Middle Length Lam-Rim

(Lam rim ‘bring ba)

by

Lama Tsongkhapa

with additional outlines by Trijang Rinpoche

Translated from the Tibetan

by

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Note from the editor

The additional outline and any further additions by Trijang Rinpoche are in small lettertype, to be distinguished from Lama Tsongkhapa’s own outline which is in larger lettertype. Lama Tsongkhapa’s outline is extracted from the main text. The division of the text in chapters is added by the editor; the main titles are probably added by the editor of the Tibetan text.

The numbers in brackets { } correspond to the Tibetan text of the Middle Lam-Rim published by Sera Je Computer Project, Sera Je Monastic University, Bylakuppe, 1999.

The initial draft translation by Philip Quarcoo was used by the Basic Program at Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa, and provisional changes were made by Ven. Joan Nicell as clarification, to add missing words, or to make slight corrections based on checking the original Tibetan. In this penultimate edition Philip has incorporated many of Joan’s suggestions, and he carefully revisited his earlier work in preparation for publication, checking it against the Tibetan and re-translating where needed.

Olga Planken, editor
FPMT Education Department
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**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

Respectfully I prostrate at the feet of the venerable saints who are full of compassion.

This here is the middling of three Lamrim texts - a great, a middle length and a small one - which the gentle protector, Dharmaraja¹ Tsongkhapa composed. It is also widely known as the "small Lamrim". Its source text has three sections:

1. The introductory elements of the explanations
2. Composition of the explanations themselves
3. Their completion

1 **The introductory elements of the explanations**

**Expression of veneration and the vow of composition**

1A **Expression of veneration**

Bhagavan², Lord of this world system of forbearance, Jina's³ regent, Jamgon, Lord of the Dharma, Manjughosha, single father of all the sugatas⁴, Nagarjuna and Asanga, foretold by the Jina, bowing to you with respect

1B **Vow of composition**

I shall once more give explanations here in a summary fashion of the gradual path of the most profound view and of vast conduct - making it easy to access.

**General introductory explanation of the instructions being taught here**

1C **Identification of the Dharma to be explained in the context of what the title means**

(2) The Dharma to be explained here consists in how the fortunate are lead to the level of buddhahood through the stages of the path to enlightenment. It summarises all the points of the Jina’s excellent speech, [following] the tradition of the two great trail-blazers Nagarjuna and Asanga, constitutes the Dharma system of supreme beings progressing to the state of omniscience, and contains all the stages without omission that the three [types of] beings need to practice.

2 **Composition of the explanations themselves**

A **Correspondence with the manner of explanation proposed by the scholars**

B **The actual explanations in accordance with that**

2A **Correspondence with the manner of explanation proposed by the scholars**
The scholars of glorious Vikramashila [monastery] considered it vital to start off with three preliminaries, i.e. the greatness of the author of the teachings, the greatness of the teachings and the way to explain and listen to them.

In accordance with that, the guide to the stages of the path to enlightenment has four [parts]: Showing the greatness of the author in order to show that the teachings are venerable, showing the greatness of the teachings in order to generate respect towards the instructions, how the teachings which are great in two ways should be listened to and explained, and the stages by which a disciple should be guided through the actual instructions.

**Showing the greatness of the author in order to make the teachings venerable**

First: the author: Generally speaking, the present instructions are the ones that the venerable protector Maitreya gives in his *Ornament of Clear Realization*. In particular, they are based on *Lamp on the Path to Enlightenment*, so that its author is also the author of the present text. Other than under the name of Great Master Dipamkara Shri-jñana he is also widely known as the glorious Atisha.

His greatness is threefold: How he took birth in an excellent family, how he achieved his good qualities on that basis, and having achieved them, how he performed deeds for the sake of the teachings.

(3) According to the translator’s⁵ praise:

Due east in the excellent country of Sahor⁶ lies a city of great size, namely Vikramanipura.

In its midst: the royal court, an extremely spacious palace called “the one with golden banners”.

Its pleasures, might and wealth resemble those of king Tongkhun of China.

King of that land is Kalyanasri and his queen is called Shriprabha.
The royal couple have three sons: Padmagarbha, Candragarbha, and Shrigarbha they are called. Again, Prince Padmagarbha has five royal consorts and nine sons—the oldest one, named Shriguna, is a Mahapandita widely known as Dhanashri. His youngest brother, called Shrigarbha, is the Bhikshu Viryacandra. The middle one is Candragarbha—he is our exalted guru.

2B1B-2 How Atisha achieved his good qualities on that basis
A How Atisha attained the positive qualities of comprehensive scriptural knowledge
B How Atisha attained the realizational qualities of its correct accomplishment

How he attained his positive qualities has two [parts]: how he attained the positive qualities of comprehensive scriptural knowledge and how he attained the realizational qualities of its correct accomplishment.

2B1B-2A How Atisha attained the positive qualities of comprehensive scriptural knowledge
1 How Atisha learnt the areas of general knowledge
First: By the age of 21, having studied the four areas of knowledge common to Buddhists and non-Buddhist—language, logic, crafts and medicine—he had become an excellent scholar. In particular, the great Drolungpa relates how, at the age of 15, having heard the Lines of Reasoning just once, he debated with a non-Buddhist intellectual renowned for his erudition and beat him—which spread his fame far and wide.

2 How Atisha learnt Mantra
Then he requested complete empowerment from the master yogi of the main temple on Black Mountain, the glorious Rahulagupta who had received direct visions of Hevajra and a prophecy from Vajradakini, receiving the secret name Jñāna-guhyavajra. Up to the age of 29 he studied the Vajrayana under numerous highly realized gurus and thereby became knowledgeable in all texts and instructions. When the thought “only I am knowledgeable in the secret mantra” occurred to him, dakinis pointed out, in his dream, several volumes of mantra he had not seen before. That lowered his pride.

3 How Atisha was ordained and learnt the collections of inner knowledge
Both in his dreams and directly the gurus and protectors then made known to him that vast benefit would accrue for the teachings and many beings, if he took monastic vows as appropriate. Upon their encouragement he had himself ordained. The great upholder of monastic discipline, Shilarakshita, an elder of the Mahasamghika tradition who had attained the concentration in which you single-pointedly enter [ultimate] reality on the path of preparation, officiated as abbot. Candragarbha received the name Shri Dipamkara-jñāna.

Afterwards, up to the age of 31, he studied the lower and upper divisions of inner philosophical knowledge, in particular, for 12 years, the Great Detailed Explanation under Guru Dharmarakshita in Odantapuri. As he was very well versed in the scriptures of the four
original traditions, he had an infallible grasp of the tiniest details in modes of behaviour that should be cultivated and rejected according to the various philosophical schools, like [for instance the monastic rules concerning] accepting gifts.

2B1B-2B How Atisha attained the realizational qualities of its correct accomplishment
   1 How all realizational qualities are contained in the three trainings
   [2 How Atisha was accomplished in the three trainings]

2B1B-2B1 How all realizational qualities are contained in the three trainings

Second: As, generally speaking, all the scriptural teachings by the Jina are contained in the three precious collections, the realizational teachings are also contained in the three precious trainings.

2B1B-2B2 How Atisha was accomplished in the three trainings
   A Ethical discipline
   B His training of concentration
   C His training of wisdom

2B1B-2B2A [Ethical discipline]
   1 Transition to ethical discipline
   2 How Atisha was actually accomplished in ethical discipline
   3 Proper protection [of ethical discipline]

2B1B-2B2A-1 Transition to ethical discipline

(5) In this regard the training in ethical discipline is often praised in the [Buddha’s] excellent teachings and in the commentaries as the foundation of all good qualities such as the training in concentration and wisdom. Therefore, it is necessary, first of all, to have realizational qualities in terms of ethical discipline.

2B1B-2B2A-2 How Atisha was actually accomplished in ethical discipline
   A How Atisha possessed the highest vows of individual liberation

In this regard there are three [kinds]: How he possessed the first of those, the highest vows of individual liberation: Having received the bhikshu vows, he protected them the way a yak protects its coat - a yak is so attached to its coat that it rather risks its life, trying to save a strand of tail hair that has got caught on a tree, than to part with it, even if it sees its life is being threatened by a hunter. That is how Atisha protected every detail of the foundation of trainings, not to speak of the major [rules of the] foundation of trainings which he had undertaken, so that he came to be called the elder who is a great upholder of discipline.

B How Atisha possessed the bodhisattva vows:

Bodhisattva vows: He practiced numerous instructions for training the mind of enlightenment which is rooted in love and compassion. Especially, in attendance upon Serlingpa, he trained for long in the highest instructions passed on by the venerable Maitreya and Manjugosha through Asanga and Shantideva. Thereby the mind of enlightenment that cherishes others more than oneself, arose in his heart. This aspirational mind gave rise to the mind of active involvement and due to his excellent behaviour, i.e. his engagement in the trainings following the promise to train in the vast conduct of bodhisattvas, he never transgressed the rules of Buddha’s children.

C How Atisha possessed Vajrayana vows

Vajrayana vows: Owing to the fact that he had the meditative stabilisations of the generation stage where one’s own body is seen as that of a deity and of the completion stage of the
[indestructible] vajra mind, [6] he became chief among yogis. In particular, he protected his tantric commitments properly by not transgressing the prescribed rules.

**Proper protection [of ethical discipline]**

Not only did he courageously undertake the trainings in ethical discipline of the three vows, he also upheld them as he had promised. He kept the vows without transgressing the rules associated with them, and even if he transgressed them ever so slightly, he quickly, very quickly purified this by means of a suitable ritual restoring the given vow.

**Atisha’s accomplishments in the training in concentration**

His training of concentration has two [aspects]: Common concentration: He had achieved the serviceability of the mind of calm abiding and, as regards uncommon concentration, he had the extreme stability of the generation stage. Furthermore, he completed the three or six years of modes of conduct of yogic realization disciplines.

**His training of wisdom**

His training of wisdom has two [aspects]: The common one: He had attained the concentration of special insight which is the union of special insight and calm abiding. The uncommon one: he had attained the special concentration of the completion stage.

**The deeds he did for the sake of the teachings, having attained those positive qualities**

A **Deeds in India**

B **Deeds in Tibet**

The deeds he did for the sake of the teachings are of two [types]: his deeds in India and his deeds in Tibet.

**Deeds in India**

First: At the palace of great enlightenment in Bodhgaya he defeated proponents of base, non-Buddhist doctrines by means of the Dharma three times, thus maintaining the Buddha’s teachings. Eliminating the taints of ignorance, misconception and doubt also with regard to the teachings of his own upper and lower systems, he spread the teachings, so that he was regarded as a crown jewel by [proponents of] all factions beyond partiality.

**Deeds in Tibet**

1 Clearing up misconceptions about the Dharma and restoring the tradition
2 Identifying the three causes of excellence in the composition of commentaries
3 The ability to ascertain the Jina’s intentions due to these three causes [8]
4 The special qualities of his disciples

Deeds in Tibet: Lha Lama [7] and his nephew sent the two great translators Gya-tson-seng and Nagtso Tsultrim Gyalwa to India one after the other. As they took great pains again and again to invite [Atisha], he came to Upper Ngari during [the reign of] Jangchub O [10] and was requested to purify the Buddha’s teachings. Thereupon, he spread the teachings by composing the *Lamp on the Path to Enlightenment*, a text bringing together all the points ofutra and tantra and condensing them into applicable stages, as well as other texts. Specifically, he spent three years in Ngari, nine years in Nyetang and five years elsewhere in
Central Tibet and Tsang teaching the fortunate all the scriptures and instructions of sutra and tantra without exception. Thereby he restored the tradition of teachings that had declined, made those that remained flourish, and corrected those that had been soiled by the errors of misconception, ensuring that the precious teachings were freed from all flaws.

2B1B-3B2 Identifying the three causes of excellence in the composition of commentaries

There are three causes of excellence in the composition of a text clarifying the Muni’s intentions: being learned in the five areas of knowledge, having received instructions for the application of their meaning which transmit the instructions of the perfectly complete Buddha in an unbroken line of exalted [masters], and having received the permission to teach through the vision of a protector deity. If a text can be composed with any one of these [causes of excellence] - it will turn out all the more excellent if all three are complete. This great master [, Atisha,] possessed all three.

2B1B-3B3 The ability to ascertain the Jina's intentions due to Atisha possessing these three causes {8}

A The care of protector deities

As for the care of protector deities, it says in the Praise:

Of the glorious Hevajra,  
of the Samaya-vyaha-raja,  
of heroic Lokeshvara,  
noble, reverend Tara and others,  
you had visions and permissions,  
therefore, dreaming and directly  
you perpetually heard teachings  
both the ones profound and vast.

B How Atisha's lineage is uninterrupted

[Atisha] held numerous lineages of masters such as the two lineages of the shared vehicle and of the great vehicle, with regard to which there are the two – perfection and secret mantra vehicles. In the perfection vehicle he held three lineages: the lineages of the view and of conduct, the latter having been passed on from Maitreya and from Manjugosha. In the secret mantra he had received five types of transmission as well as many other lineages such as the lineage of tenets, the lineage of blessings and lineages of various instructions. The Gurus from whom he heard [instructions] directly are mentioned in the Praise:

The gurus you always relied on were  
Sintipa, Serlingpa,  
Bhadrabodhi, Jiññasri-  
many with high accomplishments.  
In particular you held  
the profound and vast instructions  
that had been transmitted from one to another  
[all the way] from Nagarjuna.
It is well known that he had twelve gurus who had attained high accomplishments as well as many others.

C The fact that he was learned in the five areas of knowledge

The fact that he was learned in the five areas of knowledge has [already] been explained. For all these reasons this master was able to ascertain the Jina’s intentions skilfully.

2B1B-3B4 The special qualities of his disciples
A His disciples in India, Ngari and Tibet

{9} The master who was like this had an incredible number of disciples in India, Kashmir, Oddiyana, Nepal, and Tibet, however, the main ones were four great scholars in India who matched the master himself in their knowledge: Pitopa, Dharma-akaramati, Madhyasinha and Ksitingartha. Some also add Mitraguhya as the fifth. In Ngari it was the great translators Rinchen Sangpo and Nagtsos as well as the ordained king Jangchup O, in the province of Tsang Gargewa and Gokugpa Lhaytsay, in Lhodrak Chagpa Trichog and Gewa Kyong, in Kham Nayjorwa Chenpo, Gonpawa, Sherab Dorje and Chadar Tonpa and in Central Tibet there were the three, Khu, Ngog and Drom.

B The foremost disciple

Again, among these it was the great lineage holder Dromtonpa Gyelwa Chungnay who had been prophesied by Tara and further spread the exalted activities of the master.

This was a summary description of the author’s greatness. You should come to understand it more extensively in the great biographic texts.

Showing the greatness of the teachings for the sake of generating respect for the instructions

2B2  Showing the greatness of the teachings
A Identifying the teachings
B Presentation [of this text] as the three: complete, easily applicable and a particularly noble system
C Indication of the four greatnesses

2B2A  Identifying the teachings

Second: As for the teachings, the source text of the present instructions is Lamp on the Path to Enlightenment.

2B2B  Presentation [of this text] as the three: complete, easily applicable and a particularly noble system

Although Jowo composed numerous texts, the Lamp on the Path to Enlightenment is their perfect completion - like a root. As it indicates all the points of both sutra and tantra in summary fashion, it is complete in terms of content. As it makes the gradual taming of the mind its main topic, it is easy to put into practice. As it is ornamented by the instructions of the two masters {10} who were skilled in the systems of the two trail-blazers12, it is a particularly noble system compared to others.

2B2C  Presentation of [this text] as possessing the four greatnesses
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Introduction

1 The greatness of recognizing all teachings as non-contradictory
2 The greatness of all of the Buddha’s teachings dawning on you as useful instructions
3 The greatness of allowing you easily to find the meaning intended by the Buddha
4 The greatness of a grave misdeed stopping by itself

2B2C-1 The greatness of recognizing all teachings as non-contradictory

The greatness of these instructions of this text has four [aspects]. The first of these [is] the greatness of recognizing all teachings as non-contradictory.

A Identifying the teachings

Everything the Jina has said.

B How all these teachings are recognized as non-contradictory

They all come to be understood as one person’s path to Buddhahood. That is to say some are primary points of the path - others are appropriate secondary points.

C How it is demonstrated through scripture and logic that it would be contradictory not to accept this

In this regard it is the bodhisattva’s wish to work for the welfare of the world. For that purpose it is also necessary to care for all three types of disciples and therefore train in their respective paths. This is because it is explained by the venerable Maitreya that knowing paths of the three vehicles constitutes the means of realizing the bodhisattvas’ goals.

D Establishing that the teachings are non-contradictory

In the Mahayana path there is the common and the uncommon. The former is that which originates from the Hinayana collection of scriptures - except for some peculiarities that are not common, to do with the thought of aspiring to individual liberation and the like. Apart from that, it is not that faults are partially ceased and qualities are partially completed in perfectly complete buddhahood, but rather all kinds of faults have been eliminated and all types of good qualities are complete. Consequently, as the Mahayana, achieving this, also brings about the cessation of all faults and the development of all good qualities, the path of the Mahayana comprises all the various aspects of qualities of abandonment and realization of all other vehicles. (11) That is why the sections of the Mahayana path, which brings about Buddhahood, comprise all the Buddha’s teachings, for there is no utterance of the Muni that does not cause the cessation of some faults and the development of some good qualities, and because it is not the case that all of this is not brought about by the Mahayana.

E Clearing up doubts

If you think: 'That may be true for the Paramitayana', but not for those entering the Vajrayana: Although the way you train in the Paramitayana - in countless clear distinctions that clarify giving etc. - is different from mantra, the behavioural basis - the generation of the mind - and the coarse form of the path of training in the six perfections, the behaviour, is nevertheless the same and therefore something shared by them. In Vajra peak it says:

Not even to sustain one’s life,
the bodhi mind should be abandoned

and:

The practice of the six perfections,
must not be abandoned ever.
This is also taught in numerous other mantra texts. In many authentic sources for the mandala ritual of highest yoga tantra it says that a set of two vows must have been taken: a common and an uncommon one and indeed, the former refers to bodhisattva vows. The precious teacher also said: “My guru who knew how to accommodate all the teachings by means of the path [as if in] a square...” These words form the basis of a major investigation.

2B2C-2 The greatness of all of the Buddha’s teachings dawning on you as useful instructions

Second: the greatness of all of the Buddha’s teachings dawning on you as useful instructions

A The distinction of pure and impure manners of comprehending

Anyone construing the great scriptures to be explanatory teachings that do not contain the points of practice who thinks that guidance indicating the meaning of the essential points of practice exists separately from them, and holds that even in the holy Dharma the explanatory and accomplishing teachings are found in different places, will create an obstacle for the origination of deep respect towards the immaculate sutras and tantras as well as the treatises clarifying their intent. One should be aware that the karmic obscuration of abandoning the Dharma is accumulated by despising them, saying that they only outline external knowledge without presenting the inner meaning. Hence, for those who want liberation, the infallible, supreme instructions are indeed the great scriptures. Nevertheless, it is possible that, due to poor intelligence etc., one cannot reach certainty through relying on these scriptures only as supreme instruction. Therefore and one must seek certainty with respect to them by relying on excellent direct instructions, but one should not think that the great scriptures do not contain the heart of the matter because they only outline external knowledge while the direct instructions are supreme because they present the inner meaning.

B How all the Buddha’s teachings dawn on you as useful instructions

The great Yogi Jangchub Rinchen said:

Someone who has reached certainty concerning a handy little volume, cannot be said to know all the topics of direct instructions, this is said about someone who understands all of the Buddha’s teachings as instructions.

We need the kind of understanding Great Jowo [Atisha]’s disciple Gompa Rinchen Lama expressed saying he had ground his body, speech and mind to dust in a single meditation session on Atisha’s instructions and that thereby the understanding had now arisen in him that all scriptures are instructions.

In the words of the precious [Drom] Tonpa:

If, after studying the Dharma a lot, you feel the need to search elsewhere for a way of applying the Dharma, you are mistaken.

Likewise, those who study the Dharma a lot over a long period and, completely ignorant as to how to set about it, develop the wish to practice Dharma, do not understand and therefore err in the manner described above. As it says in the Treasury.
The Buddha’s teachings have two aspects: their nature is scripture and realization.

In accordance with this dictum, the teaching is nothing apart from the scriptural teaching and the realizational teaching.

The scriptural teaching is how the Dharma should be practiced and establishes the manner of accomplishment, while the realizational teaching is what is [thus] established. Since one practices in accordance with what is to be established, these two act as cause and effect. To give an analogy: when you have a horse race, the horse is first shown the course and afterwards, likewise, it runs there. It would be ridiculous to show it a course and then have the race elsewhere. When it comes to attainments, how could it be appropriate to accomplish something after having determined something else through listening and reflecting? That is also expressed in the last volume of Stages of Meditation: “Whatever has been realized by the wisdom arising from listening and reflecting is precisely what should be cultivated by means of the wisdom arising from meditation. Just like a horse runs along the course it has been shown.”

C Indication of analytical meditation as a means of making all teachings appear as instructions

Thus, through summarising all the topics of paths set out in the excellent teachings and commentaries - starting from how to rely on a spiritual teacher up to calm abiding and special insight - they are all condensed into stages of practical application in terms of performing stabilizing meditation where stabilizing meditation is required and analyzing with the wisdom of individual investigation where analytical meditation is required. Thereby, these instructions guide you so that all the excellent teachings dawn on you as instructions. Then the certainty develops that they should be understood as supreme instructions, and the misconception that they should be understood as mere background [knowledge] for the Dharma rather than as actual instructions (14) is completely reversed.

2B2C-3 The greatness of allowing you easily to discover the Jina’s intention

Third: the greatness of allowing you easily to discover the Jina’s intention

A For beginners the Jina’s intention is not easy to find without a guru’s oral instructions

Although the great texts, teachings along with their commentaries, form the supreme instructions, completely uneducated beginners cannot find the intention - even though delving into it - without relying on excellent direct instructions, and even if they find it, they spend a lot of time and enormous effort.

B It is found through a guru’s oral instructions

If they rely on a guru’s direct instructions and the like, it becomes easy to understand.

2B2C-4 The greatness of a grave misdeed stopping by itself

Fourth: the greatness of a grave misdeed stopping by itself:

A Showing that abandoning the Dharma as the biggest misdeed

As explained in the White Lotus [Sutra] and the Chapter of the Truthful One, it amounts to abandoning the Dharma, if you hold that some utterances of the Buddha are means of attaining Buddhahood while others are obstacles to Buddhahood, dividing them into good
and bad, appropriate and inappropriate or Mahayana and Hinayana, and thereupon holding that a bodhisattva needs to train in some and not in others because you fail to understand that all the words of the Buddha directly or indirectly teach means of attaining Buddhahood. In the Sutra Gathering All the Threads it says that the karmic obscuration due to abandoning the Dharma is so subtle that it is hard to recognize. Concerning the grave disadvantages that ensue if you abandon the Dharma, it says in the King of Concentration Sutra:

Someone here in Jambudvipa
tears down all the stupas found,
someone abandons a class of sutras
the latter’s misdeed is far more grave.

Someone even murders arhats-
as many as sand grains in the Ganges
someone abandons a class of sutras
{15} the latter’s misdeed is far more grave.

Although there generally appear to be many ways in which the Dharma might be abandoned, the one described previously seems to be the greatest, which is why we should try hard to give it up.

B When there is a realization along the lines of the first two greatnesses, the misdeed stops by itself

That is to say since this is reversed simply by gaining certainty regarding what was shown above, the misdeeds stops by itself.

C You should come to realize such certainty from the White Lotus Sutra and other texts

This certainty should be sought by studying the Chapter of the Truthful One as well as the [Sutra of the] Excellent Dharma’s White Lotus. The other ways of abandoning the Dharma should be learnt from the Sutra Gathering all the Threads.

Explanation of how Dharma possessed of the two greatnesses should be listened to and explained

2B3 How Dharma possessed of the two greatnesses should be listened to and explained

A How to listen
B How to explain
C Generally, how to proceed at the end

The third one has three points: how to listen, how to explain and generally how to proceed at the end.

2B3A How to listen

1 Considering the advantages of listening to the Dharma
2 Developing respect towards the Dharma and those who teach it
3 The actual way to listen

The first one has three points: considering the advantages of listening, developing respect towards the Dharma and who teaches it and the actual way to listen.

2B3A-1 Considering the advantages of listening
First: from the Verses on Listening:

Through listening you come to know the dharmas,  
through listening misdeeds are turned away,  
through listening all trivia are abandoned,  
through listening nirvana is achieved

These four [lines] say that in dependence on listening an understanding of the points that should be adopted and abandoned gradually develops. From this knowledge - ethical discipline that counteracts wrongdoing. Then, once you have turned away from meaningless pursuits, concentration where the mind can stay on a wholesome object as long as you wish arises. Then, through training in wisdom realizing the suchness that is selflessness, the root of samsara's fetters is cut and you attain liberation.

In the Jataka stories, too, it says:

He who through listening fills his mind with faith,  
{16} grows firm rejoicing in that which is excellent.  
Wisdom is born and bewilderment vanishes-  
this is well worth paying for with one's own flesh.

Listening is the lamp against mental darkness,  
the greatest wealth no robber can carry away,  
the weapon destroying the enemy - ignorance  
best of friends giving guidance in skilful means;  
near and dear, if you are poor or not;  
inoffensive cure against ills of sorrow,  
the foremost army destroying an army of faults,  
it is the best fame, and treasure and splendour as well.  
If you meet noble beings - the best of gifts,  
and in assemblies it is the delight of the wise.

as well as:

Having listened make the attainment the essence of practice,  
and you will be released from the stronghold of births with ease.

Keep thinking again and again about these and other advantages of listening and generate resolute faith from the bottom of your heart.

Second: from the Ksitigarbha Sutra:

Listen filled with one-sided faith and respect,  
without any mockery nor disrespect towards them,
worship the exponents of the Dharma, 
producing the notion of them as resembling Buddhas.

In accordance with this quotation you should view them as resembling a Buddha, offer them service with things like lion thrones, worship them with gifts and give up disrespect. In the Bodhisattva Levels it says that you should be free from arrogance and, towards the teachings and those who expound them, from disregard and you should respect those two. And in the Jataka stories it says:

Sit on a seat that is very low, 
develop the glory of discipline, 
see with eyes imbued with joy, 
while drinking the nectar of the words.

Bow down in respect and concentration, 
with mind that is pure and free of stains 
like one who is ill {17} heeds the doctor’s words, 
respectfully listen to the Dharma.

The third one has three [points]: Giving up the three faults of a vessel and relying on the six discriminations.

2B3A-3A1 Giving up the three faults of a vessel

First: If a vessel is turned upside down or held the right way round but unclean or clean but with the bottom leaking, then even if rain is made to fall on it by the gods, it cannot go in, or even if it goes in, it will be polluted by the dirt and therefore will not fulfil the purpose of being drunk and the like or even if it is not spoiled by dirt, it will not stay but leak out. In the same way it is to no great purpose to hear the Dharma, if you sit in a place where it is being explained, but do not listen well, or listen, but take it wrong - with a faulty motivation and the like - or if, even in case these faults are not present, the words and the meaning you grasped at the time of hearing are not consolidated and get lost through forgetfulness etc. Therefore, one should be free from these [faults]. The antidotes to these three are set forth in three phrases in the sutras: “Listen well - intensely - and keep in mind!” And in the Bodhisattva Levels we are told to listen with the desire to know everything, single-pointedness, attention, a humble mind, and the thought of all sentient beings.
Middle Length Lam-Rim

Introduction

A Contemplating the discrimination of oneself as a patient
B Contemplating the discrimination of the one expounding the Dharma as a doctor
C Generating the discrimination of what has been taught as medicine
D Generating the discrimination of persistent practice as the cure
E Contemplating the discrimination of the Tathagata as an exalted being
F Generating the wish for the Dharma tradition to last long

The second one has six points: contemplating the discrimination of oneself as a patient, of the one expounding the Dharma as a doctor, subsequently generating the discrimination of what has been taught as medicine, the discrimination of persistent practice as the cure, contemplating the discrimination of the Tathagatas as exalted beings and generating the wish for the Dharma tradition to last long.

2B3A-3A2A Contemplating the discrimination of oneself as a patient

First: In Engaging\(^2\) it says:

Even when stricken with ordinary illness

\(\{18\}\) one has to follow the words of the doctor

how much more so, if a hundred

ills like lust strike you down all the time!

As is mentioned here, owing to mental afflictions like attachment etc. we always suffer from diseases causing long-lasting and severe suffering that is difficult to cure. Therefore we first need to diagnose them as such. Kamawa said: “If it is not in accord with the actual situation, our meditation goes off in the wrong direction. We have been stricken with a serious illness due to the three poisons, the illness is very grave, but we do not know we are ill at all.”

2B3A-3A2B Contemplating the discrimination of the one expounding the Dharma as a doctor

Second: If we are stricken with a serious illness like for example a wind or gall disease, we look for a specialist in medicine and meeting one we are extremely happy, listen to what he says, treat him with respect and acknowledge him. In the same way one looks for a spiritual guide teaching the Dharma and, having found one, accomplishes what he says, taking it not as a burden but as an ornament, acting with respect and reverence towards him.

2B3A-3A2C Generating the discrimination of what has been taught as medicine

Third: Just as a patient greatly appreciates the medicine put together by the doctor, one regards the instructions and teachings given by someone expounding the Dharma as the most important thing, making an effort to hold them in respect and not wasting them through forgetfulness and the like.

2B3A-3A2D Generating the discrimination of persistent practice as the cure

1 The contempt of striving for words without practicing them

Fourth: An ill person sees that his illness cannot be alleviated, if he does not take the medicine the doctor put together, and takes it. Likewise, once you see that attachment etc. cannot be eliminated without practicing the instructions the Dharma teacher has taught, you should practice diligently and not make a great effort at vain words of numerous classifications without putting them into practice. As a matter of fact, what good would it be to a leper whose hands and legs are coming off to resort to a dose of medicine once or twice.\(\{19\}\) Likewise, for us who have been stricken since beginningless time by the wicked basis of
illness that is the mental afflictions, it is not sufficient to practice the meaning of the instructions only a couple of times. This is why we should examine all the complete parts of the path with discriminating wisdom and be as diligent as a flowing river. It is like it says in the Praise of Confessing:

... That is to say our minds are always obscured, for long we have served the causes of our ills how can a leper whose hands and feet fall off and who takes his medicine but rarely derive benefit?

2 The importance of the discrimination of oneself as someone ill

That being so the discrimination of oneself as someone ill is very important. If it is present, the other ones also arise. However, if this remains merely words without the meaning of the instructions being accomplished for the sake of eliminating the mental afflictions, you will only be a listener. You will resemble an ill person who is not rid of his illness if, having sought a doctor, he only cares about the medicinal composition and does not take the medicine - says the King of Concentration [Sutra]. It also says:

If, after I have explained the excellent Dharma, you don’t apply it well, although you heard it, it is like with patients whose pouches are full of medicine, but who still cannot cure their own diseases.

And in the Guide:

These should be put into practice physically, what would be gained by uttering just the words? Would it be beneficial to the patients, if they just read how the medicine is meant to be used?

3 The instruction to act [accordingly], having identified [the meaning of] "persistence"

Therefore the discrimination that persistence eliminates the disease should be developed. “Persistence” in this statement signifies putting into practice the topics of adopting and abandoning [of modes of conduct] from the spiritual teacher’s instructions. [20] Now, to put them into practice you need to know them and for that you need to listen and study. Again, after studying and knowing you need to practice and therefore it is crucial to engage in the meaning of what has been studied to the best of one’s abilities. Otherwise, at the time of death, you will have regrets with regard to what you have not accomplished. You will resemble an actor imitating others or someone interested in sugar eating only sugar cane. In Exhortation to the Supreme Intention it says:

“I failed in my attainments - now, what should I do?” that is how the childish wail while dying. They have not delved deep and the suffering is great- note that these are the faults of delighting in words.

And:
Like someone amidst the crowd observing a play, discussing the virtues of another hero, and failing with regard to his own persistence - note that these are the faults of delighting in words.

And:

In the bark of sugar-cane there is no essence, the delightful flavour is inside, someone eating the bark is unable to find the delicious flavour of molasses. Similarly, words are like the bark, the taste is like the meaning of those words. Consequently abandon delighting in words, always be conscientious reflecting their meaning!

Contemplating the discrimination of the Tathagata as an exalted being

The fifth one consists in developing respect, having brought to mind the teacher of the Dharma, the Bhagavan.

Generating the wish for the Dharma tradition to last long

The sixth one consists in the thought: how nice it would be, if based on listening to such a Dharma, the Jina’s teachings remained in the world for long.

The way in which one needs to listen, having related this to one’s mind

Apart from that, if you keep your own mind aside while explaining or listening to the Dharma, the Dharma remaining separate from it, then this will result in whatever is being explained to miss the point. Therefore, it is necessary to listen in order to reach certainty concerning one’s own continuum. To illustrate this: [21] if you want to examine whether or not there is dirt or some other impurity on your face, you look at yourself in a mirror and, understanding that there is, remove it. Likewise, when you hear the Dharma, your faulty behaviour appears in the mirror of the Dharma, whereupon you feel anguish thinking: ‘that is what my mind has come to’. Then, as you engage in eliminating faults and attaining qualities, you necessarily train in accordance with the Dharma. It is like in the Jataka stories [where] the son of Sutasa asks Prince Chandra for Dharma teachings in these terms:

Beholding the forms of my bad behaviour, in the dazzling mirror of Dharma, anguish arises forceful in me, and I turn towards the Dharma.

Knowing this to be the thinking of a [suitable] vessel for hearing the Dharma, the Bodhisattva gave him teachings.

How to keep in mind the purpose of attainments

In short, thinking: ‘I shall attain Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings, to attain that, I need to train in its causes. Apparently, it is necessary to listen to the Dharma for that, therefore I shall listen to the Dharma’, you should generate the mind of enlightenment, consider the benefits of study and listen with joy, abandoning the faults of a vessel.
How to explain

1. Considering the benefits of explaining the Dharma
2. Generating respect for the teacher and the teachings
3. What kind of attitude and activities to explain with
4. Distinction between who the explanations should and should not be given to

The second one has four points: Considering the benefits of explaining the Dharma, generating respect for the teacher and the teachings, what kind of attitude and activities to explain with, distinction between who the explanations should and should not be given to.

2B3B-1 Considering the benefits of explaining the Dharma

First: In the *Treasury* it says:

> Giving Dharma, free of mental afflictions, teach according to sutra and other true texts.

In its auto-commentary it says: “Therefore, those who explain the Dharma incorrectly and with an afflicted mind craving for material gain, respect and fame, corrupt their own great merits. Therefore, a pure motivation to teach the Dharma is extremely important and just like Ngargompa said, it is crucial to review it beforehand: “I have never explained the Dharma without meditating upon impermanence before the session.”

In *Exhortation to the Supreme Intention* two groups of 20 advantages of giving the gift of Dharma in the absence of material things and the concern for gain, respect and the like are set forth. Also, in *Drag Shul Chan* it says that the merit of a householder giving immeasurable material things is exceeded by an ordained person giving a single verse of Dharma.

2B3B-2 Generating respect for the teacher and the teachings

Second: When uttering the *Mother of the Buddhas* the Teacher himself arranged the seat and so on. Accordingly, the Dharma is a field of veneration even for Buddhas, so one should bring to mind the positive qualities and kindness of the Dharma and its teacher, generating respect.

2B3B-3 What kind of attitude and activities to explain with

A. Attitude
B. Activities

The third one has two points: attitude and activities.

2B3B-3A Attitude

First, [the *Sutra Requested by Sagaramati* puts forward five discriminations: generating the discrimination of oneself as a doctor, of the Dharma as medicine, of the one listening to the Dharma as a patient, of the Tathagata as a holy being and of the mode of the Dharma as abiding for a long time as well as the development of loving kindness towards the people around.

The envy born from anxiety that others are superior, the laziness of putting things off, the discouragement of fatigue due to explaining things over and over again, praising oneself and chit-chatting about other people’s faults, the reluctance to lend texts as well as concern for material things such as food and clothing should be abandoned, thinking: those merits
from teaching for the sake of my own and others' enlightenment are the provisions of my happiness.

2B3B-3B Activities

(23) Second: Having washed and dressed in immaculately clean clothes, you sit down in a clean and pleasant place on a cushion on a Dharma throne. If you then chant a mantra subjugating demons, demons and gods of the demonic category will not get closer to you at all than a perimeter of 100 joyanas and even if they do, they will not be able to create any obstacles, as it says in [the Sutra] Requested by Sagaramati. Therefore you should chant that mantra and - with an extremely radiant facial complexion - give your explanations conjoined with the conditions for ascertaining their meaning - examples, proofs and quotations.

2B3B-4 Distinction between who the explanations should and should not be given to

Fourth: In the Sutra on Discipline it says: “do not act without being asked to”. Accordingly, you do not teach without having been asked and even when someone asks, you should examine the vessel. However, knowing someone to be a vessel, it is acceptable to teach even without having been asked, as it says in the King of Concentration [Sutra]. Further modes of conduct are set forth in the Sutra on Discipline.

2B3C Generally, how to proceed at the end

1 What to do at the end - the actual things to do:

The roots of virtue of teaching and listening in this way should be sealed by means of pure aspirational prayers such as the Prayer of Good Conduct.

2 The benefits of this

There is no doubt that, if the Dharma is explained and listened to in this manner, in just one session the advantages stated above will arise. Due to the act of listening and explaining the Dharma hitting home, all the karmic obscurations accumulated previously by not respecting the Dharma or those expounding it etc. are purified and all the ones being newly accumulated are nipped in the bud.

3 The general mode of behaviour of saints

Due to the manner of listening hitting home, the instructions set forth bring about benefit in the mind. Seeing this, all the earlier saints in general (24) were diligent about this and especially the former gurus of this instruction persevered at it with utmost diligence.

4 The advice to cherish them, as it is a great fault to turn away from them

These are evidently great instructions - if one does not reach certainty about this and one’s attitude does not change - as is often the case - the Dharma, so profound and vast, no matter how much it is explained, will be like a god fallen to [the rank of] a demon and that very Dharma will become an aid to the afflictions. Therefore, “if you err on the first of the month, [you will do so] until the fifteenth” as they say and since it is like that, the wise strive at this method of transforming what has been heard and explained into the path and make every opportunity to explain and listen into something worthwhile. For this is the best preparation for teaching the instructions.
Explanation of the stages by which a student of the actual instructions should be guided

2B4 The stages by which a student should be guided through the actual instructions
   A The root of the path: how to rely on a spiritual teacher
   B The stages of how to train the mind once you have relied

The fourth one has two points: the root of the path - how to rely on a spiritual teacher - and the stages of how to train the mind once you have relied.

2B4A The root of the path: how to rely on a spiritual teacher
   1 The somewhat elaborate explanation for generating certainty
   2 The condensed presentation of how to sustain it

The first one has two points: the somewhat elaborate explanation for generating certainty and the condensed presentation of how to sustain it.

2B4A-1 The somewhat elaborate explanation for generating certainty
   A The need for relying on a spiritual master since all good qualities depend on him
   B The actual way to rely

2B4A-1A The need for relying on a spiritual master since all good qualities depend on him
First: As all goodness, starting off from the development of a single positive quality and the decrease of a single fault in the mind of the disciple has its root in the sublime friend, the way to rely on him is important in the beginning.

2B4A-1B The actual way to rely
   1 Characteristics of the one to be relied on, the virtuous spiritual friend
   2 Characteristics of the one who relies
   3 The way he relies on him
   4 The benefits of reliance
   5 The drawbacks of not relying
   6 Summary of the meaning of these [points]

In this regard there are six points: characteristics of the one to be relied on, the virtuous spiritual friend, characteristics of the who relies, the way he relies on him, the benefits of reliance, the drawbacks of not relying (25) and a summary of the meaning of these [points].

2B4A-1B1 Characteristics of the one to be relied on, the virtuous spiritual friend
   A Identification of a “guru”
   B His characteristics

2B4A-1B1A Identification of a “guru”
First: Although, generally speaking, in terms of the individual vehicles, a lot is said [about this] in the [Buddha’s] excellent words along with the commentaries, here only a virtuous spiritual friend guiding on the path to Buddhahood, the Mahayana, by gradually guiding on the path of the three [types of] beings, will be presented.

2B4A-1B1B His characteristics
   1 Highest characteristics
   2 Middling characteristics
   3 Minimum characteristics

2B4A-1B1B-1 Highest characteristics
   A Good qualities he himself needs

In *Ornament of the Sutras* it says that the disciple needs to rely on a spiritual teacher possessed of ten properties:
A spiritual teacher with discipline, calm, complete peace, more qualities, effort, rich in scriptural transmissions, who has thoroughly realized suchness, is eloquent, loving, and no more discouraged - on that one rely!

Furthermore it says that someone who has not disciplined himself, for that reason is not in a position to discipline someone else. A spiritual master disciplining others has to be someone who has first disciplined his own mind. You may wonder: “Well then, in what way does it need to be disciplined?” To accomplish anything at all that occurs to you and then label it a realizational quality because it exists in the mind, is of no benefit. This is why a system of mental discipline compatible with the general teachings of the Jinas is necessary. That has been ascertained as the three precious trainings, and therefore, ethical discipline and the other two have been set forth. In this regard “disciplined” refers to the training in ethical discipline. In the Individual Liberation it says:

In accord with the unruly horse of the mind
always wilfully straying away:
a bridle strutted with hundred sharp nails -
that’s individual liberation

Someone skilled at breaking in wild horses tames them by means of a good bridle. The sense powers pursue wrong objects like wild horses. Ethical discipline subjugates them as one engages in inappropriate activities and through many efforts makes one engage in what ought to be done. Someone trained in it has likewise tamed the horse of the mind.

“Calm” means having developed the training of concentration where, based on mindfulness and introspection with regard to engaging in positive and counteracting unwholesome behaviour, the mind abides in a state of inner calm. “Complete peace” means that based on calm abiding of a serviceable mind the training of wisdom has been developed through individual analysis of the correct meaning [of reality]. However, it is not enough merely to have developed - thus, by means of the three trainings - the qualities of realization that act to tame the mind. As the quality of scriptural knowledge is also needed, [we have] “rich in scriptural transmissions” meaning that the three collections and so forth have been studied extensively. According to Geshe [Drom] Tonpa:

For someone to be called a Mahayana guru, he must generate boundless understanding when he explains, and when he practices, he must show what is of benefit and direct significance in the last days of the teachings.

“Realization of suchness” refers to the training in wisdom - realization of the selflessness of phenomena. Alternatively, it is mainly held to be manifest suchness. However, even if this is not present, it is said that this [criterion] is also fulfilled by a realization through scriptures and reasonings.
That being so, even if he has scriptural knowledge and realizations, it is not enough for
them to be inferior or equal to that of the disciple and therefore someone with more qualities
is needed. In the Verses\textsuperscript{32} it says:

People relying on someone inferior wither,
those relying on one of their peers stay the same,
those relying on leaders achieve excellence.
Therefore rely on those ahead of you
Possessed of discipline, perfect peace,
and the most exalted wisdom-
if you rely on any such a lord,
\{27\} you even end up ahead of him.

That is why. Puchungwa said: “As I listen to the accounts of the saints, I look up to them”
and Tashi: “I take the old men at Radreng as a model\textsuperscript{33}.” Accordingly, we need someone with
more qualities as a model to look up to. Those six properties like this are qualities you
yourself attain [for your own welfare].

\textbf{B Positive qualities necessary for the welfare of others}

The remaining ones are qualities for taking care of others. As they say:

The Capable Ones\textsuperscript{34} do not wash away evil with water,
they do not remove the suffering of beings by hand,
they do not graft their realizations on others-
they liberate, teaching the truth of reality’s nature.

As is being expressed here, apart from taking care of others, having taught them the path in
an unmistaken manner, nothing can be done washing away negativities with water and the
like. Out of the four characteristics for this, “eloquent” means experienced with regard to the
stages of guidance and skilled at putting the meaning across to the minds of those to be
tamed. “Loving” means having a pure motivation to teach the Dharma and teaching
motivated by compassion without regard for material gain or respect. We need someone like
Potowa [who] said to Chengawa: “Son of Lima, however many explanations of the Dharma I
have given, not once have I claimed the applause as my own. There is no migrating being that
is not pitiable.” “Energetic” (“with energy”) means constantly delighting in the welfare of
others. “Having abandoned discouragement” (“no more discouraged”) means not to become
weary due to explaining things over and over again, but rather to bear the hardships of
explaining.

\textbf{2B4A-1B1B-2 Middling characteristics}

Potowa said: “The three trainings, realization of suchness and a loving heart - those five are
the main thing. My master Shangtsun is not very \{28\} learned in everything, as he cannot bear
disenchantment either, he does not impress on his mind the kindness he received. However,
as he has the above-mentioned five, whoever is in his presence benefits. Nyanton is by no
means eloquent and each time he makes a dedication the only thing he knows is that, again,
no body understood anything, but as he has those five, people near him benefit.”
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Introduction

2B4A-1B1B-3 Minimum characteristics

A The actual minimum of characteristics

Even if it is difficult, due to the times, to find someone who has the complete set of characteristics like that, it is said that you should not rely on anyone whose faults are greater or whose faults and positive qualities are equal, but on someone whose positive qualities exceed the faults.

B The expediency of association with the characteristics

Such a spiritual master bringing about complete liberation is a perpetual root of aspiration. Therefore, those wishing to rely on a spiritual teacher should be aware of them and make an effort looking for someone who possesses the characteristics. Those wishing to have disciples rely on them should also strive to acquire these characteristics.

2B4A-1B2 Characteristics of the one who relies, the disciple

A Faults of someone who does not have and benefits of someone who does have the five characteristics

Second: From the *Four Hundred*:

Impartial, intelligent, full of endeavour -
thus is explained a vessel for teachings.
Otherwise qualities of the teacher,
have no effect – there’s no change in the listener.

As it says in the commentaries: someone endowed with the three characteristics is a suitable vessel for listening. If all three are complete, the positive qualities of the one expounding the Dharma appear as positive qualities and do not appear as faults. Not only that: the positive qualities of the listeners also appear as such to that person and do not appear as faults. If the characteristics of a vessel are not complete, the listener, under the power of his faults, will classify even an extremely, perfectly pure spiritual teacher who expounds the Dharma, among those who have faults, and perceive an exponent’s faults as qualities.

B Explaining the specifics of the [various] characteristics in detail

{29} In this regard “impartiality” (“unbiased”) means being without bias. If you have a bias, it will make you obscured and you will not perceive positive qualities, due to which the meaning of excellent explanations is not found. It is just as it says in Essence of the Middle Way:

With a biased - thus anguished - mind peace can never be realised.

To be biased means to be attached to one’s own approach and to hate other people’s approach. Having examined something like this in your own continuum, you should give it up. If you wonder whether that by itself is sufficient: even though impartial, someone to whom good ways of explaining appear as faulty ones, due to not having the intelligence to distinguish them, is not a suitable vessel. Therefore one needs to have the intelligence that understands those two. Are those two sufficient? Even if one has the two, [impartiality and intelligence], someone who is just like the listener to the Dharma in a [lifeless] picture is not a suitable vessel. Therefore one [also] needs to have great endeavour. The commentary states
that adding the two, respect for the Dharma and the expounder of Dharma as well as an attentive mind, five [characteristics] are set forth.

C Specifics of achieving the conducive conditions and eliminating the adverse conditions for having the four characteristics

That being so there are four: (1) great endeavour with regard to the Dharma, (2) an excellently attentive mind while listening, (3) great respect in the Dharma and the expounder of Dharma and (4) holding to good explanations having rejected faulty ones. Intelligence is a conducive circumstance for those four and the impartiality is what eliminates adverse circumstances.

D The need to strive for those characteristics

You should examine whether or not all the attributes that would make you suitable for being guided by a spiritual teacher are complete and cultivate joy, if they are. If they are not complete, you should strive henceforth including future lives at the causes for making them complete.

2B4A-1B3 The way he relies on him

A Explanation of the need to rely on someone with the characteristics
B The actual manner of relying on someone who has the characteristics

2B4A-1B3A Explanation of the need to rely on someone with the characteristics

{30} Third: Thus someone possessed of [the characteristics of] a vessel should examine - the way explained above - whether or not a teacher has the characteristics and if so, obtain the kindness of the Dharma from him.

2B4A-1B3B The actual manner of relying on someone who has the characteristics

1 The manner of relying in thought
2 The manner of relying through actions

With regard to the manner of relying on a spiritual teacher from whom you generally obtain the kindness of the Dharma and who, especially, guides your mind well by means of perfectly complete instructions, there are two points: the manner of relying in thought and the manner of relying through actions.

2B4A-1B3B-1 The manner of relying in thought

A The root, training in confidence
B Through remembering his kindness, developing respect

The first one has two points: the root, training in confidence and through remembering his kindness, developing respect.

2B4A-1B3B-1A The root, training in confidence

1 Explanation of confidence as the basis of all qualities

First: In the Jewel Tala Dharani it says:

The preparatory practice of confidence bears- like a mother- all positive qualities, guards them and makes them increase.

This says that confidence gives birth to positive qualities that have not yet arisen and, once they have come into existence, it sustains and increases them. In the Ten Dharmas it also says:
That which guides to liberation, the foremost yana is confidence. Therefore, the intelligent, rely on pursuing confidence. In those who are without confidence wholesome qualities do not arise, Likewise, in seeds that were burnt by fire, no green sprout can germinate.

In these terms confidence is said to be the foundation of all positive qualities through forward and reverse pervasion.

2 Identification of confidence

Generally speaking, there are many types of confidence: in the Jewels, in actions and effects, and in the Four Noble Truths, however, here it is confidence in the spiritual master.

3 The need to discriminate a Buddha with regard to the spiritual master

Furthermore, as for the way of looking at the spiritual master, it says in the Vajrapani Empowerment Tantra:

Oh Lord of secrets, how should a disciple see the master? Just like he would see the Buddha Bhagavan.

[31] Similar statements can be found in the collection of Mahayana sutras and in the vinaya. Their meaning is this: If you understand that someone is like a buddha, a mind conceiving faults in him will not arise, but rather a mind thinking about his positive qualities. Likewise, with regard to a spiritual master, you should purposely abandon any concepts of faults in every respect while training the mind conceiving positive qualities.

4 The disadvantages of conceiving faults

In addition, the above tantra says:

Apprehend the master’s positive qualities, do not ever apprehend his faults, apprehending his qualities you will gain siddhis, apprehending his faults they cannot be gained.

You should act accordingly. Thus if positive qualities predominate in a spiritual master, but you think about him in terms of the few faults he has, this will become an obstacle to your own accomplishments. Even if faults predominate, if you train in confidence from the perspective of his positive qualities without thinking about him in terms of his faults, this will become a cause for accomplishments to come about. Therefore, when it comes to your own spiritual master, whether his faults are big or small, contemplate the disadvantages of thinking about him from that perspective, repeatedly generate a mind to abandon this and make it stop.
5 The way of restraining concepts of faults

If concepts of faults arise due to carelessness, a lot of afflictions, etc. you should apply yourself to restraint through confession. If you accustom yourself in this manner, you may see that there are a few faults, but since your mind holds on to the side of positive qualities, it will not become an obstacle to your confidence. For instance, the great Jowo upheld the view of the Madhyamaka, while Serlingpa upheld the view of the True Aspectarian Cittamatra which is why, in terms of view, one was higher than the other. However, as he discovered the general stages of the Mahayana path and the mind of enlightenment relying on him, he regarded Serlingpa as unequalled among spiritual teachers.

2B4A-1B3B-1B Remembering the kindness and being respectful

Second: {32}
In the [Sutra of the] Ten Dharmas it says:

He looks for me who has roamed in cyclic existence for a long time; he awakes me from a long time of obscuration and torpor due to ignorance; he pulls me out as I sink within the ocean of existence; he shows good paths to me who has entered bad ones; he frees me who has been bound in the prison of existence; he is a doctor to me who has long been tormented by illness; I should generate the notion of [of him as] rain-clouds, pacifying me who has been ablaze with the fire of passion and so on.

The Array of Stalks\textsuperscript{39} [Sutra] also says:

\textquote{These are my spiritual friends, expounders of Dharma, exhaustively teaching the qualities of all that is thoroughly teaching the conduct of bodhisattvas, with these thoughts in mind I came to this place. As they give birth to all that, they are like my mother, as they give milk of virtues they are like nurses, they cleanse me completely by means of enlightenment\textquotesingle s branches. These spiritual friends completely exorcize harm, they are like doctors releasing from death and old age, showering rain of nectar they are like Lord Indra, like the full moon they flourish with white qualities they show the direction of peace, just like bright sunlight, regarding friends and foes they are like mountains, they have minds as undisturbed as the sea, they give perfect support, some say: \textquote{like boatmen}. with this in mind, Sudhana, I came here. Bodhisattvas bring forth my understanding, Buddha\textquotesingle s children cause enlightenment these [beings, these] friends of mine are praised by Buddha with such wholesome thoughts in mind I came here,
'As they save the world they are like heroes, they have become the captains, protectors and refuge, they are {33} the eye bestowing happiness on me’ with thoughts like these I honour my spiritual friends.

[The thoughts] expressed here should be remembered through a tune to go with the verses, substituting oneself for “Sudhana”.

The second one:
In the Fifty [Verses about the] Guru it says:

What need is there to say a lot of words here? do everything⁶⁰ to make your guru happy give up anything that does not please him apply yourself to that, examine that! This was said by Vajradhara himself: ‘spiritual attainments follow the guru’, aware of this, use anything there is, and make your guru totally, utterly] happy.

In brief, you try hard to please him and to give up what he does not like.

The three means of pleasing [the guru] are (1) offering material things, (2) serving him and paying him respect with body and speech, and (3) practicing in accordance with his advice. In this regard it says in the Ornament of the Sutras:

Through homage and pure offerings and service and practice you should rely on a spiritual friend.

As regards the first one it says in the Fifty [Verses]:

Through things not normally given - your son and your wife and through your life you should forever rely on the master of your sacred commitments needless to say: through fickle possessions [as well].

And:

Giving that amounts to always offering gifts to all the Buddhas. Offering that accumulates merit,
which turns into the highest attainments.41

2 Serving and paying respect with body and speech

The second one [involves] bathing him, anointing him, massaging him, wrapping him up, cleaning him, nursing him when he is ill etc. and talking about his positive qualities.

3 Practicing in accordance with his advice

The third one [consists in] practicing without going against the instructions, this being the main one. In the Jataka stories it says:

The offering to be made in return for his help, is practice in accordance with his instructions.

2B4A-1B4 The benefits of reliance

A Benefits such as one’s approaching the state of a buddha

Fourth: It says [in the scriptures] that you will approach the state of a buddha, that the Jinas will rejoice, that you will not be deprived of virtuous spiritual friends, that you will not fall to the lower realms, and that you will not easily succumb to bad karma and afflictions. As you do not transgress the conduct of bodhisattvas, [remaining] mindful of it, your accumulation of good qualities will grow higher and higher and all your temporary and ultimate goals will be accomplished.

B Bad karma is exhausted and [the benefit] exceeds even that of offerings to numerous Buddhas

Furthermore, through serving and paying respect to the spiritual teacher, the karmas for experiencing the lower realms is exhausted directly in this lifetime through only slight harm to body and mind or experiences in dreams. It is said that there are enormous benefits that outshine the roots of virtue of making offerings etc. to innumerable Buddhas.

2B4A-1B5 The drawbacks of not relying

A The way it ruins this life and future ones

Fifth: If you make someone your spiritual teacher and then back off in your reliance on him, a lot of illnesses and negative forces will cause harm in this life, and in future lives you will have to experience the immeasurable sufferings of the lower realms. In the Fifty [Verses] it says:

Do not ever agitate the minds of your masters - not in any way, if you do so due to some delusion you will necessarily roast in hell.
It has been explained authentically, that all those who disparage their masters, will be dwelling in horrific hells - such as the Avici - that were taught.

{35} In a passage from the Commentary on Difficult Points of the Black Opponent [of Yama] it also says:

Whoever hears a single verse of Dharma, and does not perceive the spiritual teacher,42,
will be born among dogs a hundred times, and afterwards as someone of low cast.

B No positive qualities are attained and earlier ones deteriorate
Apart from that positive qualities that have not arisen do not arise and those that have deteriorate and vanish.

C The disadvantages of relying on unwholesome spiritual friends and bad companions
If you rely on unwholesome spiritual friends and bad companions, again, positive qualities diminish, faults increase and there will be undesirable results. Therefore it was taught that this should be avoided in every way.

2B4A-1B6 Summary of the meaning of these [points]
A The importance of proper reliance on the root of perpetual striving
Sixth: That being so, the instructions widely known as Guru Yoga should also be understood according to what has been explained before. It will not be enough to do the visualisation in just one meditation session, though. When you do one Dharma practice from the bottom of your heart, you should long rely on a spiritual teacher who guides you unmistakenly. As Chekawa also said about that time span: “when you rely on a guru, there will be doubtful questions whether to give up”. Accordingly, since there will only be loss without profit if you do not know how to rely, it becomes evident that the cycles of teachings about relying on a spiritual teacher are more important than any other ones and the root of perpetual striving.

B The need for confession and vows, if that proper reliance does not come about - because it is a great fault
With our coarse mental afflictions we have often allowed many faults of reliance on a spiritual teacher to occur in regard to listening to the Dharma - not knowing how to rely or knowing how to but not doing so. It is difficult for an awareness of that to develop through confession and vows. (36) Having understood the advantages and disadvantages as explained previously you should therefore sincerely confess any occurrences that are not in accordance with proper reliance, developing many strong resolves.

C How the realization of reliance is not far away, if you act in that manner
If you act in that manner, you will before too long become like the bodhisattva Sadaprarudita and the young Sudhana who was insatiable in his quest of a spiritual teacher.

2B4A-2 The condensed presentation of how to sustain it
A The actual way to sustain it
B The reason why it needs to be sustained by means of two modes of sustaining
The second one has two points: the actual way how to sustain it and the reason why it needs to be sustained by means of two modes of sustaining.

2B4A-2A The actual way to sustain it
1 What to do during the meditation session itself
2 What to do during the periods between sessions
The first one has two points: what to do during the meditation session itself and what to do during the periods between sessions.

2B4A-2A1 What to do during the meditation session itself
The first one has three points: what to do in preparation, during the actual [meditation session] and at the end.

2B4A-2A1A  What to do in preparation

1 [Cleaning your dwelling and setting up representations of body, speech and mind]
2 [Laying out offerings]
3 [Sitting posture and mental attitude]
4 [Visualisation of the merit field]
5 [Accumulation of merit and purification of negativities]
6 [Mandala offering and request for blessings]

First: the six preparatory practices:

2B4A-2A1A-1  [Cleaning your dwelling and setting up representations of body, speech and mind]
Following the life story of Serlingpa you should clean your dwelling and set up representations of the exalted body, speech and mind.

2B4A-2A1A-2  [Laying out offerings]
Beautifully lay out an arrangement of offerings that were honestly acquired.

2B4A-2A1A-3  [Sitting posture and mental attitude]
On a comfortable seat straighten up your body. Assume a suitable position in cross-legged or half cross-legged posture making sure that the mind is fused with going for refuge and bodhicitta.

2B4A-2A1A-4  [Visualisation of the merit field]
In the space in front of you should imagine that there abide the lineage lamas of vast conduct and profound view and countless buddhas, bodhisattvas, arhats, arya hearers, and pratyekabuddhas along with their attendants, [thus] visualising the merit field.

2B4A-2A1A-5  [Accumulation of merit and purification of negativities]

A The reason why it is necessary to accumulate [merit] and purify [negativities]
B Explanation of accumulation and purification in detail
C Categorization of the individual [elements]

2B4A-2A1A-5A   The reason why it is necessary to accumulate [merit] and purify [negativities]
It is exceedingly difficult for [wholesome] paths to arise in your continuum, if the favourable conditions for their arising, the accumulations, have not been accumulated, and their adverse conditions, the obscurations, have not been purified. Therefore you need to purify the mind by means of the seven-limb practice, which brings together the key points of accumulation and purification.

2B4A-2A1A-5B  Explanation of accumulation and purification in detail

1 The actual detailed explanation
2 The need to take the meaning of the words to heart

2B4A-2A1A-5B1  The actual detailed explanation

A [The limb of prostration]
B [Offerings]
C [Confession of evil deeds]
D [Rejoicing]
E [Requesting for the wheel of Dharma to be turned]
F [Supplication]
G [Dedication]

2B4A-2A1A-5B1A   [The limb of prostration]
{37} With regard to the limb of prostration, the prostration combining the three doors is [set out] in the single stanza “Whoever...” This is not [prostration] to the world spheres of one direction and to the buddhas of one time. Rather, focusing on all the Jinas residing in the 10 directions and three times, you prostrate body, speech and mind to them with respect and from the bottom of your heart.

As regards the prostrations of the three individual doors, there are three points:

Physical prostration [is set out in] the single stanza “excellent behaviour...” You focus on all the Jinas belonging to the directions and times as the objects of your mind, as though you directly perceive them. Emanating your own body in manifestations as numerous as fine particles you should prostrate. Furthermore, having generated the power of confidence in the excellent conduct of the objects, you are motivated by that.

Mental prostration [is set out in] the single stanza “on one fine particle...” - on top of each minute particle buddhas as innumerable as dust particles reside encircled by bodhisattvas. You generate the resolute faith of recollecting their positive qualities.

Verbal prostration [is set out in] the single stanza “praising those...” From each of the bodies innumerable heads emanate and from each of the heads again innumerable tongues which sing inexhaustible praises of the objects’ positive qualities to sweet melodies. Here “melodies” are praises and their “branches”, that is their causes, are the tongues. The word “ocean” refers to a lot.

Surpassable offerings [are set out in] the two stanzas “the best flowers...” The best flowers [38] are marvellous specimens of divine and human flowers. Garlands are many different kinds of flowers mixed and strung together. Both together [refer to] all actual and imaginary flowers. “Cymbals” are the sounds of traditional instruments and the like. “Scented unguent” is a mixture of fragrant perfumes. “Sublime parasols” are the finest of parasols. “Butter lamps” are fragrant, radiant lights from things like incense or butter as well as radiant jewel lights. “Incense” refers to combinations of fragrant substances and to a single one. “Sublime garments” are the finest of clothes. A “supreme scent” is water and the like pervaded by a scent that fills the billion world-systems with fragrance. The “vessels of powder” are packaged powders of fragrant incense suitable for scattering and burning or the coloured sand powder of a mandala in multiple layers wide and high like Mount Meru. “Arrangement”, joined at the end to all the above, [means] a lot, decorated and variegated.
A  The actual [offerings]

Unsurpassable offerings [are set out in] the single stanza “whatever offering ...” - the unsurpassable ones are offerings of worldly beings, therefore this here is [about] everything good that is emanated by powerful beings such as bodhisattvas.

B  The motivation for prostrations and offerings

The last two lines are to be joined to all the previous [sets of] two in order to complete them. They indicate the motivation of prostrations and offerings as well as the object.

2B4A-2A1A-5B1C  [Confession of negative actions]

Confession of negative actions [is set out in] the one stanza “desire ...” In dependence on the cause, the three poisons, and by means of the three bases, the body etc., their nature is that I have done them (that is, that I have actually created them), that I have made others create them, and that I {39} rejoiced in those created by others, all of which are generally subsumed under “whatever I have done”. If through recollecting their faults, you regret those done previously and sincerely confess them with a mind of restraining from them in the future, the increase of deeds done earlier and the continuity of future occurrences will be severed.

2B4A-2A1A-5B1D  [Rejoicing]

Rejoicing [is set out in] the single stanza “the Jinas of the ten directions ...” As you recall the benefits of the five persons’ virtue, you develop joy.

2B4A-2A1A-5B1E  [Requesting for the wheel of Dharma to be turned]

Requesting for the wheel of Dharma to be turned [is set out in] the single stanza “in the ten directions ...” You exhort those who have awoken to complete buddhahood in fields of the ten directions, are detached and have found unobstructed exalted knowledge, to teach the Dharma, emanating the same number of bodies for a long time.

2B4A-2A1A-5B1F  [Supplication]

Supplication [is set out in] the single stanza “Showing the passage into nirvana ...” You supplicate those who show how to pass beyond sorrow in fields of the ten directions to stay, not passing into nirvana for as many eons as there are particles of dust in the universe in order to bring about the benefit and happiness of migrating beings.

2B4A-2A1A-5B1G  [Dedication]

The limb of dedication [is set out in] the single stanza “Prostrations and ...” All the roots of virtue represented by the previous six limbs are made common [property] of all sentient beings and never come to an end since they have been dedicated with strong determination to perfect enlightenment.

2B4A-2A1A-5B2  The need to take the meaning of the words to heart

If you thus develop an understanding of the meaning of those words and gently do as was taught without allowing your mind to wander, you will hold immeasurable heaps of merit.

2B4A-2A1A-5C  Categorization of the individual [elements]

Accordingly the five limbs prostrating, offering, requesting, {40} supplicating and rejoicing constitute the collection of accumulations. Confessing purifies obscurations, one aspect of rejoicing, the cultivation of joy at one’s own virtue, multiplies the virtue. By means of dedicating the virtues of collecting, purifying and multiplying, however small, are multiplied
manifold, and what would come to and end after producing a temporary effect is made inexhaustible. In brief, there are the three: (1) accumulation, (2) purification, as well as (3) multiplication and making inexhaustible.

Then, with a clear visualisation of the objects, offer a mandala and with strong aspiration supplicate many times: “I pray that all mistaken attitudes towards the spiritual teacher such as disrespect may cease and that all the non-mistaken attitudes towards him may come about with ease and I request blessings for a complete pacification of all outer and inner obstacles”.

The second one has two points: how to sustain [meditation] in general and in this context.

First: Meditation on the path as it will be explained here serves to make you fit to make use of any virtuous object you wish.

Moreover, if you attend to this and that object, thinking to take merely this number of virtuous objects in any order you wish, nothing will come of it and having gone wrong from the beginning, your spiritual practice will continue to be faulty throughout your life.

Therefore, you should first of all develop certainty concerning the number and order of objects to be sustained, then you should unleash a strong driving force that does not allow thoughts to arise other than in accordance with what has been ascertained, and sustain with mindfulness and alertness what has been ascertained without omission nor addition.

Second: You should first think about the benefits of reliance and about the faults of non-reliance.

Then you repeatedly resolve never to allow your mind to get lost in conceiving faults in the guru and think of qualities like discipline and meditative stabilisation that you yourself have perceived in him, cultivating the faith that is a mind having the aspect of faith until it arises.

Then you should, in accordance with the above quotations from the sutra collection, consider the [instances of] beneficial kindness that you received and are still receiving and sincerely cultivate respect until it arises.
Third: By means of the *Prayer of Good Behaviour* and the Seventy about *Aspiration* the accumulated virtue should be dedicated with strong determination to the temporary and ultimate aspirations.

**2B4A-2A1C-2** Times and duration of meditation

A Indication of the times of meditation

Thus you should meditate in four sessions - at dawn, in the morning, in the afternoon and in the evening.

B How to meditate in the beginning

Moreover, if [your sessions are] long in the beginning it is easy to fall under the power of laxity and excitement. As it is difficult to correct this state of mind once you have got used to it, you should have many short sessions. If you break off the session when there is still a desire to meditate, you will really want to enter meditation the next time, too. They say that otherwise, you will be overcome by nausea at the sight of your practice place.

C How to sustain [the meditation] once it has stabilized a bit and advice on how to avoid exhaustion

When it has stabilized a bit, you should prolong the sessions, sustaining them all (42) free from the faults of being excessively tense or relaxed. Thereby small obstacles, over-exhaustion and drowsiness will be pacified.

**2B4A-2A2** What to do during the periods between sessions

A General practices enhancing the object [of meditation]

B The causes of calm abiding and special insight

**2B4A-2A2A** General practices enhancing the object [of meditation]

Generally speaking, there are numerous practices enhancing the object such as prostration, circumambulation and recitation, however, the main point is that, having made an effort at the essence of the session, if, during the intervals where you leave the session, you let go carelessly without relying on mindfulness and introspection with respect to the observed object and aspect - which is the cause of sustaining [the meditation] - the outcome will be very little. Therefore, you should also be concerned with the Dharma [texts] teaching that [object] in between sessions, and recall it again and again. By various means you should accumulate the collection of conditions favourable to the arising of positive qualities, and by various means purify the adverse conditions, the obscurations. Your determination with respect to the discipline you have accepted, the basis of everything, should be reaffirmed a lot.

**2B4A-2A2B** The causes of calm abiding and special insight

1 Controlling the sense doors
2 Vigilant behaviour
3 Knowing the right measure of food
4 Exerting oneself not sleeping and practicing yoga, and what to do when lying down to sleep

Apart from that, train in the collection of four causes for an easy arising of the paths of calm abiding and special insight, the four accumulations.

**2B4A-2A2B-1** Controlling the sense doors

In this regard: When the six consciousnesses arise in dependence upon objects and sense powers, after that attachment and aversion arise toward the six pleasant and the six unpleasant objects of mental consciousness. Controlling the sense doors guards against their arising.
Vigilant behaviour

Vigilant behaviour - in *Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour* it says:

> To examine time and time again, the situation of one’s mind and body - put concisely that and only that is the sign of protective vigilance.

Following this, whenever the body etc. engages in such and such an action, you come to understand whether or not it should be done and behave accordingly.

Knowing the right measure of food

Knowing the right measure of food means to give up eating too much or too little and to eat only the amount that does not do damage to one’s virtuous activities. Furthermore, having meditated upon the drawbacks of craving for food, you should also remember what is said in the scriptures about eating thinking that it should be without mental afflictions, that it should be of benefit to the giver, [43] that you now bring together the micro-organisms of your body by means of material things and that in the future you will bring them together by means of the Dharma, and that you will bring about the welfare of all sentient beings. In the *Letter to a Friend* it also says:

> Reasoning that foodstuffs are like medicine depend on them without attachment or hatred they are not meant for conceit nor for arrogance they are not meant to fatten you - just keep you going.

Exerting oneself in yoga without sleeping, and what to do when lying down to sleep

Exerting oneself not sleeping and practicing yoga, and what to do when lying down to sleep. In the *Letter to a Friend* it says:

> Sensible one, great being after all the day’s sessions, as well as the first and last ones of the night also sleep with mindfulness in between these so that during sleep, too, fruit will not be absent.

The essence of the sessions of both the entire day and the first and last part of the night as well as what should be done in between is being explained. Therefore, having walked about and sat down, you should completely purify your mind of the five obscurations and thus make [whatever you do] meaningful.
2 The behaviour of sleep
As the behaviour of sleep occurs between sessions, it should also not be wasted meaninglessly. In this regard, the conduct of the body consists in lying down, during the middle of three parts of the night, on your right side placing the left leg on top of the right one and sleeping like a lion.

3 Mindfulness
As for mindfulness, you should rely on the fact that, until you fall asleep, it pursues the predominant virtuous action that you have cultivated during the day. Therefore, you can sustain your spiritual practice such as meditative stabilisation even while asleep similarly to when you are not asleep.

4 Vigilance
Vigilance: If any mental afflictions arise while you cultivate mindfulness, you become aware of them and rather than grasping them eagerly abandon them.

5 The discrimination of getting up
The discrimination of getting up consists in projecting the thought of getting up at this and that hour.

How to apply [all this] to the intervals between all meditations
That being so, apart from the uncommon ways of sustaining meditation during the actual meditation, [these indications as to] what should be done in preparation, during the actual meditation, at the end and in between sessions should be applied to all observed objects and aspects being sustained from here up to special insight.

The reason why [meditation] needs to be sustained by means of two modes of sustaining
1 [The two modes of sustaining]
2 Refutation of the misconception asserting that although there are both analytical and placement meditations, one single person does not practice them
3 Refutation of the misconception asserting that all conceptions apprehend signs
4 Refutation of the misconception asserting that if you do a lot of analytical meditation prior to the arising of concentration, it becomes an obstacle

The reason why both analysis and placement are necessary for meditation
Second: In Ornament of the Sutras it says:

Here, first of all, proper mental attention arises in dependence on study and from proper mental attention, again, the exalted wisdom with the meaning of pure reality as its object arises.

That is to say that from proper mental attention, through wisdom arisen from reflecting the meaning of what has been studied, the wisdom arisen from meditation directly realizing the meaning of pure reality arises. In the Ornament of Direct Realization, too, it says:

For the four aspects of ascertainment,
the paths of seeing and meditation,
repeated reflection, assessment, and certainty
are the path of meditation.
That is to say there are [types of] repeated reflection, assessment, and certain understanding (“certainty”) that constitute the paths of meditation of Mahayana Aryas. In the *Compendium of Trainings* it also says:

Thus you should practice meditation, continuously giving away, guarding, purifying and increasing your bodies, possessions, and merit in all kinds of ways.

With regard to the meditations that should be done according to the statement, for all four activities - giving away, guarding, purifying and increasing - with respect to each of the three - body, possessions and roots of virtue, there are both analytical meditations sustained through analysis by means of discriminating wisdom and placement meditations, which are to place [the mind] single-pointedly without analysis.

### B Identification of analysis and placement

(45) Now if you ask what are the paths of analytical meditation and what are the paths of placement meditation - for meditations such as the cultivation of confidence in the spiritual teacher, the preciousness of the freedoms and endowments and how difficult it is to find them, death and impermanence, karma and its effect, the faults of cyclic existence and the cultivation of bodhicitta, analytical meditation is necessary. For each of them minds of great strength and the ability to subdue the mind for a long time are necessary, because, if they are absent, their counterparts, disrespect and the like cannot be prevented and because the generation of these minds depends on nothing but the meditation analyzing them by investigating them individually time and again. To illustrate, just as intense attachment arises, if you meditate on an object of attachment a lot, exaggerating its pleasant features, in the same way intense aversion arises, if you think of many unpleasant features with regard to an enemy. Hence, in regard to meditating these paths, it is the same, whether or not the aspect of the object appears clearly, but the mind’s mode of apprehension has to be intense and long-lasting, which is why you should do analytical meditation. In the context of practicing calm abiding, which enables one to place [the mind] on whatever single object one wishes - since someone whose mind cannot stay on a single object will not be fit for mental quiescence - since someone whose mind cannot stay on a single object will not be fit for mental quiescence if he analyses again and again, it is necessary to practice placement meditation for that.

### 284A-2B2 Refutation of the misconception asserting that although there are both analytical and placement meditations, one single person does not practice them

Although some who do not know this approach claim that, if you are a scholar, you should only do analytical meditation while sadhus should only do placement meditation this is not so, for it is necessary to do the two one by one - because the learned, too, need to achieve calm abiding and sadhus, too, need to achieve strong confidence in the spiritual teacher (46) and the like. Therefore the understanding that repeated analysis by means of discriminating wisdom belongs to the context of listening and reflecting and not to the context of practice is inadmissible.

### 284A-2B3 Refutation of the misconception asserting that all conceptions apprehend signs

The understanding that all conceptions apprehend signs and therefore create obstacles to enlightenment has the fault of not discriminating between improper mental attention, the conception of true existence⁴⁶, and proper mental attention, the conception of reality.
The idea “it is necessary to achieve the non-conceptual meditative stabilization capable of placing the mind on a single object in whatever way it pleases and, if you do a lot of analytical meditation before, it will become an obstacle to the arising of [that] meditative stabilization”, is not upheld in the present instructions. To illustrate, similarly, when a smith burns gold or silver in the fire and washes it in water again and again, all the impurities are removed and it becomes very supple and workable, whereby it can subsequently be made into any jewellery like earrings at will. Likewise, just as at first the mental afflictions, the secondary afflictions, and faulty conduct emerge on the occasion of meditating on black actions and their results and the disadvantages of cyclic existence, by meditating on such disadvantages again and again with the wisdom of individual investigation, the mind will become completely tormented or disenchanted; therefore it is like burning gold in a fire. Similarly, just as the mind turning away from the black side and the defilements being purified emerges on the occasion of [meditating on] the positive qualities of the spiritual friend, the great meaning of the freedoms and endowments, the positive qualities of the Three Jewels, white actions and their results, and {47} the benefits of the mind of enlightenment, by meditating on these positive qualities again and again with the wisdom of individual investigation, the mental attention of the mind becomes moistened or sincere, whereby it is like washing gold with water. Through the mind approaching the white side and delighting in it, the mind is moistened by virtuous dharmas. When it has been transformed in that way, whatever you wish to achieve, calm abiding or special insight, if you fix upon it, you will achieve it without difficulty. That is why such an analytical meditation is the best means of achieving non-conceptual meditative stabilisation. That is how Arya Asanga also put it:

By way of analogy, when a smith or his skilful apprentice burns gold or silver in a fire and washes it with water a couple of times in order to discard all impurities and slag, it becomes supple and workable for this and that ornament, whereby this is directly perceived. In this regard, through the know-how that accords with this of the smith or his skilful apprentice, any manner of ornament desired is then made, with their smith’s tools. Likewise, when a yogi does not turn toward impurities and slag such as covetousness, he thereby gets disenchanted and turns away from unhappy afflicted states of mind, and approaches manifest joy in the virtuous side, thereby becoming manifestly joyful. In that case, that yogi definitely trains his mind in either the side of calm abiding or the side of special insight, such that it is thoroughly applied to this and that, rests in its natural state, is immovable and unwavering, and {48} also moves for the sake of perfectly achieving whatever purpose he has contemplated.

Furthermore, the main adverse conditions for the mind staying with an object of meditation continuously are twofold: laxity and excitement. If you have a strong and constant awareness that sees the positive qualities of the Three Jewels etc., it is quite easy to overcome laxity, for many valid sources say that its antidote is to uplift the mind by looking at positive qualities. If
you have a strong and constant awareness that sees the disadvantages of impermanence, suffering, and so forth, it is quite easy to overcome excitement, because, since excitement is a distracted mind belonging to [the category of] attachment, many texts praise disillusionment as its antidote.

2B4B The stages of how to train the mind once you have relied

1 The basis of leisure - exhortation to take its essence
2 How to take the essence

The second one has two points: with regard to the basis of leisure - exhortation to take its essence and how to take the essence.

2B4B-1 The basis of leisure - exhortation to take its essence

A Identification of leisure and endowments
B Considering their great value
C Considering the difficulty in finding them

The first one has three points: identification of leisure and endowments, considering their great value and considering the difficulty in finding them.

2B4B-1A Identification of leisure and endowments

1 Leisure
2 Endowments

The first one has two points: leisure and endowments.

2B4B-1A1 Leisure

A Identification of leisure

First: In the Summary it says:

Through rules the essence of the many worlds of animals and eight unfree states are renounced – thus constant leisure won.

Accordingly, leisure consists in the freedom from the eight unfree states.

B The eight unfree states:

[Living in] a border remote country where the four types of followers [of the Buddha] do not roam, stupidity or being dumb, being of incomplete faculties - missing a limb, an ear etc., holding wrong views that regard past and future lives, actions and their effects and the Three Jewels as non-existent, being without the word of a Jina, with no buddha having appeared [in the world] are the four unfree states of humans. (49) The three bad migrations and being a long-lived god are the non-human unfree states. As for the long-lived gods, the Commentary on the Letter to a Friend discusses two types: discriminationless ones and formless ones. The former live in one region of the fourth concentration, Great Result, as if in a solitary place far away from a village. The latter are ordinary beings born in the formless realms. In Discourse on the Eight Unfree States gods of the desire realm constantly distracted by activities of desire are explained to be long-lived gods.

2B4B-1A2 Endowments

A The five personal endowments

The second one has two points of which the five personal endowments are said to be “human nature, birth in a central region, complete faculties, no extremely perverted deeds [and] faith
in the foundation”. Here “birth in a central region” is to be born in a place where the fourfold followers roam. “Complete faculties” consist in not being stupid or dumb and having complete limbs as well as minor body parts such as eyes and ears. “No extremely perverted deeds” implies not having committed or caused to commit an action of immediate retribution. “Faith in the foundation” is faith in the foundation from which all the mundane and supramundane white dharmas are born, discipline. Here “discipline” should be applied to all three collections [of scriptures].

As those five are brought together in one’s own mental continuum and constitute circumstances for the accomplishment of [the] Dharma, they are called “personal endowments”.

B The five endowments conditioned by others

The five endowments conditioned by others are said to be:

A buddha arrived and taught the holy Dharma,
the teachings are abiding and being followed,
there are hearts with loving concern for others.

Here the “A buddha arrived or emerged” means that, after accumulating the collections throughout three countless eons, he has manifestly attained perfect Buddahood. “taught the holy Dharma” means that the Buddha or his hearers have taught the Dharma. “The Dharma teachings are abiding” means that the Dharma that is accomplished by means of actualizing the Dharma of the ultimate [50] has not degenerated. “The abiding Dharma teachings being followed” means that through that very realisation of the Dharma, beings see that they have the power to directly perceive the holy Dharma and follow the teachings in accordance with that realisation. “Hearts of loving concern for others” means that there are alms-givers and benefactors who grant monastic robes and the like. As those five are present in the mental continuum of others and constitute circumstances for the accomplishment of the Dharma, they are called “endowments conditioned by others”.

2B4B-1B Considering their great value

1 Considering the inappropriateness of someone with this special base acting like an animal

Second: If no practice of the completely pure Dharma for the sake of lasting happiness comes about at all, you are like an animal despite your birth in a higher realm, since animals also have the endeavour merely to attain happiness and eliminate suffering until they die.

2 How a body of leisure and endowments is best

For the accomplishment of the Mahayana path a base like the one explained earlier is necessary. In the Letter to a Disciple it says:

The base of the path of those gone to bliss, the tool for leading beings, that very strength of mind, a strength that human beings have gained that path has not been found by gods or nagas - nor by asuras, not by garudas, vidyadhara, kinnaras or snakes.
Furthermore, although some gods of the desire realm with strong habitual tendencies from having previously trained on the path on a human basis, are suitable as a basis for seeing the truths for the first time, it is impossible to attain the aryā path for the first time on an upper realm\textsuperscript{48} basis. However, as explained before, the desire realm gods are said to be, for the most part, an unfree state and therefore not the best basis for attaining the path for the first time. Again, an inhabitant of the continent of Uttarākurū is unsuitable as a basis for vows, which is why the bases of [the other] three continents is praised - and out of those [especially] the inhabitants of Jambudvīpa.

3 How to train in the wish to take the essence, having brought to mind those [two] objectives

‘Consequently, why would I act in such a way that an excellent base like this one I have gained \cite{51} does not have a result? If I did not make it meaningful, could there be a greater self-betrayal and a bigger stupidity? Having passed through many perilous places of unfreedom, such as the bad migrations, again and again, if I were to go back to those places, forsaking this one-off liberation as meaningless, it would be like turning mindless as though stupefied by a magic spell’. By way of thoughts like these you should meditate again and again.

In Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour it says:

Having found this kind of leisure, not to cultivate what is virtuous - no betrayal could be a greater, nothing more deluded than that.

And:

Having found this place so rare, hard to find and beneficial, if I, well aware of it, were taken to that hell again as if deluded by magic spells - has my mind here wasted away? - through what delusion I do not know either - what has become of my mind - my feelings?

4 The inappropriateness of returning empty-handed, given that not only ultimate but also temporary objectives are easily accomplished

Thus you should also consider the method that allows you easily to attain the causes of a higher realm body, resources, and a retinue which are not only greatly meaningful from an ultimate but also from a temporary point of view by means of this basis: [practicing] giving, ethical discipline, patience and so on. If you do not apply yourself day and night to the causes of those two by means of that greatly meaningful basis, it would seem like returning empty-handed from an island of precious jewels.

2B4B-1C Considering the difficulty in finding it
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Introduction

1 Illustration of the difficulty of finding it
2 Reasons why it is difficult to find
3 The rarity of those obtaining the causes of leisure and endowments
4 The result of sustaining those objectives
5 The method of meditation with four special features
6 Differentiated, sustained mode [of practice]

2B4B-1C1 Illustration of the difficulty in finding it

Third: In the Basis of Scriptural Transmission it says that beings who die and migrate from the bad and happy realms to the bad realms are like the dust of the great earth and that the beings who are born from there into the happy realms are like the dust taken up by the tip of a finger nail. Therefore, [a precious human rebirth] is difficult to find from both the happy and the bad realms.

2B4B-1C2 Reasons why it is difficult to find

If you ask just why they are it is so difficult to find, it says in the Four Hundred [Verses]:

For the most part people fix
on the side that is unholy.
Consequently common beings
mostly surely go to bad realms.

Accordingly, there are many humans and other beings who mostly fix on the side of the ten non-virtues and that is also why, consequently, they go to the bad realms. Furthermore, if, for each moment of anger and the like towards a bodhisattva, you have to spend one eon in the [Avici] hell of incessant torment, the negativities accumulated over many lifetimes which have not come to fruition nor been overcome by antidotes, and which are present in your own continuum, will doubtlessly cause you to spend many eons in bad realms.

2B4B-1C3 The rarity of those obtaining the causes of leisure and endowments

Although, if you thus made sure to clear away and purify the causes of bad migrations accumulated earlier and closed the door to new engagement in them, happy migrations would not be rare, as it is, they are very rare indeed. If you fail to do so, you go to bad migrations, and, once you have gone to bad migrations, you do not create virtue, but always commit negativites and therefore do not even hear the name of happy realms for many eons, as it says in Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour.

2B4B-1C4 The result of sustaining those objectives

Potowa said: “In the region of Pan there was a solid fort by the name of Ma’i Chakar which had been seized by an enemy. For a long time the people had become poor servants. One old man used to be in anguish about this fort and when, one day, he heard people saying that it had been won [back], he grabbed his spear and, not being able to walk, dragged himself along saying: ‘If only the capture of Ma’i Chakar was not dream’. Likewise, having won leisure and endowments, one must also derive such joy from it and practice Dharma.” In accordance with this statement, you should meditate in order to gain this kind of attitude.

2B4B-1C5 The method of meditation with four special features

Thus four thoughts regarding the Dharma are necessary for the generation of a fully qualified wish to take the essence of this basis of leisure:
1. The need to accomplish [the Dharma] - because all sentient beings only want happiness and do not want suffering and attaining happiness and eliminating suffering only depends on the holy Dharma.

2. The ability to accomplish [the Dharma] - because you have the external condition, a spiritual teacher, and the internal condition, leisure and endowments.

3. The need, also, to accomplish [the Dharma] in this life - because if you do not accomplish it within this life, it will be difficult to find leisure and endowments in many [future] rebirths.

4. The need to accomplish [the Dharma] right now - because the time of death is uncertain.

The third one of those counteracts the laziness of abandoning it, thinking “I should practice the Dharma in later lives” and the fourth one counteracts the laziness of not engaging in it thinking “it needs to be accomplished in this life, but although it was not accomplished in earlier years, months and days, it is enough to accomplish it much later on”. It is admissible to make them into three subsuming those two under “[the need to] accomplish it quickly”.

Like that, remembering death may also be linked in here. In any case, as this is a lengthy topic, it should be explained below.

2B4B-1C6 Differentiated, sustained mode [of practice]

A How to contemplate from various points of view
B How to contemplate in particular

2B4B-1C6A How to contemplate from various points of view

As the mind is more significantly subdued, if you contemplate from various points of view, you should contemplate as explained above. If you cannot do that much, you should subsume them under [three headings]: what the essence of leisure and endowments is, the manner in which they are greatly meaningful from a temporary and ultimate point of view, and how difficult they are to find from the point of view of cause and effect. You should study each of the points explained above as appropriate and meditate.

2B4B-1C6B How to contemplate in particular

1 The difficulty in finding [leisure and endowments] from the point of view of their cause

First: The difficulty in finding [leisure and endowments] from the point of view of their cause. Generally speaking, (54) even for the attainment of a mere happy migration, it is necessary to perform one of the pure virtues such as discipline. In particular, for the attainment of complete leisure and endowments, you need a lot of roots of virtue such as getting hold of a base through pure ethical conduct, reinforcing it through giving and the like and making connections by means of stainless prayers. In that case, it becomes apparent that those who accomplish such causes are very few, which is why one should think that, proportionately, the result, the general and specific base of happy realms is difficult to find.

2 The difficulty of finding [leisure and endowments] from the point of view of the result

The difficulty of finding [leisure and endowments] from the point of view of the result:

You meditate on the fact that, from the point of view of the beings in bad migrations, different in rank from us, even the mere happy realms seem hard to attain, and from the point of view of beings in happy migrations, of the same rank, too, distinguished leisure is extremely rare. Geshe Dolpa laid great emphasis on this. He said that all other teachings come about brought on by this. As it is like this you should strive accordingly.
2B4B-2  How to take the essence: the three beings’ mode of applying the path

A  Generating certainty with regard to the general presentation of the path
B  The actual way of taking its essence

The second one has two points: Generating certainty with regard to the general presentation of the path and the actual way of taking its essence.

2B4B-2A  Generating certainty with regard to the general presentation of the path

1  How all the Buddha’s teachings are contained in the paths of the three [types of] beings
2  Giving reasons for gradual guidance from the point of view of the three [types of] beings

The first one has two points: How all the Buddha’s teachings are contained in the paths of the three [types of] beings and giving reasons for gradual guidance from the point of view of the three [types of] beings.

2B4B-2A1  How all the Buddha’s teachings are contained in the paths of the three [types of] beings

A  How the meaning of all the excellent teachings [of the Buddha] is subsumed under the accomplishment of two objectives

First: As everything the Buddha did, in the beginning the generation of the mind [of enlightenment], in the middle the accumulation of the collections and at the end the manifestation of perfect buddhahood, was done for the welfare of sentient beings only, all his Dharma teachings only bring about the welfare of sentient beings, too. That being so, the goal to be accomplished, the welfare of sentient beings is twofold: temporarily high status and ultimately certain goodness.

B  How lesser beings attain high status

{55} As for the undertaking to attain the former: everything that has been set forth is included in the actual cycle of teachings for lesser beings or in the cycle of teachings common to lesser beings. Special lesser beings do not do much for the sake of this life, pursuing [instead] the excellence of high status in future lives [and] engaging in achieving the causes for that. In the Lamp on the Path:

Whoever pursues by any means,
the happiness of samsara only,
just for his own benefit,
should be known as least of beings.

C  How intermediate beings achieve the certain goodness of liberation

There are two kinds of certain goodness: (1) the liberation that is merely release from samsara and (2) omniscience. In this regard everything that has been set forth starting from the vehicles of hearers and solitary realizers is included in the actual cycle of teachings for intermediary beings or in the cycle of teachings common to intermediary beings. Intermediary beings develop disenchantment with existence as a whole and having made the liberation that is release from existence for their own welfare their object of attainment, they engage in its method, the three trainings. In the Lamp on the Path it says:

Indifferent to pleasures of existence
a master desisting from evil deeds -
whoever pursues only personal peace
is called an intermediate being.

**D How great beings attain omniscience**

There are two means of attaining omniscience: the great vehicles of secret mantra and [of] the perfections. Those two are contained in the cycle of teachings of great beings. Since great beings are under the power of great compassion, they have made enlightenment their object of attainment in order to bring all the sufferings of sentient beings to an end and train in the six perfections, the two stages etc. In the *Lamp on the Path* it says:

> He whose own mind is affected by suffering,  
> who thus yearns to bring to an end,  
> all the suffering of others - completely,  
> such a one is a superior being.

As for the means of those beings’ attaining enlightenment - they are set forth under two [headings]: perfections and mantra.

**E Elucidating the sources of the term “three [kinds of] beings”**

The term “three beings” is mentioned in many texts such as the *Compendium of Ascertainments* and the *Commentary on the Treasury*.

**F Clearing up doubt**

Although, with regard to lesser beings, there are both those who devote themselves to this life and those who devote themselves to future lives, this is about the latter. One should consider them as engaging in the unmistaken means to high status.

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**2B4B-2A2 Giving reasons for gradual guidance from the point of view of the three [types of] beings**

**A The purpose of guiding someone by way of the three beings’ path**

**B Giving reasons for such gradual guidance**

The second one has two points: what is the purpose of guiding someone by way of the three beings’ path and giving reasons for such gradual guidance.

**2B4B-2A2A The purpose of guiding someone by means of the three beings’ path**

First: thus, although it is explained in terms of the three beings, the path of great beings contains within it the path of the two other ones, which is why Master Ashvagosha says that these two are branches of the Mahayana path. Consequently, here, they are not guidance on the path of lesser beings making only the happiness of conditioned existence their object of attainment, nor on the path of intermediate beings making only liberation from samsara for their own benefit their object of attainment. Rather, some paths common to those two are considered to be preparatory practices leading to the path of great beings and taken to be branches for training in the path of great beings.

**2B4B-2A2B Giving reasons for such gradual guidance**

1 The actual reasons
2 The purpose

The second one has two points: the actual reasons and the necessity.

**2B4B-2A2B-1 The actual reasons**
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Introduction

A The entry gate to the Mahayana
B The need to consider its benefits and allow one’s inspiration to increase before generating the mind of enlightenment along with the [relevant] sources
C The benefits of striving for this mind
D How the lesser and intermediary [paths] are necessary for laying the basis of those benefits
E How you need the lesser and intermediate when training in the actual mind
F How the lesser and intermediate are necessary for the ritual[s] of accumulation and purification of this mental attitude
G Advice to cherish the way that the teaching cycles of lesser and intermediate beings become branches of that of great beings
H [The order on the path]
I Summary of all paths in the three trainings
J For the sake of skilful classification: summary of all paths in the two collections
K The need to enter the Mantrayana
L How to pursue the perfection only path
M The stages of engagement in mantra
N Explanation that the intention of Lamp on the Path etc. is the engagement in both sutra and mantra [vehicles]

2B4B-2A2B-1A The entry gate to the Mahayana

First: The entry gate for entering the Mahayana consists in forming the mind toward supreme enlightenment. Once it has arisen in the mind - according to Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour:

When bodhicitta has arisen, at once, the wretched bound in the prison of cyclic existence are to be called the children of those gone to bliss.

{57} For in accordance with this statement, an individual having obtained the name of “Bodhisattva” is admitted among the adherents of the Mahayana. If it deteriorates, he will leave the midst of Mahayana practitioners.

2B4B-2A2B-1B The need to consider its benefits and allow one’s delight to increase before generating the mind of enlightenment along with the [relevant] sources

This being the case, those wishing to enter the Mahayana need to exert themselves in many ways to arouse that mind. However, before arousing it, they need to meditate on the benefits of arousing that mind and allow delight with regard to those benefits to increase, do the seven-limbed practice, and go for refuge - that has been set out in the Compendium of Trainings and in Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour.

2B4B-2A2B-1C The benefits of striving for this mind

If we summarise the benefits set forth in this way, there are two: temporary and ultimate benefits. The former, again, are twofold: not to fall to the lower realms and to be born in the happy realms. Once this mind has arisen, the causes of miserable existences accumulated previously are purified and the continuity of those accumulated later on is interrupted. The causes of happy realms accumulated previously, due to being embraced by it, increase extensively, and the ones newly created, due to being motivated by it, become inexhaustible. When it comes to attaining the ultimate objectives of liberation and omniscience with ease, through relying on this mind: if an unconvinced wish to achieve the temporary or ultimate benefits is not present, one may say “since those benefits arise from generating that mind, I shall endeavour to generate that mind”, but it will only be words. This is very clear if we examine it in our own mind.

2B4B-2A2B-1D How the lesser and intermediate [branches of the path] are necessary for laying the basis of those benefits
In order to develop the wish to attain those two benefits, high status and certain goodness, it is necessary to develop the thoughts common to lesser and intermediate beings. (58)

Having thus developed the wish to achieve the two benefits, when you cultivate the beneficial mind it is necessary to develop the root of that mind, love and compassion. In this regard, if your body hair does not shiver and quiver as you think about the way you yourself wander in cyclic existence, deprived of happiness and oppressed by suffering, there is no way the inability to bear how other sentient beings are deprived of happiness and oppressed by suffering can come about. In *Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour* it says:

> In beings to whom previously, 
such a thought, even for their own sake, 
did not even appear in their dreams, 
how could it arise for others?

For that reason, having thought about how, in the context of lesser beings, the harm of the sufferings of bad migrations falls upon you and how, in the context of intermediate beings, even in [rebirths of] high status there is suffering and no peace nor happiness, meditating - in accord with your own experience - on sentient beings who have become dear to you, becomes the cause for love and compassion to arise. As the mind of enlightenment is born from them, training in the thoughts shared with lesser and intermediate [beings] is the means of generating the uncontrived mind of enlightenment.

Efforts to purify and accumulate by many means, through the thoughts of going for refuge, actions and results, and so forth in the context of the two paths, also constitute methods for training the mental continuum - preliminary practices for the generation of the mind [of enlightenment]. As they become [part of] the the seven-limbed practice along with going for refuge, these thoughts common to lesser and intermediate beings should also be understood as methods for the arising of the mind of enlightenment.

Here the spiritual master indicates how the teaching cycles of lesser and intermediate beings become branches for the arising of the mind of enlightenment (59) and the disciple also gains certainty in this regard. Through recalling those [points] with each practice, you should thoroughly cherish this training. If this is not done, the actual path of great beings and the individual paths become unconnected. As you do not gain certainty with regard to the mind of enlightenment until you reach the actual path of great beings, this would be an obstacle to the arisal of that mind or, meanwhile, the degeneration of that great objective. Therefore you should exert yourself at it.
1 The order of the two minds etc. and how to train them

Having trained in this manner, you should make the uncontrived mind of enlightenment arise in your mental continuum as much as possible, then, in order to stabilize it, first go for uncommon refuge and then perform the ritual of the aspiring [mind of enlightenment]. Having taken the aspiring [mind of enlightenment] through the ritual, practice its trainings. Then, time and again develop the wish to engage in the trainings - the six perfections, the four ways of gathering etc. Once the wish to engage in them has come forth, from the bottom of the heart take the pure vow of the engaging [mind of enlightenment].

2 The order of explanations

Then even risk your life in order not to be tainted by a root downfall. Strive not to be tainted by small and medium contaminations or infractions either. If you still get tainted, purify them well by means of what has been expounded with regard to restoring downfalls. Then, train in the six perfections in general and especially in meditative concentration, the essence of calm abiding, in order to make the mind serviceable with respect to whatever virtuous object you wish. The statement in Lamp on the Path that you train in calm abiding in order to develop superknowledges is only an example. Atisha himself has stated on other occasions that it also serves to develop special insight. Therefore you should develop calm abiding for that purpose, too. Then, in order to cut the bonds of grasping at the two selves, decide on the meaning of emptiness through the view, sustain this mode of meditation flawlessly and accomplish the essence of wisdom, special insight.

2A2B-1 All paths are contained in the three trainings

Accordingly, except for the accomplishment of calm abiding and special insight, everything up to and including the trainings of the engaging [mind of enlightenment] constitutes training in ethical discipline. Calm abiding is training of the mind and special insight is training in wisdom. So it says in the Commentary on the Lamp on the Path.

2A2B-1J For the sake of skill in classification: all paths are contained in the two collections

Furthermore, everything up to and including calm abiding is method, the collection of merit, the paths based on conventional truths are stages of the vast path while the generation of the three special insights constitutes special insight, the collection of wisdom, that which is based on ultimate truth and stages of the profound path. Therefore, you should generate great certainty with respect to their order and set number as well as the fact that enlightenment cannot be attained by means of method and wisdom that are separate from each one another.

2A2B-1K The need to enter the Mantrayana

Having thus trained one's mental continuum by means of the common paths, it is certainly necessary to enter the Mantrayana, for, once you have entered it, you quickly complete the two collections.

2A2B-1L How to pursue the perfection path alone

If you cannot manage more than [the perfection path] or due to the small power of your lineage you do not want to, you should just expand on these very stages of the path more and more.

2A2B-1M The stages of engagement in mantra
As for engagement in mantra, proper reliance on a spiritual teacher is generally lent great emphasis in all the vehicles and particularly in mantra, which is why you should make it [even] more pre-eminent [in this context] than before. Then, having ripened your mental continuum by means of an empowerment that comes from a pure tantra class, you should risk your life for, that is guard, the commitments and vows that you obtained at the time. {61}. Especially, if a root downfall occurs, even though you may take them again, this will spoil your mind and it will be difficult for positive qualities to develop. Therefore, do not be tainted by them. Do not get tainted even by a branch downfall and, if you do, you should not be unconcerned about it, but purify them through confession and restraint. Then you should be guided as appropriate in the yoga with signs in accordance with the lower tantra classes or in the yoga of the generation stage in accordance with the higher tantra classes. On that basis you should train as appropriate in yoga without signs in accordance with the lower tantra classes or the yoga of the completion stage according to the higher tantra classes.

Such is the structure of the presentation of the path set forth in Lamp on the Path, and the Lamrim also guides [students] in the same way.

2B4B-2A2B-2A The actual purpose
1 Question
Second: If the dharma-cycles of lesser and intermediate beings constitute the preparatory practices of great beings, it should indeed be all right to consider them the stages of the path of great beings. What is the use of saying “the stages of the path in common with lesser and intermediate beings”?

2 Answer
There are two major purposes for classifying and guiding three kinds of beings. In this way, (1) the conceit of claiming oneself to be a great being, while the mental attitudes that are common to lesser or intermediate beings have not even arisen is overcome and (2) all three - the highest, intermediate and least mental attitudes - have great benefits. The way in which they are great is that since the two more advanced beings also need to strive for high status and liberation, there is no fault in teaching great or intermediate individuals [who are] to be guided how to train in thoughts of those two, and positive qualities are developed. However, if a lesser person trains starting off from the more advanced ones, the more advanced thoughts will not arise and the lesser ones will be cast away, {62} so nothing will develop. Moreover, through being taught the common path and through training, those with the good fortune of superior capacity will soon develop positive qualities that had or had not arisen before whereby they can be guided to higher and higher [levels], once the lower ones have arisen. Their path will not be prolonged.

2B4B-2A2B-2B The sources
The need to develop mental states gradually is proclaimed in [the Sutra] Requested by the King Lord of Dharanis through the analogy of a skilled jeweller cleaning precious stones gradually
which is applied to the meaning. The protector Nagarjuna also taught to gradually lead in the path of high status and certain goodness:

First the Dharma of high status,  
then that of certain goodness comes forth.  
Therefore, once you achieve high status,  
certain goodness will come by stages.

Arya Asanga also said:

Also, in order that the side of virtue be gradually accomplished properly, the bodhisattva initially teaches those who have the wisdom of childish sentient beings easy Dharma, and causes them to follow the easy directions and instructions. Realizing that they have developed middling wisdom, he causes them to follow intermediate Dharma teachings and intermediate directions and instructions. Realizing that they have developed vast wisdom, he teaches them profound Dharma teachings and causes them to follow subtle directions and instructions. His beneficial activities descend on those sentient beings progressively.

Aryadeva, in [his] Lamp of Summarised Behaviour, establishes that first the training in contemplations of the perfection vehicle and after that the mode of engagement in mantra {63} needs to be gradual. Summarising the meaning [of this] he says:

In order for beings who act like beginners to get involved in ultimate truth the means the perfect Buddha expounded resemble the steps of a flight of stairs.

2B4B-2B The actual way of taking its essence  
1 Training the mind in the stages of the path common to lesser beings  
2 Training the mind in the stages of the path common to intermediate being  
3 Training the mind in the stages of the path of great beings

The second one has three points: Training the mind in the stages of the path common to lesser beings, training the mind in the stages of the path common to intermediate being, and training the mind in the stages of the path of great beings.
CHAPTER II
SMALL SCOPE

Explanation of the stages of the path common to lesser beings

2B4B-2B1  The stages of the path common to lesser beings
  A  The actual training in the contemplations of lesser beings
  B  The gauge of those contemplations having arisen
  C  Clearing up misconceptions about them

{63} The first one has three points: the actual training in the contemplations of lesser beings, the gauge of those contemplations having arisen, clearing up misconceptions about them.

2B4B-2B1A  The actual training in the contemplations of lesser beings
  1  Developing a mental attitude of interest in future worlds
  2  Relying on the methods for the happiness of future worlds

The first of those has two points: developing a mental attitude of interest in future worlds and relying on the methods for the happiness of future worlds.

2B4B-2B1A-1  Developing a mental attitude of interest in future worlds
  A  Being mindful of death: the thought that one is not going to stay in this world for long
  B  What things will be like in future worlds: thinking of the happiness and suffering of the two kinds of migrating beings

The first one has two points: being mindful of death- the thought that one is not going to stay in this world for long and what things will be like in future worlds- thinking of the happiness and suffering of the two kinds of migrating beings.

Explanation of how to be mindful of death - that one will not stay in this world for long

2B4B-2B1A-1A  Being mindful of death- the thought that one is not going to stay in this world for long
  1  The disadvantages of not cultivating mindfulness of death
  2  Advantages of cultivating it
  3  What kind of mind that is mindful of death is being generated
  4  How to cultivate mindfulness of death

The first of those has four points: the disadvantages of not cultivating mindfulness of death, advantages of cultivating it, what kind of mind that is mindful of death is being generated, and how to cultivate mindfulness of death.

2B4B-2B1A-1A1  The disadvantages of not cultivating mindfulness of death
  A  Demonstration that the mind’s holding on to the idea that one is not going to die is the gateway of harm
  B  How this prevents us from even taking an interest in future lives

First: Although in all of us there is the thought that at the end of our days death will come, every day we think “I will not die today”, “today I will not die either”. That way, even right until we are about to die, the mind holds on to the idea that we are not going to die.

{64} If you do not take to heart an antidote to this and you are obscured by such an idea, and then develop the idea that you will remain in this life, you will keep thinking about ways of achieving happiness and eliminating suffering in this life only thinking: “I need this and I
need that…” As a mind investigating meaningful goals such as future lives, liberation, and omniscience does not arise, no allowances are made for engaging in Dharma.

C How this results in meaningful endeavours also having little power

Even if you engage in study for a hundred years, contemplation and meditation, whatever virtue you do will have little power, as it is done for the sake of this life alone. As you will engage in them linked with faulty behaviour, negativities, and downfalls, it will be rare for them not to be mixed with causes of bad migrations.

D How this results in long-term goals, too, being postponed

Even if you aim at future worlds and allow for their attainment, you will not be able to cease the laziness of postponement that thinks: “I shall do it later”. A major effort at accomplishing it properly will not come about, as you while away your time with sleepiness, pointless chatter, and distractions of food, drink and the like.

E How holding to permanence induces attachment, aversion, and so forth and how they induce faulty behaviour

Not only that, through putting great effort into the excellences of this life the mental afflictions and faulty behaviour induced by them increase and then you turn your back on the nectar of Dharma. Since that leads to bad migrations, what could be more inappropriate than that? From the *Four Hundred Verses*:

> If someone sleeps as if at ease,  
> As if the ruler of three worlds,  
> Lord of his death did not exist -  
> What else could be more horrible?  

And in *Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour* it says:

> Everything has to be abandoned,  
> Unaware that this is so,  
> I did negativities of all sorts,  
> For the sake of friend and foe.  

And in *Parinirvana [Sutra]* it says:

Second: {65} Once a genuine awareness mindful of death has developed, for instance if you are convinced you will die tomorrow, and you have just a little understanding of the Dharma, you will see that henceforth you will be without the company of relatives and friends and you will avert craving for them. In the majority of people the wish to take the essence of this life by means of giving things away and the like will naturally arise. In that way, seeing that all effort for the sake of worldly goals such as fame and gain are futile, you will turn away from faulty behaviour, accumulate the good karma of going for refuge, ethical discipline and the like. What could be more meaningful than ascending to sublime states oneself by those means and guiding migrating beings there, too? That is why it is also praised with many analogies. In the *Parinirvana [Sutra]* it says:
Among all ploughing of fields, that in autumn is best. Among all footprints, that of the elephant is best. Among all discriminations, those of impermanence and death are best: they eliminate all the desire, pride and ignorance of the three realms. [3]

Similarly, it is praised, among other things, as a hammer destroying all mental afflictions and all faulty behaviours instantly as well as a gate to the simultaneous accomplishment of all that is virtuous and excellent.

In brief, the time for achieving the goals of beings is only this time where we have gained the special basis. We mostly remain in bad migrations and even if we make it to happy migrations just once they are predominantly places of unfreedom, so that we do not find opportunity to accomplish the teachings. If we gain a basis suited to accomplishing the teachings and still do not accomplish them properly, it is due to this thought of “I’m not going to die yet”. Therefore, this mind that holds to the position of not dying [66] is the door to all manner of degeneration and mindfulness of death is the door to all excellence.

Therefore, you should not think: “This is a practice for those who do not have profound Dharma, other objects of meditation to meditate on “ and “You should meditate on this, but only a bit in the beginning, it is unsuitable to practice it continually”. You should not take it like that, but rather you should meditate upon it, until you gain certainty from the bottom of your heart that it is necessary in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end.

Third: The fear [born] from worries about separation from relatives etc. is the kind of fear of death of those who are not trained in the path. Therefore, here this is not what is to be generated. Well then, what [kind of fear is to be generated]? All bodies taken under the power of karma and mental afflictions do not pass beyond death, which is why – even though this may give rise to fear – it cannot be prevented for the time being. However, without having blocked the causes for bad migrations and accomplished the causes for high status and certain goodness, you will fear death. With regard to that, if you think of the resulting fear this can be accomplished, whereby you will not be afraid on the verge of dying. If you do not achieve this objective, for fear of not being liberated from the cycle of existence in general and of falling to bad migrations in particular, you will be tormented by remorse at the time of death.

Fourth: You should meditate on this by way of the three root thoughts, the nine reasons and the three resolutions. In this regard, the three [root thoughts] are: (1) it is certain that we will die, (2) it is uncertain when we will die, and (3) at the time of death nothing except for the Dharma will be of benefit.
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Small Scope

1 Actual reasons
2 Resolution

2B4B-2B1A-1A4A-1 Actual reasons

A The Lord of Death will certainly come and there are no conditions for warding him off
B One’s life span cannot be increased and diminishes incessantly
C You die without having had time to practice Dharma while alive

The first one has three points: (1) the Lord of Death will certainly come and there are no conditions for warding him off, (2) one’s life span cannot be increased and diminishes incessantly, and (3) you die without having had time to practice Dharma while alive {67}.

A The Lord of Death will certainly come and there are no conditions for warding him off

First: In the Udanavarga it says that whatever body you have taken, whatever country you reside in, and whatever the time - you are defeated by death. It will come to pass that way and cannot be turned back by fleeing swiftly away or by force, wealth, material substances, mantras or medicine as it says in Advice to a King [Sutra]. Kamawa said: “Now some fear of death is necessary. At the moment of death you must not be apprehensive. We do it the other way round: no we are not afraid [but] at the moment of death we dig our fingernails into our chests.”

2B4B-2B1A-1A4A-1B One’s life span cannot be increased and diminishes incessantly

Second: As it says in [the Sutra of] Entering the Womb, reaching a life span of a hundred years seems to be the limit of what is possible. However, even if you reach that, the years until then waste away with the passage of month after month, day after day, and day and night. As they too waste away with the passage of morning, and so on, it seems that the general lifespan has [already] been wasted a lot previously and the remainder also diminishes incessantly without anything being added. In Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Behaviour it says:

This life decreases constantly,
Day and night, without respite,
If from nowhere there is increase,
Either, how would I not die?     [4]

Furthermore, you should consider this by way of numerous analogies such as a weaver weaving cloth, animals to be slaughtered approaching the place of slaughter with each step, cattle being lead without any control to their place by a herder, and so forth. This is also taught in [the Sutra of] Extensive Display by means of many analogies:

Impermanent – autumn cloud-like: the three existences
Birth and death of beings resemble a show
The passage of life of a being – a flash in the sky
It passes fast like a waterfall from a steep mountain.     [5]

For someone with the resolve of inner contemplation {68} there are no external objects that do not point out impermanence to him. Since this is taught, certainty arises, if you consider it often and from many angles. There is no benefit in thinking one has [considered] something several times, but still no certainty arose. As Kamaba said: “You say nothing has come about
through contemplation – well, when did you contemplate? During the day you indulge in distractions, at night you sleep – don’t lie!”

It is not just at the end of our lives when death overcomes us that we proceed towards another world, for up until then there is not a moment where the lifespan does not diminish. Therefore, since we entered the womb we have been going straight towards a future life without remaining still even for a mere instant. In the meantime life also wastes away without a moment of respite, as we go towards death lead by its messengers, disease and aging. Therefore, do not rejoice in the view that you abide during your life without approaching future worlds. It is like the analogy that when falling off a high mountain peak the time of falling through the sky before crashing to the ground is not worthy of joy. In the Commentary on the Four Hundred Verses there is the quotation:

> Hero of men, in that night in the very beginning,  
> Where someone comes to dwell in a womb in the world -  
> Starting from that point he moves with each day  
> Without the pause of a step towards the Lord of Death.  

2B4B-2B1A-1A4A-1C You die without having had time to practice Dharma while alive.

Third: Even if you can live for so long, it is inappropriate to think you have time. As it is stated in [the Sutra on] Entering the Womb, initially, during the first ten years of childhood it does not occur to you to practice the Dharma and at the end, during the 20 years of old age you do not have the power to practice the Dharma. Of the time in between sleep snatches away one half, illness and the like also waste much time and no more than a few opportunities remain to accomplish the Dharma.

2B4B-2B1A-1A4A-2 The decision to practice Dharma

{69} Since it is like that, at the time of death all the excellence of this life will only be an object of recollection – like the recollection of a happy experience in a dream after you have woken. Why would you delight in being beguiled by this life, if the enemy who is death will certainly come? With this thought in mind you should take the decision that you definitely need to practice the Dharma and reiterate this innermost feeling many times. From the Jataka Stories:

> Alas, afflicted worldly beings,  
> Your stay is not stable, there is no joy,  
> Even this water lily’s splendour  
> Will soon be but a memory.  

2B4B-2B1A-1A4B The time of one’s death is uncertain

1 The need for generating a mental state mindful of death every day
2 The actual reasons
3 The decision that from now on you need to practice the Dharma]

2B4B-2B1A-1A4B-1 The need for generating a mental state mindful of death every day

Second: It is certain that death will come between now and 100 years [from now] and it is not certain on which day in between it will. Therefore, it is not definite on any day like today whether you will die or not. Nonetheless, the mind should side with the idea of death and you need to generate the awareness that thinks: “I will die today”, for if the mind sides with
the idea of not dying, thinking: “I will not die today”, you constantly prepare for staying in this life and will not prepare for future lives. Due to this, if you get seized by the Lord of Death in the meantime, you will have to die in anguish. However, if you prepare to die every day, you will accomplish a lot that is meaningful for the future, so that, even if you do not die, it is good you have done it and if you die it was all the more necessary.

The actual reasons

A There is no certainty with regard to a life-span in Jambudvipa which is why the time of death is uncertain
B There are many conditions that lead to death and few that promote life
C The body is extremely vulnerable and the time of death therefore uncertain

This has three points: there is no certainty with regard to a life span in Jambudvipa, which is why the time of death is uncertain, there are many conditions that lead to death and few that promote life and the body is extremely vulnerable and the time of death therefore uncertain.

A There is no certainty with regard to a life-span in Jambudvipa which is why the time of death is uncertain

First, in general a lifespan of the beings of Uttarakuru is set, and for most beings of the other [continents] there is more certainty, even though it may not be sure that the full extent of the lifespan of each individual be reached. For the beings of Jambudvipa a life-span is extremely uncertain. In the beginning they reached even immeasurable years, later ten years will be the maximum duration to be reckoned with and even nowadays it does not seem certain whether they die in their old age, in their youth or in between. In the Treasury it says:

Here it’s uncertain: in the end:
ten years – initially: infinite. [8]

You should take to heart the fact that people like your gurus or friends have died through sudden internal or external conditions for death before reaching the end of their lives, and you should think over and over again: “I too have similar qualities.”

B There are many conditions that lead to death and few that promote life

Second: There are various harmful influences – animate as well as inanimate – on this life, so you should thoroughly consider how it is threatened by human beings and non-human malevolent influences, how types of animals endanger one’s body and life through manifold harm, and likewise how both internal illnesses and external elements cause harm. Furthermore, one’s body is necessarily formed from the four elements and they also harm each other if their domains expand or diminish out of balance, thereby causing illnesses and ravishing one’s life. Since they exist simultaneous with oneself, even though body and life appear to be stable they cannot be relied on. In the Parinirvana [Sutra] it says:

The discrimination of death is that this life, constantly surrounded by hostile enemies, weakens in each moment and that there is nothing that increases it. [9]

And in the Precious Garland:

We live amidst the conditions for Yama,
Like a butter lamp in a gale. [10]

Besides life itself permeates the reality of death so that many conditions for life are unreliable:

From the Precious Garland:

There are many conditions of death
Those for living are only few
Even they may well be deadly
Therefore, always practice dharma. [11]

C The body is extremely vulnerable and the time of death therefore uncertain

{71} The body is as vulnerable as a water bubble - therefore this and that such as a thorn piercing it may be to blame and occasion the destruction of life without the need for major harm. Thus it is very easily overcome by conditions of death. In the Friendly Letter it says:

If physical things – the ground, Mount Meru, and oceans –
Are burnt up by the seven blazing suns
And even ashes are not left behind%
What need to mention exceedingly feeble humans? [12]

2B4B-2B1A-1A4B-3 The decision that it is necessary to practice Dharma from now on

At the end of thoughts like these you should reiterate many times the innermost decision to practice Dharma from this very moment, for it is uncertain when the body and life will be overcome by the Lord of Death and it should no be assumed that there is still time. As Shri Jagatamitra said:

Earth lord as long as this borrowed body
Abides in pleasure – not sick not decayed,
At that time do take its essence
Not fearing illness, death, decay.
In times of illness, old age, and decay
You may be concerned, but to what avail? [13]

Among the three root[ thought]s the one about the uncertainty of the time of death is most important, which is why you should make an effort.

2B4B-2B1A-1A4C At the time of death nothing is of benefit except for the Dharma

1 The actual reasons
2 Decision

2B4B-2B1A-1A4C-1 The actual reasons
A [You cannot take along friends]

Third: Thus when you see you have to go to another world, leaving this world, even if at that time you are surrounded by loving and grieving friends or relatives, you cannot take even one of them along.
Whatever heaps of attractive riches you have obtained – you cannot take along even a small particle of it.

If you have to give up even the flesh and bones you were born with, what need to talk of anything else?

Then you think: “At that time, it will certainly come to pass that all the excellences of this life leave me, just as I leave them, and I will proceed to another world. It will happen today.” [72] You should make the decision many times to practice Dharma without submitting to the the of conditions like the body, friends and possessions.

Although this arises with difficulty, you should try hard, as it is the foundation of the path. In the words of Potowa:

These are my meditations on impermanence, appearances and [their] elimination. Eliminating all the phenomena of this life – close relationships, possessions and the like – and aware that I will go here and there to another life alone without anything, I think: “there is nothing to do other than to practice the Dharma”, and non-attachment to this life first arises. As long as this [attitude] has not arisen in my mind, I will sit with the paths to all the Dharma blocked.

And Dolpa said:

Incidentally, if you accumulate the collections and purify obscurations, make request to the deities and [your] guru and contemplate insistently with perseverance, even that which you think will not come about within 100 years will come about effortlessly, for compounded phenomena do not remain static as they are.

When someone asked Kamawa about moving on to another object [of meditation] he said: “repeat the previous one!” Asked about the remaining ones, he said: “There is nothing beyond it.”

Thus, if you know how to practice reliance on a spiritual teacher, leisure and endowments as well as impermanence in this and that context of the excellent scriptures and their commentaries, and sustain them, you will easily find the intention of the Jina. In this way, you will also become aware of them in other contexts.
Explanation of what will become of you in future worlds:
How to think about the happiness and suffering of the two [types of] migrating beings

2B4B-2B1A-1B The happiness and suffering of the two [types of] migrating beings: Thinking about what will become of you in future existences

1 Thinking about what will become of you in future worlds
2 From among the happiness and suffering of the two migrations, considerations about the suffering

2B4B-2B1A-1B1 Thinking about what will become of you in future worlds

Second: That being so, since it is certain that you will die soon, you have no time to spend in this life and, after death, it is not that you become non-existent; you must take rebirth. Since apart from the two there is no other place of birth, you will be born in either the happy migrations or the bad migrations. In addition, since you are not under your own control but under the control of other - karma, you will be reborn according to the wholesome and unwholesome karma that impels you.

2B4B-2B1A-1B2 From among the happiness and suffering of the two migrations, considerations about the suffering

A The need to think about suffering
B How thinking about suffering is a vital point
C How to think about suffering

2B4B-2B1A-1B2A The need to think about suffering

You should think about the suffering of the bad migrations considering: What will become of me, if I am reborn in the bad migrations? Nagarjuna said:

Every day remember the hells
That are fiercely hot and cold.
Also remember the hungry ghosts,
Emaciated by hunger and thirst.
Look at animals and remember
[How they’re] beset with the sufferings of dullness.
Give up their causes, use causes for happiness.
Once you have gained what is hard to gain,
A human body in Jambudvipa,
Endeavour to cut the cause of bad realms.

2B4B-2B1A-1B2B How thinking about suffering is a vital point

Meditation about the sufferings of cyclic existence in general and in the three bad migrations in particular is a very vital point, for if you thus consider how you yourself fall into the ocean of suffering, despair will repel pride and arrogance. Having seen that suffering is a result of non-virtue, you will be very careful to avoid negativities and downfalls. As you do not want suffering but happiness, once you realize that it is the result of virtue, you will also enjoy accomplishing virtue. In proportion to your own experience compassion for others arises and out of aversion to cyclic existence you strive for liberation. For fear of suffering, you take refuge forcefully. These positive qualities of suffering comprising many important points of practice are stated in Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Behaviour in terms of suffering [already] arisen in one’s own continuum, however, they are equally applicable to suffering one is yet to experience.
Thus, the considerations about the suffering of the bad migrations have three points: thinking about the sufferings of hell beings, animals, and hungry ghosts.

The first one has four points: the great hells of sentient beings, the neighbouring hells, the cold hells, and the occasional hells.

A The great hells of sentient beings

First: 32,000 yojanas below from here there is the hell of Continual Revival and below it, seven more hells separated by 4,000 yojanas each.

In the first of those eight, the hell of Continual Revival, beings come together and stab each other with various weapons emerging through the power of their karma. Whenever they faint and collapse on the ground a voice rings out from the sky, “You shall come back to life!”. Upon that they stand up again and start stabbing again as before, due to which they experience immeasurable suffering.

In Black Line the guardians put black lines on the [bodies of] sentient beings born there in [the shape of] many squares and the like and then the latter experience the pain of being cut into pieces with weapons along those lines.

In Crushing Hell the guardians pack the beings, once they have been rounded up, in between two goat-faced or similar iron mountains. Then they are immediately crushed by the two, whereupon rivers of blood spurt out from all their orifices.

In the hell of howling, the sentient beings in search of an abode enter iron houses. As soon as they enter, fires blaze all around and they burn.

The hell of great howling is like the previous one, the difference being that the iron houses have two layers.

In Hot Hell, the hell guardians put the sentient beings into very hot and blazing iron cauldrons of several yojanas and fry them like fish. They are impaled through their buttocks on blazing iron stakes that emerge at the crown of the heads and fire blazes out of their mouths, their two eye sockets, nostrils, ears as well as all their pores. They are laid out, on their back or face down, on the blazing iron foundation and pounded and tormented with blazing iron hammers.

In the very hot hell, an iron trident is stuck into the buttocks so that the right and left prong emerge from the shoulders and the middle one from the crown of the head. Owing to that tongues of fire blaze from orifices such as the mouth. Their bodies are wrapped in blazing
hot iron sheets and placed headlong into an iron cauldron full of boiling liquid whereupon they are tossed up and down and about as they are boiling. Then, once their skin, flesh and blood have been destroyed and nothing but the skeleton is left, they are pulled out again and spread out on the iron foundation. After that, when the skin, flesh and blood have developed again, they are put in again. Apart from that it is like the hot hell.

In Without Respite the foundation is completely ablaze for hundreds of yojanas from the East. As it spreads, the force of the fire increases, gradually destroying the skin, flesh, sinews and bones of the sentient beings to the marrow. Like the wick of a butter lamp, their whole bodies are pervaded by blazing tongues of fire. In the other three directions it is similar. As the fire coming from the four directions mixes there, beings experience incessant sufferings and only by their pathetic howling are they understood to be sentient beings. In iron baskets they are made to jump about on blazing iron embers. They are made to fall down on the iron foundation and to climb up huge iron mountains. Their tongues are pulled out from their mouths, spread out flat with a hundred pegs, and then made to be without a wrinkle or crease, as though preparing cow hides. Then again they are placed on the iron foundation on their backs, their mouths are opened with iron tongs, and blazing lumps of iron are inserted into their mouths. Boiling copper is poured into their mouths and burns the mouth, the throat and the entrails before issuing from the lower body. Apart from that it is like the very hot hell.

How long those sufferings are experienced is as stated in the Friendly Letter:

Even if, for billions of years, you experience completely unbearable sufferings in that way, as long as the non-virtue has not been exhausted, equally long you will not get rid of your life. [15]

Moreover, in the Treasury and Actuality of the Stages it is stated that 50 human years are one day in the [god realm of the] Four Great Kings, thirty of those one month, and twelve of those one year. 500 such years is the life span of the beings of the [realm of the] Four Great Kings. All of that is one single day in the hell of Continual Revival, 30 of those a month, twelve of those a year and 500 of those a life span. Likewise 100, 200, 400, 800 and 1,600 human years, respectively, form a day in the other five desire god realms ranging from the Thirty-Three up to the Controlling Others’ Emanations and the life-spans can be 1,000, 2,000, 4,000, 77 8,000 and 16,000 god years. These respectively form a day in Black Line through the Hot Hell and they can reach from 1,000 through 16,000 of their own years. In the hell of Great Heat one can reach half an intermediate eon and in Without Respite, one intermediate eon.

B The neighbouring hells

Second: Each one of the eight hells has four side walls and four gates. On the outside they are surrounded by an iron fence and that fence also has four gates. By each gate there are the four remaining hells of sentient beings: (1) the Pit of Burning Embers, (2) the Bog of Putrid Corpses or the Bog of Excrement that Reeking of Corpses, (3) the Razor Road etc., and (4) the River Without a Ford.
In the first of those there are hot embers up to the knees and when sentient beings go to look for a place [to stand], as they set their foot down, their skin and flesh and blood are destroyed, and as they lift them up they regenerate.

Nearby, there is the second one, the bog of excrements reeking of corpses. As they cross it in search for an abode, sentient beings fall and sink in up to the head. In this bog there are worms called “sharp-beaks” that pierce the skin, flesh, sinews, and bones and dig through them all the way to the marrow.

Near the bog there is the third one, a path fitted with razor blade teeth. As soon as sentient beings walk along it in search of an abode, as they put down their feet, their skin, flesh and their blood are cut and grow back again as they lift them.

Nearby there is the forest of sword-leaves. As sentient beings walk around in search of an abode using its shade and settling down, (78) swords emerge from the trees and chop up their limbs and other body parts. When they faint there, reddish-brown dogs come, grab them from the back and eat them.

Nearby there is the forest of Iron-Spiked trees. Sentient beings walking around there in search of an abode set about climbing up the trees. As they climb up the tips of the thorns point downwards, and as they climb down, they point upwards chopping up the limbs and other body parts. Since there are birds with iron beaks in that place, they [come and] alight on the shoulders or heads, peck at their eyeballs and eat them.

All these places are similar in that they cause weapon injuries and should be considered as one.

The fourth, near the forest of Iron-Spiked trees there is the so-called river without ford filled with fast moving, boiling water. Sentient beings in search of an abode fall in and get cooked as they bob up and down like for instance peas thrown in a cauldron filled with water over a great fire. On either bank of the river there are [guardians] holding sticks, hooks and nets in their hands, not letting anyone come out. Having pulled them out with the hooks or nets, [the guardians] place them face upward on a blazing great foundation and ask them what they want. When the say: “I don’t know anything – I cannot see, however I am hungry and thirsty”, fiercely blazing lumps of iron are inserted into their mouths and boiling copper is poured in.

The *Actuality of the Stages* explains that the life span in the neighbouring and occasional hells in not certain. However, the sufferings will be experienced as long as the potency of the karma for experiencing those sufferings has not been exhausted.

C The cold hells

The third ones – the cold hells – are directly opposite the eight great [hot] hells of sentient beings each at a distance of 10,000 yojanas. (79) 32,000 yojanas below from here there is the hell of blisters and from there, separated by 2,000 yojanas each, another seven hells. Among those eight, in the one of Blisters you are hit by strong icy wind and your body shrivels while everywhere blisters appear. In the hell of Bursting Blisters you shrivel as the blisters burst open. Chattering Teeth, Lamentation and the “Brrr” are named after the sounds being uttered. In the Splitting Apart Like an Utpala Flower, as you are hit by strong icy wind, you turn blue in colour and split apart into five or six pieces. In the Splitting Apart Like a Lotus you pass beyond blue and turn red, splitting apart into ten or more pieces. In Great Splitting Apart Like a Lotus your skin turns deep red and you split apart into 100 or even more pieces.
All this is explained in *Actuality of the Stages*. As for the lifespan, it is stated that if you were to fill a storage container up to the brim with eighty kharis of sesame from Magadha and take out one grain of sesame every hundred years, the lifespan in the hell of Blisters would last far longer than for the sesame to be completely used up and the life span in each hell below is twenty times that of the previous one.

**D The occasional hells**

The fourth ones exist in the vicinity of the hot and cold hells. In *Actuality of the Stages* it says that they also exist in the human places and in *Basis of [Vinaya] Scriptures* it is stated that they exist near the shores of great lakes – as it appears from *Expression of the Realizations of Sangharaksita*.

**b” The need for fear at the thought that you have already accumulated numerous causes for being born there**

Since it is very easy, as will be explained below, for the causes of birth there to come about, each day you accumulate even many of them, and since also those that you accumulated before are immeasurable, it is inappropriate to sit around happily. [80] Therefore you should think about them and be afraid, for nothing other than this unsteady respiration separates you from them. From *Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Behaviour*:

How can you sit there, happily,
Having created the karma for hell? 

and in the *Friendly Letter*, too it says:

Evildoers separated only
By the time it takes for breathing to stop,
Hearing about the boundless torments of hell
And not scared in thousand respects are like vajras.
If seeing, hearing, remembering and reading
Descriptions of hell as well as their depictions,
Generates fear, no question about experience
Of the unbearable fully ripened effects.

The intense suffering is also stated in the *Friendly Letter*:

Just as the bliss of extinguishment of craving
Is supreme among all kinds of bliss,
Likewise among all kinds of sufferings – those
Of Avici hell are most unbearable.
Here, if in one day 300 spears,
Were to hit you brutally – the suffering
Would be small compared to sufferings of hell,
Would not even be a fraction of them.
You should come to understand that the cause giving rise to such suffering is only your own 
faulty behaviour and strive with all your might not to be tainted even by minor negative 
actions. From the same [text]:

The seed of these non-virtuous effects
Is faulty behaviour of body, speech, and mind.
Strive with such resourcefulness that nothing –
Not even a speck of them exists in you. [19]

2B4B-2B1A-1B2C-1B Thinking about the sufferings of animals

Second: The weaker animals are killed by powerful ones. They become the chattels of gods 
and humans and lacking freedom they are under the control of others which is why they get 
killed, beaten and harmed. It is explained in the Actuality of the Stages that since they {81} 
accompany humans and gods, they do not have another abode. The Commentary on the 
Treasury explains that their main abode is the great ocean and that the others spread from 
there. Furthermore, they are born in darkness and in water, age there and die. They are worn 
out by heavy burdens, put to the plough, shorn, driven, and killed miserably by means of 
many different killing methods. They are tormented by hunger, thirst, sun and wind, 
persecuted by hunters and the like in many ways and are always terrified. Therefore you 
should feel saddened and disquieted thinking of the many ways in which they suffer.

In the Treasury it says that “the longest animal lifespan is one eon” and it is explained 
that the long-lived ones reach a mere eon while the short lived ones are unspecified.

2B4B-2B1A-1B2C-1C Thinking about the sufferings of hungry ghosts

Third: Those who predominantly attend to miserliness will be born as hungry ghosts. They, 
too, are hungry and thirsty. As their skin, flesh and blood are dried up, they are like burned 
logs. Their faces are hair-covered, their mouths are exceedingly dry and are licked by the 
tongue.

A Those with external obstructions to food and drink
B Those with internal obstructions to food and drink
C Those with obstructions to food and drink itself

There are three of these: those with external obstructions to food and drink, those with 
internal obstructions to food and drink, and those with obstructions to food and drink itself 
dry.

A Those with external obstructions to food and drink

As for the first ones, if they wander towards springs, lakes and ponds, they are hindered 
externally by sentient beings holding swords, spears and lances. They also see the water as pus 
and blood and do not want to drink it.

B Those with internal obstructions to food and drink

The second ones have mouths only like the eyes of needles. They have goitres and big bellies 
and their mouths are on fire. Even if they end up finding food and drink without others 
creating obstructions, they themselves are not able to eat and drink.
C. Those with obstructions to food and drink itself

As for the third ones, the so-called “fire-garlanded ones” get burned as everything they eat and drink catches fire. The so-called “filth-eaters” eat excrement and drink urine. They only eat and drink that which is unclean, smelly, harmful and despicable. Some cut their own flesh and eat it. They cannot make use of clean and good food or drink.

As explained in a Commentary on the Treasury, their abode is below the city of Rajagrha in this world Jambudvipa, separated by a distance of 500 yojanas, and from there the other hungry ghosts have spread out. As for their life span, it says in the Actuality of Stages that one human month is a day and that they last for 500 of their years.

In the Friendly Letter it says:

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Attending to suffering uninterruptedly,
Fettered by the very solid rope
Of karma of faulty behaviour, some beings with bodies
Do not die for five - even ten thousand years.  [20]
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The commentary explains that the life span of some hungry ghosts is 5000 years and of some 10000 years.

In all three bad migrations the body size is indefinite. In Actuality of the Stages it says that through the power of the non-virtues there are all kinds of sizes.

In accordance with that, when you think about the sufferings of bad migrations you reflect: “If it would be difficult to sit for one day with ones hands stuck into embers, or just to stay in a freezing cave during a winter storm without clothes on, or to be without food and drink for a few days, or for my body to be bitten by something like a bee, how could I bear the suffering of hot and cold hells, hungry ghosts and animals that devour one another alive? Relative to such experience you should meditate until a change of mind of intense fear and terror occurs. As you think about it now with your good base, what has been accumulated previously is purified and what you will engage in later on lessens. Through intense aspirational prayers you direct the virtue that has been accumulated previously and thereby increase it manifold. Since this opens up many avenues for engaging in them newly, there will be [opportunities] every day for making the leis ures meaningful. If you do not think about it now, once you have fallen to bad migrations, you will not find a refuge protecting you from those fears, even if you look for it. At that time you will lack the power of mind to take on what should be done and reject what should not be done. This is mentioned in Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Behaviour.

**Explanation of how to rely on methods for the happiness of future worlds**
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Small Scope

A  Training to go for refuge: the holy [sublime] gate for entering the teachings
B  The root of all well-being: generating the confidence of firm conviction in actions and [their] effects

The second one [how to rely on methods for the happiness of future worlds] has two points: Training to go for refuge: the holy gate for entering the teachings, and the root of all well-being:\(^{55}\): generating the confidence of firm conviction in actions and [their] effects.

2B4B-2B1A-2A Training to go for refuge: the holy gate for entering the teachings
1  The causes that going for refuge depends on
2  Depending on them, the objects you go to for refuge
3  The way in which to go for refuge as much as one can
4  The stages of training after having gone for refuge

The first one has four points: the causes that going for refuge depends on, depending on them, the objects you go to for refuge, the way in which to go for refuge as much as one can, and the stages of training after having gone for refuge

2B4B-2B1A-2A1  The causes that going for refuge depends on

First: Although, in general, there are many causes, here it is the fact that, as explained above, we do not stay in this life, we die soon and after death we do not have control over where we are going to be reborn controlled by [our] karma. Also, karma, according to Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Behaviour is:

As a flash at night amidst the clouds
Illuminates the darkness for a moment,
Likewise on the road through the power of buddhas
A rare understanding of merit comes forth in the worldly.
Therefore, that which is virtuous is always weak
While evil is extremely strong and unbearable. \(^{21}\)

{84} Thus, as you think about how you fall to bad migrations because the power of wholesome karma is small and that of unwholesome karma is excessively extremely strong, the two arise: fear of bad migrations and the conviction that that which is rare and precious\(^{60}\) [the Jewels], can protect you from them. Consequently, if these two remain but [mere] words, going for refuge will be similar. However, if they are present intense and firm, going for refuge will also come to tame the mind. Therefore, you should strive at those two causes.

2B4B-2B1A-2A2  Depending on that the objects you go to for refuge
A  Identifying the objects [of refuge]
B  The reasons why they are worthy of refuge

The second one has two points: identifying the objects [of refuge] and the reasons why they are worthy of refuge

2B4B-2B1A-2A2A  Identifying the objects [of refuge]

First: In the Praise in One Hundred and Fifty Verses it says:

To one in whom perpetually
All faults are definitely absent,
To one in whom in every manner,
All good qualities abide,
In case someone like that exists,
It is fit to go for refuge,
To praise him, to attend on him,
To abide in what he teaches.

Thus, if someone has the intelligence to differentiate between what is a refuge and what is not, it is appropriate for him to go for refuge to the undeceiving protector, the Buddha Bhagavan. This also characterizes the Dharma Jewel and the Sangha Jewel. From the Seventy Verses on Going for Refuge:

Buddha, Dharma, Sangha are
The refuge of those who want liberation.

The reasons why they are worthy of refuge
1 The actual reasons

Second: Someone who is free from all fear, skilled in means of liberating others from fear, steeped in great compassion toward everyone without closeness and distance and who works for the benefit for the welfare of all regardless of whether they help him or not – such a one is worthy of refuge. As only Buddha has those qualifications, while Ishvara and the like do not, he is a refuge. For that reason the Dharma taught by him as well as the Sangha of hearers are also worthy to be refuges.

Advice to be persistent about conviction, the principal cause

That being so, once you have derived certainty with regard to these objects of refuge set forth in the Compendium, when you are able to rely on them with a single-pointed mind, it is impossible for you not to be protected. Therefore you should generate certainty from the bottom of your heart. Of the two causes for being protected, there is no incompleteness in the external one – our teacher [Buddha] has achieved it – however, since the internal cause, taking hold of that refuge trustingly has not come about, we suffer.

The way in which to go for refuge as much as one can
A Understanding their positive qualities
B Understanding their distinctions
C Assertion
D Going for refuge by not advocating other ones

The second one has four points: Going for refuge (by) understanding their positive qualities, understanding their distinctions, assertion and going for refuge by not advocating other ones.

Understanding their positive qualities
1 The Buddha’s positive qualities
2 The positive qualities of the Dharma
3 The positive qualities of the Sangha

First: Since it is necessary to be mindful of the positive qualities of the refuges, this has three points: the Buddha’s positive qualities, the positive qualities of the Dharma and the Sangha.
The first one has four points: the positive qualities of [the Buddha’s] body, speech, mind and exalted activities.

2B4B-2B1A-2A3A-1A1 The positive qualities of [the Buddha’s] body

First: Being mindful of the [major] marks and minor characteristics of a buddha: In the Praise in Analogies it says:

Your body is adorned with marks,  
Beautiful, nectar for eyes [to look at],  
Like a cloudless sky in autumn  
Ornamented with clusters of stars.

Oh Muni, endowed with the colour of gold,  
Beautiful, dressed in monastic robes,  
Like a golden mountain top  
Wrapped in clouds at dusk or dawn.

Protector, the splendour of your facial orb -  
Although unadorned by jewelry -  
Is beyond that of the moon disc  
Although vast and clear of clouds.

If the lotus of your mouth  
And a lotus in bloom in the sun  
Are beheld by a bee, the bee  
Will have its doubts about the lotus.

Your face endowed with the colour of gold -  
White teeth make it [more] beautiful  
(86) like immaculate autumn moonbeams  
Filtering through among golden mounts.

Venerable one, your right hand,  
Embellished by the mark of the wheel  
Gives breath to the people terrified  
By the cycle of existence.

Oh Muni, as you walk, your feet  
Draw what looks like lotuses of  
Glory on the earth [you tread] -  
With lotuses how would it be lovelier?  

[24]
You should remember them in accordance with this statement.

2B4B-2B1A-2A3A-1A2 The positive qualities of [the Buddha’s] speech

Second: you should think about the very marvelous way in which whatever sentient beings in the world realms ask different questions all at once and he still apprehends them with wisdom that possesses a single instance of mind and answers all the questions with one utterance that they understand in their respective languages In the Chapter of the Truthful One it says:

If thus all beings, in one single moment, ask a question in a lot of terms his mind comprehends them in a single moment and answers them all with one melodious [statement].

Thus know that the melodious Brahma voice Of him, who gives instructions rings forth in this world. He thoroughly set in motion the wheel of Dharma eradicating sufferings of gods and men. [25]

You reflect along the lines of this statement.

2B4B-2B1A-2A3A-1A3 The positive qualities of [the Buddha’s] mind

A The positive qualities of knowledge
B The positive qualities of mercy

The third one has two points: the positive qualities of knowledge and the positive qualities of mercy.

A The positive qualities of knowledge

First: As all knowable objects – modes and varieties - are engaged by the Muni’s unobstructed knowledge like a dhatri berry placed on the palm of his hand, the diverse knowable objects are pervaded by the Muni’s knowledge. However, they are not pervaded by other’s [knowledge], as knowable objects are vast and their consciousnesses are narrow. In this regard it says in Praise of the Praiseworthy:

Only your exalted wisdom, [87] Encompasses all the knowable objects For all the others apart from you Some knowable objects remain to be known. [26]

And:

Bhagavan, dharmas of all times, All aspects, all places of origin, Are spheres of activity of your mind Like dhatri berries in your palm.

As regards dharmas – static or mobile, Single or various and distinct, There’s nothing to which your mind is obstructed - Like wind moving to and fro in space.
You should reflect in accordance with these statements.

B The positive quality of mercy

Second: Just as sentient beings are bound by the afflictions without any control, the Muni is bound by great compassion without control and therefore great compassion continuously arises in him when he perceives suffering migrating beings. In the One Hundred and Fifty Verses it says:

All of these migrating beings
Are equally bound by the afflictions.
In order to untie their afflictions
You have long been bound by compassion.

Should I first prostrate to you
Or to that which causes you
To stay in samsara that long, aware
Of its faults – to great compassion? [27]

In the Chapter of the Truthful One it also says:

When he sees the many beings always
Obscured by ignorance and mental darkness
Imprisoned in the prison of samsara
Great compassion is born in the holy sage. [28]

You should become aware of it in accordance with these statements.

The positive qualities of [the Buddha’s] exalted activities

Fourth: By means of both spontaneous and uninterrupted exalted activities of [his] body, speech and mind he benefits all sentient beings. In fact insofar as a trainee is fit for guidance, it is impossible for the Muni not to give that trainee what is excellent and pull him out of his degeneration. That is why it is stated that they certainly perform all the appropriate actions. [88]

Supplementary points

1 Gaining certainty regarding the conviction: the cause of going for refuge purely

Potowa said this: “If you keep contemplating again and again, the firmer your conviction and the purer your mental continuum becomes, the more blessings will arise. As you gain certain knowledge in this regard, you will go for refuge from the bottom of your heart and then, if you merely train in the precepts, everything you do will become an instance of practicing the Buddha’s teachings.

2 Not gaining the conviction

We do not even value the Buddha’s exalted knowledge as much as [we value] a keen woman fortune teller. If a keen fortune teller tells you “I know there will be no bad luck for you this year”, you walk away happy and comfortable. If she says: “This year [there will be] great misfortune – do this, don’t do that!”, you will try hard to accomplish it and if you do not
manage, you will think: “I did not accomplish what she told me [to do]” and your mind will be anxious. If the Buddha says: “Do this and that. Accomplish this and that”, do you take it on? If you do not accomplish it, does your mind become anxious? To say: “from the [point of view of] Dharma those words [may be] explained as follows: due to place and time that is inconvenient now. I must do this” is to ignore the Buddha’s statements and proceed on the basis of your own understanding. If you turn the mind within and investigate this in detail, rather than being unquestioningly happy and confused with respect to the mere words, it will strike you as very true.

3 Insistent advice to achieve certainty

Therefore, think about the Buddha’s positive qualities again and again, and strive to achieve as much certainty as possible. If it develops, you have reached the main point of going for refuge, because a similar certainty will come concerning the Dharma that arose from him and the Sangha of those who have accomplished that Dharma. Without it there is no way going for refuge, a tamed mind, let alone other paths, will come either.


Second: On account of [your] respect for the Buddha, you should be mindful thinking: the fact that the Buddha has [89] limitless qualities arose from manifesting and meditating the Dharma of scriptures and realization, the truths of cessation and the path, the epitome of the abandonment of faults and the achievement of positive qualities. That is the meaning of the *Compendium of the Dharma* [Sutra].

2B4B-2B1A-2A3A-3 Positive qualities of the sangha

Third: This refers mainly to persons who are aryas. Recalling the positive qualities of the Dharma you are mindful of those who accomplish it correctly. That is the meaning of *Compendium of the Dharma*.

2B4B-2B1A-2A3B Understanding their distinctions

Second: As is apparent from the *Compendium*, you go for refuge aware of the mutual distinctions between the three jewels.

2B4B-2B1A-2A3C Assertion

Third: As is apparent from the *Extensive Commentary on the Vinaya*, you go for refuge in terms of considering the Buddha to be the one who teaches the refuge; the Dharma to be nirvana, which is the actual refuge; and the Sangha, to be the companions accomplishing refuge.

2B4B-2B1A-2A3D Not advocating other ones

Fourth: Having understood the superiority and inferiority of Buddhist and non-Buddhist teachers, teachings and students, respectively, you consider the Three Jewels alone to be a refuge, and do not consider teachers and so forth who are incompatible with them to be a refuge. With respect to the difference between the two [sets], the difference between the teachers is that the Buddha is without faults and has perfected positive qualities while other teachers are the opposite to that. In the *Praise of the Particularly Exalted* [One] it says:

Having abandoned the other teachers
Bhagavan, I take refuge in you.
If you ask “For what purpose?” – Because
You have no faults but have qualities.

and:

The more I’ve thought about the scriptures
Of others, tirthikas, the more
My confidence in you has grown, Lord.
Those whose minds are wasted through the
Faulty tenets of non-omniscience,
Whose thinking is wasted do not see,
{90} Faultless teachers – not even you.

2B4B-2B1A-2A4 The stages of training after having gone for refuge

A The actual content
B Eliminating inaccuracies [with respect to the precepts of going for refuge]

2B4B-2B1A-2A4A The actual content

1 Specific precepts [for the individual objects of refuge]
2 Common precepts [for all three objects of refuge]

The fourth one has two points: specific precepts [for the individual objects of refuge] and common precepts [for all three objects of refuge].

2B4B-2B1A-2A4A-1 Specific precepts [for the individual objects of refuge]

A Precepts of what is to be stopped
B Precepts of what is to be accomplished

The first one has two points: precepts of what is to be stopped and precepts of what is to be accomplished.

2B4B-2B1A-2A4A-1A Precepts of what is to be stopped

1 Not to go for refuge to other gods
2 To give up causing harm or difficulty to sentient beings
3 Not to associate with non-Buddhists [/Conni: proponents of non-Buddhist views]

First: From the [Sutra of Great Final] Nirvana:

Going for refuge to the three
One is a true upasaka.
One will never ever go
To some other gods for refuge.

One going for refuge to the Saddharma
Is free from the mind to harm or kill.
One going for refuge to the Sangha,
Does not mingle with Tirthikas.

In accordance with this statement there are three [inhibitory precepts]: not to go for refuge to other gods, to give up causing harm or difficulty to sentient beings and not to associate with Tirthikas.
1 Not to go for refuge to other gods

The first of these: If one does not even regard powerful worldly gods, Rudra, Vishnu and the like as long-term refuge, no need to speak of naga and local spirits belonging to the hungry ghosts. In this regard, while it is not appropriate to rely on them from a lack of conviction in the three objects of refuge, it is not inappropriate to seek their assistance for some action of temporary character. By way of example, it is like seeking assistance from a donor for one’s livelihood or like relying on a doctor in hope for a cure.

2 To give up causing harm or difficulty to sentient beings

The second one consists in giving up causing harm or difficulty to humans or animals, and so forth through thought or actions like beating, binding, ensnaring them, piercing their noses and loading them unbearably.

3 Not to associate with non-Buddhists

The third one consists in not conforming to those who are unconvinced by the protection of the three jewels, and denigrate them.

2B4B-2B1A-2A4A-1B Precepts of what is to be accomplished

1 How to train with respect to the representations of the Buddha
2 How to train with respect to the representations of the Dharma
3 How to train with respect to the representations of the sangha

[91] Second: However good or flawed painted pictures of the Buddha’s body may be, do not disparage them, do not put them on the ground when inconvenienced. Having given up the irreverence of pawning them etc. and defaming them, regard them as fields of respect like the teacher [himself]. In the Letter to a Friend it says:

The way the learned honour any form of the Sugata – even made from wood. [31]

B Examples of the fully ripened effects of irreverence that have occurred in the past

In the Scripture on Discernment [/Conni: Unterteilung der [Vinaya]-Schriften] it is stated that Manavakapila abused members of the sangha who were learners and non-learners in 18 different ways saying things like: “You elephant heads! How do you know what is Dharma and what isn’t?” Because of that he was born as a sea monster, a species of fish with 18 different heads, and remained an animal from the time of the teacher Kasyapa to that of the Shakya king [Shakyamuni].

In Minor Precepts [of the Vinaya] it says that after the teacher Krakucchanda had passed into Nirvana, when King Carumat had a big stupa built, a hired workman twice scoffed at it saying: “who knows when such a huge stupa will ever get finished”. Later on when the stupa had been finished nicely he felt sorry, had a golden bell made from his wage and tied it to the stupa. Due to that he was born as “The Well-Sounding One” with an ugly complexion and a small body but a very pleasant voice. Therefore, do not talk about representations saying “this is like that”. It is inappropriate to disparage the establishment of a great representation from good materials and to dissuade [others] from it through disruptive remarks.

The Great Yogi [Jangchub Rinchen] gave Atisha a statue of Manjushri to look at and asked: “What is the quality like? If it is good I’ll take it and give the four gold coins Rongwa
Garge has given me”. {92} Atisha said: “There is nothing that is not good about the Venerable One’s body. As for the sculptor – average.” Having said this, he placed the statue on the crown of his head.

You abandon irreverence to as little as four words of Dharma. You abandon pawning volumes of scripture, trading them, putting them on the bare ground or in inconvenient places, carrying them around together with shoes, stepping over them and so forth. Instead you treat them with respect like the Dharma jewel.

It is said that Geshe Chengawa used to put his palms together and rise up when he saw scriptures [of the Buddha’s teachings] being brought. Later on, when he could not get up any more, he used to [simply] put his palms together.

It is said when Atisha came to Ngari, one tantric practitioner did not listen to Dharma [teachings] from him. However, as one scribe smeared residue from his teeth on a Dharma text, Atisha saw it and, unable to bear it, said: “alas! that’s no good, that’s no good!”, the tantrika gained faith and listened to the teachings.

Sharawa said: “We play around with the Dharma in all sorts of ways – irreverence for the Dharma and expounders of Dharma is a cause for distorted wisdom. We are already confused enough now. What are we going to do if we get more confused?”

You do not abuse or despise the Sangha or even anyone merely bearing the marks of ordination. Nor do you look at them as opponents in any way having made [arbitrary] divisions in terms of “your group and my group”, treating them with respect as if they were the Sangha Jewel. In Exhortation to the Special Attitude it says:

Those who wish for qualities, dwelling in forests
Should not look for faults in other [people],
They should not produce the attitude:
“I’m especially noble, I’m the best”.

{93} All carelessness grows out of this complacence.
Don’t let contempt for lesser monks arise –
You won’t reach liberation for one eon -
This is the succession of this teaching. [32]

Geshe [Drom] Tonpa and the great Yogi, instead of stepping over any piece of yellow material on the ground, would shake it and carry it to a clean place. You should train in accordance with their practice, for others will respect you as much as you respect the [three] jewels. In the King of Concentration it says:
What kind of actions you have done, that kind of effects you will obtain. [33]

2B4B-2B1A-2A4A-2 Common precepts [for all three objects of refuge]

A Remembering the differences and positive qualities of the three jewels and, due to that, going for refuge again and again
B Remembering their great kindness and, due to that, exerting oneself at all times to make offerings to them and offer them even the first portion of one’s food and drink
C Remembering their great compassion and, due to that, establishing other migrating beings in such a mode [of behaviour]
D Whatever you do and whatever you need, worshipping the three jewels, then supplicating them and abandoning all other, worldly methods
E Aware of the benefits, going for refuge three times a day and three times at night
F Not giving up the three jewels for one’s life nor for a laugh and guarding against this

The second one has six points: Remembering the differences and positive qualities of the three jewels and, due to that, going for refuge again and again, remembering their great kindness and, due to that, exerting oneself at all times to make offerings to them and offer them even the first portion of one’s food and drink, remembering their great compassion and, due to that, establishing other migrating beings in such a mode [of behaviour], whatever you do and whatever you need, worshipping the three jewels, then supplicating them and abandoning all other, worldly methods, aware of the benefits, going for refuge three times a day and three times at night, not giving up the three jewels for one’s life nor for a laugh and guarding against this.

2B4B-2B1A-2A4A-2A Remembering the differences and positive qualities of the three jewels and, due to that, going for refuge again and again

First: As explained above, you think about the differences between things non-Buddhist and Buddhist as well as among the three jewels and [consider] the positive qualities of those.

2B4B-2B1A-2A4A-2B Remembering their great kindness and, due to that, exerting oneself at all times to make offerings to them and offer them even the first portion of one’s food and drink

1 Constant offerings

Second: You should come to understand all the well-being you experience as the kindness of the three jewels and worship them by acknowledging that.

2 The peculiarity that the collections are completed with little trouble

Since you constantly need to eat and drink, you will complete a great amount of collections with little trouble if you keep offering the first portion of them each time. Therefore, you should offer the first portion of whatever you enjoy, including water, from the bottom of your heart.

3 Impure offerings

Moreover Sharawa said: “You don’t need to make [offerings] from the blue [mould] on coagulated milk and yellow leaves but from something good. [Worship] comes about each time through offering the first portion of tea, but not through something like cleaning out the dust.”

4 The manner of respect when offering

In a sutra it says: For instance, if at the time of planting seeds in a fertile field something remains unplanted, it cannot just be left. Likewise, may the field of merit be tilled with the
plough of confidence, that sublime field from which all future well-being springs and that just needs to be planted with the seed of well-being throughout all four seasons. If that which needs to be done does not occur, it will be an extremely heavy loss.

5 The need to exert oneself in making offerings

Not to have even as much regard for the best of fields as for an ordinary field is not a good attitude of ours. Therefore, we should strive, at all times, to make [reverential] offerings to the three jewels.

6 High status, paths, etc. are attained through making offerings in that way

If you do that, through the power of the roots of virtue growing in the most excellent field, the power of your intelligence concerning the stages of the path increases. When your intelligence is very feeble such that you do not retain the words while listening, do not understand the meaning while contemplating, and nothing arises in the mind during meditation, the quintessential instruction is to rely on the power of the field.

7 How the size of offerings and so forth is a distinction to do with the mind

Also the offering is not confined by the thing [offered], it is confined by your confidence. As it is stated [in the scriptures], if you have faith, it is enough to offer mandalas, water, and offerings that are not considered by anyone [to be their property], therefore you should act accordingly even if you do not have any material things [to offer]. (95) Not to be able to give, even though you have something, saying: “I am a wretched pauper without any merits, I do not have any other possessions to offer” – in the words of Potowa, that is like a blind person putting some cheap aromatic plant into a smelly conch-shell container and fooling someone with eyesight by calling it sandalwood and camphor perfume.

8 How to train in uprightness with regard to offering substances, following the masters of former times

Puchungwa said: “At first I used to offer a pungent aromatic plant. Then I had the means to offer sweet incense prepared from four [different] substances. Now I offer the most exquisitely fragrant aloe wood and durushka etc.” In accordance with this statement, if you do not give anything out of contempt for small offerings, it will go on like that throughout your entire life. However, if you develop perseverance from a lesser stage, it will get better and better. Therefore you should train following his practice. It is said that he once prepared incense [worth] 22 gold coins.

9 Refutation of the manners of speaking [to the effect] that the way Bodhisattvas make offerings, having gained control over material things, is impure

If great bodhisattvas, having gained control over material things, emanate many hundreds of thousands of bodies and for each body, again, emanate hundreds of thousands of hands etc. and [if they] appear in all the fields making offerings to the Jinas for many eons, the statement by those who know only the superficial appearance of positive qualities that “As for me, I do not hope [to reach] enlightenment that way,” – is the idle talk of [people] who have very little familiarity with the Dharma.

10 How to make offerings with other vast things

In the Jewel Cloud [Sutra] it says: “From the sutra collections you should study what are very vast offerings and honours and from the bottom of your heart dedicate them with the most excellent special attitude to the buddhas and bodhisattvas.” You should do it like that.
Third: Out of loving concern you establish other sentient beings in going for refuge as much as you can.

Whatever you do and whatever you need, worshiping the three jewels and supplicating them, abandoning all other, worldly methods whatever you do and whatever requirements you see, rely on the three jewels and do what is in agreement with them such as making offerings to them. However, it is inappropriate to rely in every way on that which is not in agreement with them in every aspect such as Bon. Consequently, you should trust the three jewels at all times.

Aware of the benefits, going for refuge three times a day and three times at night

The fifth one has eight benefits: It is the measure of being a Buddhist, it is the basis of all vows, the karmic obscurations accumulated previously are reduced and exhausted, one accumulates vast merit, one will not fall into bad migrations, one will not be harmed by human and non-human obstacles, one will attain everything one wishes for, and one will swiftly attain the state of buddhahood.

First: Although, generally speaking, there appear to be many ways of positing what constitutes non-Buddhists and a Buddhists, it is widely known that Jowo [Atisha] and Shantipa distinguished them by the fact of going for refuge. Therefore, Buddhists should be understood as those having achieved going for refuge and not having given up on it. Hence, as for the measure of being a Buddhist, it is necessary to consider the three jewels as teacher etc. from the bottom of one’s heart. Without that, whatever virtuous deeds you do, you are not included among Buddhists.

Second: In the Commentary on the Treasury it says:

Those who go for refuge have gained access to taking all the vows correctly. [34]

and in Seventy Verses on Going for Refuge it also says:

Upasakas go to the three for refuge -
That’s the root of the eight vows. [35]

the intention being that through going for refuge the thought of passing beyond suffering is stabilized and that the vows spring from that.
3 The obscurations accumulated previously are reduced and exhausted

Third: In the *Compendium of Trainings* it says:

> Here, in the context of showing that negativites are purified by going for refuge, the story of the pig should be presented as illustration. [36]

For instance, a son of a god who was going to be reborn as a pig, through going for refuge was not born as one. It is stated that:

> Those gone for refuge to the Buddha,  
> Will not go to the bad migrations.  
> They give up their human body  
> and obtain that of a god.

It has been stated similarly with respect to the Dharma and Sangha.

4 One accumulates vast merit

Fourth: In the *Summary of the Perfections* it says:

> If the merit of refuge took shape  
> These three realms would even be small as a container.  
> Great oceans, foremost of water bodies  
> Could not hold or measure it.

That is how [vast] it is.

5 One will not fall into bad migrations

Fifth: You should understand this from the above.

6 Not being harmed by human and non-human obstacles

Sixth: This is easy to understand.

7 One will attain everything one wishes for

Seventh: Whatever Dharma activity you do, if at the beginning you make offerings to the three jewels, go for refuge and supplicate them, it will easily be accomplished.

8 One will swiftly attain buddhahood

In [the Sutra Requested by Senge] it says:

> Through faith unfreedom is abandoned. [37]

In accordance with that you obtain distinguished leisure and, having encountered refuge, train in the special paths, whereby you will become a buddha without long delay. Mindful of these kinds of benefits you should go for refuge three times a day and three times at night.

2B4B-2B1A-2A4A-2F Not giving up the three jewels for one’s life nor for a laugh and guarding against this
There is no doubt that we will be separated from this life, body, and possessions. If we give up the three jewels for their sake, there will be continuous suffering in all successive lives [to come], therefore we should vow not to abandon [our] refuge, come what may, and not even utter words about giving up [our] refuge for a laugh.

Eliminating inaccuracies [with respect to the precepts of going for refuge]

1 Refutation of that which is not a precept

Former masters stated a precept to the effect that you should train in going for refuge to the Tathagata of whatever direction you go in, but I have not seen a source [for that].

2 The sources for the specific precepts

Thus the six common precepts [for all the objects of refuge] are just like they appear in the Commentary on the Lamp on the Path. [98] The first three specific precepts are explained in the sutra collection, whereas the latter three appear in the Six Branches of Going for Refuge.

3 The difference between degenerating and relinquishing [the precepts]

As for the way transgression against these precepts becomes a cause of degenerating and relinquishing them, transgression of the rule not to give up your refuge even for the sake of your life actually constitutes relinquishing it. Similarly, even if you do not give up the three jewels, but dualistically uphold the three – teachers and so forth – that are incompatible with them, you transgress the precept of not advocating another refuge. By not having confidence in the refuge you also relinquish it. I think that, if these do not occur, it is a mere transgression of the precepts but not a cause for relinquishing them.

4 The advice not to transgress the precepts because of how great the benefits are: being the entrance gate to the teachings etc.

Thus going for refuge is the great entry gate to the Buddha’s teachings. If your going for refuge does not consist in mere words, you will be relying on a superior power. Therefore you will not be thwarted by external or internal obstacles, and the various qualities will come about easily and hardly deteriorate, whereby they will increase more and more. So it is vital that you uphold [your] refuge by means of being mindful of the fear and the positive qualities explained above, and that you put effort into not transgressing its precepts.

Generating the faith of conviction in karma and its results

The second one – generating the faith of conviction in karma and its results – has three points: considering karma and its results in general, considering karma and its results in particular, and having considered them, how to engage [in virtuous actions] and counteract [the non-virtuous].

The first one has two points: the actual way to consider karma and its results in general and considering the specific divisions.
The first one has four points: how karma is certain, the great increase of karma, you do not meet with karma you have not created, and karma you have created does not dissipate.

1 How karma is certain
2 The great increase of karma
3 You do not meet with karma you have not created
4 Karma you have created does not dissipate

First: All happiness having the aspect of pleasant feelings, whether in ordinary beings or aryas – even as little as that which is generated in a sentient being born in hell in dependence on a cool wind springing up - arises from virtuous karma accumulated previously. There is no way for happiness to arise from non-virtuous karma. All suffering having the aspect of painful feelings – even as little as that which is generated in the mind of an arhat – arises from non-virtuous karma accumulated previously. There is no way for suffering to arise from virtuous karma. In the Precious Garland it says:

From non-virtuous deeds: all suffering;
Likewise all the bad migrations.
From virtuous deeds: all happy realms –
Happiness in all rebirths.

2 Explanations [of this] as the basis of all white dharmas

Therefore, happiness and suffering do not arise without cause or from an incongruous cause like the primal matter, Ishvara, and the like. In general, happiness and suffering arise from virtuous and non-virtuous karma, and the manifold specifics of happiness and suffering also arise individually from the manifold specifics of the two [types of] of karma without any error. To gain certainty with regard to actions and their results being certain and infallible is said to be the correct view of all Buddhists and praised as the foundation of all white dharmas.

Second: There is nothing among external causes and effects that would resemble the increase of internal causes and effects, for even from small wholesome karma the result of enormous happiness arises while even from small unwholesome karma the result of enormous suffering arises. In the Udanavarga it says:

Even committing a small negativity,
Will effectuate great fear and
Great disaster in future worlds.
Like poison seeping through to the core.

Even committing a little merit,
In future worlds will bring great happiness,
Causing greatly meaningful things,
Like grains that ripen to excellence.

You do not meet with karma you have not created
First: Thus you have first generated certainty concerning the ways of actions and results through realizing that happiness and suffering results are certain to have their individual causes, that karma increases greatly, that you do not meet with anything you have not created and that karma does not dissipate. Now, if you ask about what actions to adopt and which ones to reject [it is as follows]. In general, the gates for engaging in good conduct and faulty conduct are determined to be three. Although not all virtues and non-virtues of the three doors are included in the ten paths of action, the Bhagavan, summing up the essential points, has stated the more obvious or coarser virtues and non-virtues, the great foundations of misdeeds, as the ten black paths of action. Having seen that, when they are given up, the most
significant points are also included in ten, he taught them to be the white paths of action. In the Treasury it says:

Subsuming the most obvious among them
The various virtues and non-virtues
Were stated as ten paths of action.  

Also, in the Scripture on Discernment it says:

Guarding one’s speech and completely restraining one’s mind
Refraining from unwholesome deeds with the body,
Once you have purified these three paths of action,
You will attain the path that was taught by the seer[s].  

Therefore, the meaning of the praise to ethical discipline of abandoning the ten non-virtuous [paths of action] from the Sutra on the Ten Grounds, is summarily stated in Entry to the Middle Way:

For high status and for certain goodness
Of ordinary beings, those born from the [Buddha’s] speech
Of those with the nature of self-enlightenment,
The Jinas’ children - the cause is not other than discipline.  

That being so, it would be quite disgraceful if someone who does not rely on the mind of restraint again and again, and guard even a bit of ethical discipline, were to say: “As for me, I am a Mahayanist.” In the Kshitigarbha Sutra it says:

By means of these ten virtuous paths [of actions] you become a buddha.
On the other hand, if one who does not guard even a single virtuous path of action throughout his life and yet says: “I am a Mahayanist. I seek unsurpassed, perfectly complete enlightenment”, that person is a thorough hypocrite and great liar, deceiving the world in front of all the bhagavans and propounding nihilism. He will die deluded and go to the wrongly fallen.  

“Wrongly fallen” should be understood as a synonym for the utterly bad migrations.

The second one – determination of actions and effects – has three points; negative actions and [their] effects, positive actions and [their] effects and indication of other divisions of actions.
2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A Negative actions and [their] effects

1. The actual negative paths of action
2. Differences in weight
3. Indication of the effects

The first one has three points: the actual negative paths of action, differences in weight and indication of the effects.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1 The actual negative paths of action

A. The actual paths of action
B. Distinction between action and path

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A The actual paths of action

1. Killing
2. Stealing
3. Sexual misconduct
4. Lying
5. Divisive speech
6. Harmful speech
7. Meaningless speech
8. Covetousness
9. Harmful intent
10. Wrong views


A. Basis
B. Attitude
C. Performance
D. Completion

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-1A Basis

As for the first one, the basis of killing is another sentient being.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-1B Attitude

1. Discrimination

The attitude has three points, the first of which is discrimination, which [again] has four points:

- with regard to the basis, such a sentient being, the discrimination of it as such,
- the discrimination that it is not a sentient being,
- the discrimination of what is not a sentient being as not a sentient being, and
- the discrimination of it as a sentient being.

The first and third discrimination are unmistaken, the second and fourth ones are mistaken. That is, if you have the motivation, for instance, thinking to kill only Devadatta and then, when it comes to the performance, you mistakenly kill Yajnadatta there is no negativity to do with the actual basis. For that an unmistaken discrimination would be necessary. However, if, at the time of the performance, you have the general motivation thinking to kill whoever is at hand, an unmistaken discrimination is not necessary. You should be aware of this rule with regard to the remaining nine, too, as appropriate.

2. Mental affliction

The [decisive] mental affliction is any of the three poisons.

3. Motiviation

The motivation consists in the wish to kill.
1 The performer

It is the same whether you yourself do the performance or whether you cause someone else to do it.

2 The essence of the performance

The essence of the performance is to do it by means of a weapon, poison, mantra, or whatever it is.

The completion consists in the death [of the other being] due to condition of the performance, at that time or at another time before you yourself die.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-1D Completion

The basis of stealing is anything that someone else has obtained.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-2A Basis

As for the attitude, among the three, discrimination and mental affliction, are as above. The motivation consists in the wish to take it away from the other [person] without being given it.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-2C Performance

As regards the performance, the performer is as [explained] above.

2 The essence of the performance

As for the essence of the performance, it is the same whether you take something by force or whether you steal something sneakily. In addition, being deceitful with respect to a debt or a trust or and using other fraudulent methods also constitutes stealing. And whether it is done for one’s own or someone else’s purpose or to harm someone else etc., it is stealing.

The completion consists in the arising of the thought that one has obtained it. Or, if you have caused someone else to rob or steal, it is enough [for that thought] to arise in him. This is like when someone kills someone else due to one’s order and, even without his knowledge, when the latter dies, the negativity of the actual [path of action] befalls the one having given the order.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-3 Sexual misconduct

The performer

It is the same whether you yourself do the performance or whether you cause someone else to do it.

2 The essence of the performance

The essence of the performance is to do it by means of a weapon, poison, mantra, or whatever it is.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-1D Completion

The completion consists in the death [of the other being] due to condition of the performance, at that time or at another time before you yourself die.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-2A Basis

As for the attitude, among the three, discrimination and mental affliction, are as above. The motivation consists in the wish to take it away from the other [person] without being given it.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-2C Performance

As regards the performance, the performer is as [explained] above.

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As for the essence of the performance, it is the same whether you take something by force or whether you steal something sneakily. In addition, being deceitful with respect to a debt or a trust or and using other fraudulent methods also constitutes stealing. And whether it is done for one’s own or someone else’s purpose or to harm someone else etc., it is stealing.

The completion consists in the arising of the thought that one has obtained it. Or, if you have caused someone else to rob or steal, it is enough [for that thought] to arise in him. This is like when someone kills someone else due to one’s order and, even without his knowledge, when the latter dies, the negativity of the actual [path of action] befalls the one having given the order.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-3 Sexual misconduct

The performer

It is the same whether you yourself do the performance or whether you cause someone else to do it.

2 The essence of the performance

The essence of the performance is to do it by means of a weapon, poison, mantra, or whatever it is.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-1D Completion

The completion consists in the death [of the other being] due to condition of the performance, at that time or at another time before you yourself die.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-2A Basis

As for the attitude, among the three, discrimination and mental affliction, are as above. The motivation consists in the wish to take it away from the other [person] without being given it.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-2C Performance

As regards the performance, the performer is as [explained] above.

2 The essence of the performance

As for the essence of the performance, it is the same whether you take something by force or whether you steal something sneakily. In addition, being deceitful with respect to a debt or a trust or and using other fraudulent methods also constitutes stealing. And whether it is done for one’s own or someone else’s purpose or to harm someone else etc., it is stealing.

The completion consists in the arising of the thought that one has obtained it. Or, if you have caused someone else to rob or steal, it is enough [for that thought] to arise in him. This is like when someone kills someone else due to one’s order and, even without his knowledge, when the latter dies, the negativity of the actual [path of action] befalls the one having given the order.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-3 Sexual misconduct

The performer

It is the same whether you yourself do the performance or whether you cause someone else to do it.

2 The essence of the performance

The essence of the performance is to do it by means of a weapon, poison, mantra, or whatever it is.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-1D Completion

The completion consists in the death [of the other being] due to condition of the performance, at that time or at another time before you yourself die.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-2A Basis

As for the attitude, among the three, discrimination and mental affliction, are as above. The motivation consists in the wish to take it away from the other [person] without being given it.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-2C Performance

As regards the performance, the performer is as [explained] above.

2 The essence of the performance

As for the essence of the performance, it is the same whether you take something by force or whether you steal something sneakily. In addition, being deceitful with respect to a debt or a trust or and using other fraudulent methods also constitutes stealing. And whether it is done for one’s own or someone else’s purpose or to harm someone else etc., it is stealing.

The completion consists in the arising of the thought that one has obtained it. Or, if you have caused someone else to rob or steal, it is enough [for that thought] to arise in him. This is like when someone kills someone else due to one’s order and, even without his knowledge, when the latter dies, the negativity of the actual [path of action] befalls the one having given the order.
1 Persons you should not have intercourse with

Among the four bases of sexual misconduct, the first is those you should not have intercourse with, your mother etc.,
women under the care of their mothers etc., all men, eunuchs and ordained women.

2 Inappropriate body parts

Inappropriate body parts are all other than the entrance to the womb such as the mouth.

3 Inappropriate places

Inappropriate places are the vicinity of gurus, places with stupas and the like.

4 Inappropriate times

Inappropriate times are pregnancy, when you abide in one-day vows, etc.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-3B Attitude

1 Three positions of scholars on discrimination

Among the three aspects of attitude, with respect to discrimination:
- the Compendium states that “a discrimination of that as that” – a non-mistaken one is necessary
- the vinaya states that with regard to a defeat of impure conduct, it is the same whether the discrimination is mistaken or non-mistaken
- the Commentary on the Treasury explains that if you approach someone else’s wife discriminating her to be yours, this will not constitute the path of action under discussion, and that there are two ways in which getting involved with someone else’s wife, perceiving her to be that of someone else yet, may or may not constitute such a path.

2 Mental affliction

{104} The mental affliction is any of the three poisons.

3 Motivation

The motivation is the wish for intercourse in a manner that constitutes impure conduct.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-3C Performance

The performance consists in endeavouring for the sake of that.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-3D Completion

The completion consists in the two coming together by the two.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-4 Lying

A Basis
B Attitude
C Performance
D Completion

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-4A Basis

1 Basis of expression

Among the two bases of lying, the basis of expression is the four: that which one has seen, heard, distinguished or become fully aware of as well as their four opposites.

2 Object of comprehension

The object of comprehension is for the other person to understand the meaning.
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Small Scope

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-4B  Attitude
Among the three [aspects] belonging to the attitude, the discrimination consists in making something one has seen into something one has not seen etc. The mental affliction is any of the three poisons. The motivation consists in the wish to say something, changing the discrimination [someone has of something].

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-4C  Performance
1  The actual performance
2  Clearing up doubts
2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-4C1 The actual performance
The performance consists in indicating something by saying it, by making sure not to say anything, or through body language.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-4C2  Clearing up doubts
A  Clearing up the doubt that it depends on the purpose
[B  Three approaches concerning the distinction between the path of action being complete or not if you enjoin someone else to lie]
2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-4C2A Clearing up the doubt that it depends on the purpose
Moreover, [in the scriptures] it says that it is the same whether you say it for your own or someone else’s purposes.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-4C2B  Three approaches concerning the distinction between the actual path of action being incomplete if you enjoin someone else to do it
1  The approach of the Treatise on the Grounds
Here it is stated that with respect to lying, divisive speech, and harsh words, even through enjoining [someone else], these three will come about.

2  Vasubandhu’s approach
In the Treasury, the root text and its Commentary, it is explained that all four associated with speech become paths of action through enjoining [someone else to perform them].

3  The approach of the vinaya is to join them to the downfalls
In the vinaya it is stated that in order to produce a complete downfall, you yourself must speak.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-4D  Completion
1  The actual completion
The completion consists in the other person understanding [what has been said].

2  Clearing up doubts
The Commentary on the Treasury explains that, if it is not understood, it becomes merely idle talk. This is the same with divisive speech and harsh words.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-5  Divisive speech
A  Basis
The basis of divisive speech are sentient beings who are in agreement or in disagreement with each other.

B  Attitude
Among the three [aspects] belonging to the attitude, the discrimination and affliction are as above.
(105) The motivation consists in the wish to divide sentient beings in agreement and the wish that those in disagreement not to be reconciled.

C Performance
The performance consists in expressing either pleasant or unpleasant subject matter with either true or untrue words and to say them for either one’s own or others’ purpose.

D Completion
The completion consists in the divisive words [thus] expressed to be understood.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-6 Harsh words
A Basis
The basis of harsh words is a sentient being who has become the basis for the arising of a hostile attitude.

B Attitude
With respect to the attitude, discrimination and affliction are as above. The motivation is the wish to speak with harsh speech.

C Performance
The performance consists in speaking unpleasantly, either truthfully or falsely, about [the person’s] faults of extraction, body, ethical discipline or behaviour.

D Completion
The completion consists in the one to whom it was said understanding the meaning.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-7 Idle talk
A Basis
The basis of idle talk is a meaningless topic.

B Attitude
Although with regard to discrimination, [one] of the three [aspects] belonging to the attitude, nothing has been stated other than “[it] is the discrimination of that as that”, here it is to talk having discriminated the very topic one wishes to express as that, because for this there is no need for someone’s understanding. The mental affliction is any of the poisons. The motivation is the wish to talk disconnectedly and randomly.

C Performance
The performance consists in setting about uttering idle talk.

D Completion
The completion is to finish uttering the idle talk.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-8 Covetousness
A Basis
The basis of covetousness is a possession or provision of someone else.

B Attitude
Among the three [aspects] belonging to the attitude, the discrimination consists in the discrimination of that basis as that. The affliction is any of the three poisons. The motivation is the wish to make it one’s own.
C Performance
The performance consists in making and effort for the object of that thought.

D Completion
The completion is the thought: “May this possession etc. be mine!”

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-9 Harmful intent
A / B Basis and attitude

The basis, discrimination and affliction of harmful intent are the same as with harsh words. The motivation is the wish to hit etc. and (106) the thought “how nice it would be if [this person] was killed or bound or if [his] resources declined by themselves or through someone else” and the like.

C Performance
The performance consists in applying oneself to this thought.

D Completion
The completion consists in the decision to hit and the like.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-10 Wrong views
A Basis
B Attitude
C Performance
D Completion

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-10A Basis
The basis of wrong views is the meaning of an object that exists.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-10B Attitude
1 Discrimination
Among the three [aspects] belonging to the attitude, discrimination consists in discriminating the object of denial as true.

2 Affliction
The affliction is any of the three poisons.

3 Motivation
The motivation consists in the wish to deny [those objects].

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-10C Performance
1 The actual performance
[2 Divisions ]

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-10C1 The actual performance
The performance consists in setting about applying oneself to such thought.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A1A-10C2 Divisions
In this regard there are four [divisions]:
A Denying causes
Denying causes consists in [the view]: “Excellent conduct and faulty conduct do not exist.”

B Denying effects
Denying effects consists in [the view]: “Fully ripened effects of those two do not exist”.

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C Denying activities

Denying activities has three points:
1. Denying the activity of plantings seeds consists in [the view]: “There is no planting of a seed by the father and no retaining of a seed by the mother.”
2. Denying the activity of coming and going consists in [the view]: “There is no coming from a former existence to this one and no going from this one to a future one”.
3. Denying the activity of being born consists in [the view]: “There is no intermediate state of miraculous birth of beings”.

D Denying existing things

Denying existing things consists in [the view]: “Arhats and the like do not exist.”

The completion is certainty with respect to one’s denial.

Among them, the intentions in the mind are actions, but no paths of action. The seven actions of body and speech are actions, yet they are also paths of action, since they are also the basis for the intentions proceeding. The three, covetousness and so on are paths of actions, but they are no actions.

D Differences in weight

The second one – differences in weight – has two points: the weight of the ten paths of action and incidentally: summary indication of the gates of strong karma.

First: In Actual Basis of the Levels six ways of being weighty are stated.

1 Strong compounding

Strong compounding is the motivation of actions by the strong presence or absence of the three poisons.

2 Habituation

Habituation is have resorted to virtuous and non-virtuous actions for a long time and to have familiarised with them out many times.

3 Essence [of the action]

As for their essence, with the seven actions of body and speech each preceding one is weightier than the subsequent one, whereas with the three actions of mind, a subsequent one is weightier than the preceding one.

4 Basis

The basis is benefiting or harming the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, gurus etc.

5 One-sided fixation on the discordant side

A one-sided fixation on the discordant side consists in spending one’s whole life adopting non-virtuous actions with one-sided determination and not even doing one single virtue.
6 Elimination of the discordant side

To eliminate the discordant side is to give up the side of non-virtue, to become free of attachment, and train in virtuous actions. In the Letter to a Friend it also says:

Persistence, strong adherence, no counter-agent,
A basis with foremost qualities – actions that spring from
[Them] are the five great types of non-virtue and virtue.
From them endeavour to practice virtuous behaviour! [47]

Moreover there are five because of the division [of the basis] into two: (1) a basis endowed with good qualities, such as the three jewels, and a basis of help, such as one’s parents.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A2B Incidentally : Summary indication of the gates of strong karma
1 Great strength by way of the field
2 Great strength by way of the support
3 Great strength by way of the thing
4 Great strength by way of the attitude

The second one has four points: great strength by way of the field, great strength by way of the support, great strength by way of the thing, and great strength by way of the attitude

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A2B-1 Great strength by way of the field
A The field of the three jewels
First: the three jewels, the guru, someone like the guru, parents, and so forth : [are gates of strong karma] because with these, even if the thoughts for them are not intense and the benefit or harm done [to them] are small, the merit {108} and misdeed are great. In this regard it says in Establishment of Mindfulness that the karma of stealing even a little thing from the three jewels is purified - in the case of the Buddha and the Dharma - if it is returned.

B The Field of the Sangha
However, however, in the case of the Sangha it does not get purified until the feeling [of the effect] is experienced – in the case of something belonging to the Sangha. Furthermore it is stated that, if it was a means of providing for the mouths of the Sangha, one is born in the great hell and otherwise one is born in the great darkness surrounding Without Respite.

C The field of bodhisattvas
Bodhisattvas are an extremely powerful field of virtue and non-virtue. In the Sutra of the Seal of Engagement in the Generation of the Power of Confidence it says that compared to someone who, in anger, puts all the sentient beings of the ten directions into a dark prison, if someone [else], in anger, turns his back on a bodhisattva, saying “I shall not look upon this horrible person [again]”, he generates incalculably greater negativity. Also compared to someone who has destroyed and burnt down stupas as numerous as sand [grains] of the river Ganges, if someone [else] generates anger and harmful intent towards a bodhisattva and says unpleasant things [the relationship] is like before. In the Sutra of the Seal of Entering Certainty and Uncertainty it says that compared to someone who with a mind of love makes eyes develop again in the sentient beings of the ten directions whose eyes have been plucked out, and who after releasing the previous sentient beings from prison, establishes them in the happiness of a universal monarch or Brahma, if someone [else] with clear faith looks at and with clear faith wishes to look at a bodhisattva with devotion to the Mahayana and proclaims his praise, he
generates incalculably more merit. Also, in the Sutra of the Magic of the Complete Certainty of Total Peace it says that compared to killing all the sentient beings of Jambudvipa or seizing all their possessions, obstructing even as little as the virtue of a bodhisattva giving a handful of food to an animal, generates incalculably greater negativity. {109} so you should be very careful with respect to this point.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A2B-2 Great strength by way of the support

A The difference between the skilful and the unskilful

Second: Even a small lump of iron sinks to the bottom, but a container made from it floats on the surface. It has been set out that, similarly, the negativites committed by the skilful and unskilful are heavy or light. In fact, it is said that with for the skilful who regret previous negativites, restrain future ones, do not keep them secret, and apply their virtuous antidotes, they are light whereas for those who arrogantly assume they are skilful and do not do this, but out of contempt deliberately engage in them, they are heavy.

B The actual strength of the support

In the Jewel Heap Sutra it also says: if all the sentient beings of the billion universes having entered the Mahayana, were to possess the kingdom of universal monarchs and each of them offered butter lamps in vessels the size of an ocean and with wicks the size of Mount Meru to a stupa of the Buddha, this would not match even the hundredth part of the merit a bodhisattva who has left his home and who holds up a little bit of wick smeared with butter in front of a stupa. This makes clear the strength of the support even if there is no difference in the attitude and the field and even if the object [offered] is very different. This reasoning also makes clear that depending on whether or not the support has vows and, if so, whether it has one, two or three, the cultivation of the path will be the more effective the more it has. There is a great difference in the strength of the roots of virtue whether, for instance, a householder, at the time of handing out donations etc., acts on the basis of keeping vows like for instance one-day vows, or whether he acts without any vows.

C The faults of discipline being adulterated

In the Sutra of Annihilating Adulterations of Discipline it says that {110} compared to a human being possessing the ten non-virtues who, for a hundred years, continuously and uninterruptedly accumulates negativity, a fully-ordained monk who has [completely] broken his [vows of] discipline and who, for one day, dressed in the victory banner of sages, enjoys that which has been offered to him with faith [accumulates] far more negativity. Again, by way of the support negativity has greater strength. In the Scripture on Discernment it also says:

It is better to eat lumps
Of iron blazing with tongues of fire
Than unrestrained, undisciplined
To eat the alms-food of the area. [48]

This has been stated with regard to both adulterated discipline and slackness in training. The Teacher’s statements that compared to negativities associated with the Dharma, the negativities of the ten non-virtues are small, appear to be true.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A2B-3 Great strength by way of the thing
Third: With regard to giving gifts to sentient beings, giving Dharma [is far more excellent] and with regard to making offerings to the buddhas, offering one’s realizations is far more excellent than gifts and offerings of material things. From that example you should also understand the [differing strength of] other things.

   2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A2B-4 Great strength by way of the attitude
   A Greatness by way of the intensity of the attitude, its duration etc.

Fourth: In the Heap of Jewels Sutra it says that compared to each one of the sentient beings of the billion universes creating a buddha stupa as massive as Mount Meru and and all those who are objects of respect paying respect to them for ten million eons, a bodhisattva undivorced from the mind of omniscience who throws one single flower [generates] more merit. That being so you should understand this in terms of the differences in attitude – whether what you want to attain is superior or inferior, whether you observe your own benefit or that of others and so forth - as well as the effect of intensity and duration. When it comes to faulty conduct a strong mentally afflicted attitude and long duration also have more strength.

   B How anger is particularly strong

Among [mental afflictions], again, anger is particulary strong. In Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Behaviour it says:

   Whatever good conduct was amassed
   In thousand eons by giving and worship
   To the sugatas and the like
   All is destroyed by one [flash of] anger. [49]

In this regard anger towards those whose conduct accords with purity weighs very heavily, [and] anger towards the jinas’ children more heavily still. In the King of Concentration [Sutra] it says:

   If one has harboured harmful intent for another,
   Discipline and study cannot save one,
   Nor can concentration or a retreat place,
   Nor can gifts, nor worship of the Buddha. [50]

   2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2A3 Indication of their effects
   A The fully ripened effect
   B The effect in conformity with the cause
   C The conditioning or empowering effect

The third one – the effects of these [actions] – has three points: the fully ripened effect, the effect in conformity with the cause and the conditioning or empowering effect.

   A The fully ripened effect

First: As each of the ten unwholesome paths of action depends on the basis, the three poisons, and whether it is great, intermediate, or small, the fully ripened effect is also threefold. In Actual Basis of the Levels it says that through each of the ten, a great [act of] killing and so on, you are reborn as a hell being, through each of the ten intermediate ones
you are reborn as a hungry ghost and through each of the ten small ones you are reborn as an animal. In the Sutra on the Ten Levels the effects of small and intermediate ones are said to be the other way around.

B The effect in conformity with the cause

Second: The effects in conformity with the cause are that even having left the bad migrations and taken rebirth as a human being, respectively, your life will be short, you will be lacking in possessions, you will not keep your partner, there will be a lot of slander, you will be separated from loved ones, you will hear unpleasant sounds, others will not listen to your words, and the three [poisons], attachment, hatred, and delusion will predominate.

C The conditioning effect

Third: The conditioning effect:
- of killing is that in future worlds, food and drink, medicine, harvests and the like have little power; that of stealing great droughts and rains and poor harvests, etc.;
- that of sexual misconduct swamps, much filth, unpleasant experiences, etc.;
- that of lying, that field work and work to do with boats will not succeed etc.;
- that of divisive speech that the location [where you live] will be bumpy and uneven, and it will be difficult to travel, and so on;
- that of harsh words that the location [where you live] will be full of logs, brambles, rocks, pebbles, potsherds, etc.;
- that of idle talk that fruit trees do not bear fruit or only out of season, etc.;
- that of covetousness that everything excellent deteriorates year by year, month by month, and day by day, etc.;
- that of harmful intent a lot of epidemics, injuries, infections, disputes, wars with enemy troops, etc. and
- that of wrong views that in the world [you live in] the best resources will decline, etc.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2B White actions and their effects
1 White actions
2 Their effects

The second one has two points: the actions and the effects.

2B4B-2B1A-2B1B-2B White actions
A Brief indication by means of scripture

First: They are the bodily actions of correctly abstaining from killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct due to possessing a wholesome mind having thought about their disadvantages, and of carrying this abstention to its conclusion. Similarly, this is to be applied to the four verbal ones and the three mental ones, the difference being that they are called “actions of speech” and “actions of mind”. This is how it is stated in Actual Basis of the Levels.

B Extensive explanation

This should therefore be related to the basis, attitude, performance and completion as appropriate. When applied to the path of action of abandoning killing, the basis is another sentient being. The attitude is the wish to give it up having seen its disadvantages. The performance is to put effort into completely abstaining from killing. The completion is the physical action of correct abstention having been completed. The other path[s] [of action] should also be understood in this manner.
Second: From among the three [effects of virtuous paths of action] the fully ripened effect is to be born as a human, a desire realm god, and a god of the two upper realms though a small, intermediate and great virtuous action. As for the effect in conformity with the cause and the conditioning effect the opposites of the [respective effects from] non-virtuous actions apply.

The third one has two points the first of which is the classification of throwing and completing [actions].

Throwing actions for [rebirth in] the happy migrations are virtuous [actions] and throwing actions for [rebirth in] the bad migrations are non-virtuous [actions].

The completing ones are uncertain, however, even in the happy migrations, incomplete limbs, minor body parts or sense powers, hideous looks, a short life-span, many illnesses, poverty, and so forth are caused by non-virtue. Also for animals and hungry ghosts, perfect prosperity is caused by virtue.

There are thus four alternatives:
- projected by a virtuous throwing [action] and completed by a virtuous or a non-virtuous completing [action],
- projected by a non-virtuous throwing [action] and completed by non-virtuous or a virtuous completing [action].

With respect to what will definitely be experienced and what will not, what will definitely be experienced is what has been done intentionally and accumulated. What will not definitely be experienced is what has [not] been done intentionally but not accumulated.

The difference between what has been done and what has been accumulated [is as follows]. What has been done is what has been intended or what has manifested through the body or speech after having been intended. What has been accumulated are actions apart from the ten [exceptions] like those done in a dream. What has not been accumulated are the ten [exceptions] such as those done in a dream.

What will definitely be experienced has three [categories] in terms of the time when the result is experienced:
1. That which will be experienced as a visible phenomenon is an action whose effect will be experienced in this life.
2. That which will be experienced after taking rebirth is [an action] whose effect will be experienced in the following life.

3. That which will be experienced at another time is what will be experienced from the next but one life onwards.

Specific considerations on karma

A. The way in which it is necessary to achieve a fully qualified basis

Second: Through abandoning the ten non-virtues you do indeed obtain a good basis. However, if you achieve a fully qualified basis for accomplishing omniscience, it will be quite unlike others [with respect to] covering ground in meditations on the path. Therefore, you should attain that basis.

This one has two points: the fully ripened positive qualities and their function and the cause of the fully ripened [effects].

The fully ripened positive qualities and their function

A. Excellent life span
B. Excellent complexion
C. Excellent extraction
D. Excellent power
E. Respectable words
F. Renown as being very powerful
G. Being male
H. Possessing strength

The first one has eight points: excellent life span, excellent complexion, excellent extraction, excellent power, respectable words, renown as being very powerful, being male, and having strength.

A. Excellent life span

The first one means that due to an earlier throwing [action], a long life has been thrown and one lives accordingly. Due to this, you undertake actions for the purpose of yourself and others accumulating a lot of virtue over a long period of time.

B. Excellent complexion

The second one refers to good complexion and shape, complete sense powers and balanced proportions. Due to this, disciples having been delighted at one’s very sight, are gathered and listen to one’s words.

C. Excellent extraction

The third one is to be born into an exalted and well-known family respected by the world. Due to this, one’s commands will be accomplished and not transgressed.

D. Excellent power

The fourth one consists in massive resources, friends and followers. Due to this, one gathers a lot of sentient beings and ripens them.
E Respectable words

Fifth: As you do not deceive others through body or speech, sentient beings uphold your words. Due to this, you gather sentient beings with the four [ways of] gathering [disciple], and ripen them.

F Renown as being very powerful

Sixth: Due to possessing positive qualities such as diligence in generosity and so forth, you become an object of veneration of great beings. (115) Due to this, they help you with all activities, whereby they acknowledge your deeds and quickly heed your commands.

G Being male

The seventh one is to possess a male organ. Thereby you become a vessel\(^9\) for all qualities and, through aspiration and effort, a vessel for expanding wisdom. You are not afraid among people, and nobody will prevent you from going with all sentient beings or living in seclusion.

H Possessing strength

Eighth: By the power of previous actions, there naturally being only few harms and no diseases, one will have great enthusiasm that arises from the conditions of this life. Due to that, you will not get discouraged by whatever goals you or others may have, and in dependence on intense enthusiasm you attain the power of individual investigation whereupon supernormal cognitive powers will be quick [to develop].

The causes of the fully ripened [effects]

A Division of the causes in eight

B Threefold division

The second one has eight points the first of which is not to cause harm to any being and to cultivate an attitude of non-harm. Furthermore it says:

Through freeing those caught in places of slaughter
And likewise helping through [giving] life,
Through reversing harming creatures
You will gain longevity.
From a doctor’s respect for the ill,
From the administration of medicine
From not harming creatures with sticks
Or lumps of earth, you will be without illness.

The second one consists in offering light, such as butter lamps and new clothing. Apart from that:

From the absence of anger as basis
And offering jewelry - a good physique.
From lack of envy [you will gain]
Good fortune as fruit, it is explained

The third one is to overcome one’s pride and respect gurus etc. and others like a servant.
The fourth one is giving food and clothing, and so forth to those who ask and also benefit [others] without being asked, giving away [freely] to the suffering and to those who are fields of good qualities but lack necessities.

(116) The fifth one is the habit of abandoning the four non-virtues of speech.

The sixth one is to make aspirational prayers to accomplish all kinds of positive qualities in the future and make offerings to the three jewels, one’s parents, shravakas, pratyekabuddhas, abbots, masters, and gurus.

The seventh one is to rejoice in the good qualities of men and, with regard to women, to look at their disadvantages without rejoicing, to oppose the inclinations of those who wish for a female body, and to liberate those whose male organs are going to be cut.

The eighth one is to carry out yourself what others cannot do at all, to help them with what they can do together with you and to give food and drink to others.

Threefold division

1 The first cause: a perfectly pure mind
   A Aspects relating to oneself
   B Aspects relating to others

As for the three causes, [the first one,] a perfectly pure mind has two aspects relating to oneself.

   A Aspects relating to oneself

   They are:
   1. to dedicate the virtues of accomplishing those causes to unsurpassed enlightenment without hoping for a fully ripened effect, and
   2. to accomplish the causes intensely from the bottom of one’s heart.

   B Aspects relating to others

The two aspects relating to others are:

   1. to give up envy, competitiveness and scorn at the sight of the highest, intermediate and least [practitioners] in agreements with the Dharma and
   2. to rejoice, even if you do not manage [completely] to examine many times a day what to do.

Pure performance with regard to oneself implies long duration, continuity and intensity.

   A Relating to oneself

With regard to others it consists in causing someone who has not correctly taken [the rules of ethical discipline] to do so, praising those who have, so that they generate delight, to make them do so continuously, and to make them not abandon them.

The first cause: a perfectly pure mind

Threefold division

1 The first cause: a perfectly pure mind
   A Aspects relating to oneself
   B Aspects relating to others
2 The second cause: pure performance
   A Relating to oneself

With regard to others it consists in causing someone who has not correctly taken [the rules of ethical discipline] to do so, praising those who have, so that they generate delight, to make them do so continuously, and to make them not abandon them.

The third cause: a pure field
Since the very two - attitude and performance - produce plenty of good fruit, they resemble a field.

2B4B-2B1A-2B3 After these considerations how to engage [in virtuous actions] and oppose [the non-virtuous]

A General presentation
B Specifically how to purify by means of the four powers

{117} The third one - after these considerations how to engage [in virtuous actions] and oppose [the non-virtuous] – has two points: general presentation and specifically how to purify by means of the four powers.

2B4B-2B1A-2B3A General presentation

1 How to bring forth a mind cultivating this perpetually, every day and night

First: In Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Behaviour it says:

Suffering springs from what is non-virtuous.
‘How to reach certain freedom from it?’
It is appropriate, day and night,
Always to think about nothing but this. [51]

And:

The root of everything that’s virtuous
Is aspiration, the Muni said.
Again, the root of that is always
To meditate on fully ripened effects.

In accordance with this statement you should come to understand positive and negative actions with their effects and then meditate on this over and over again, for [the karmic process] is a very hidden phenomenon which is why it is extremely difficult to gain certainty about it.

2 The vital importance of gaining conviction concerning the Buddha’s statements about how actions [bring about] effects

In this regard the King of Concentration [Sutra] says:

Even if the moon and stars fell down,
The earth collapsed with mountains and with towns,
And if the heaven’s aspect was transformed -
Still no word you say would be untrue. [52]

You should thus develop conviction in the words of the Tathagata and sustain it. Unless you have gained uncontrived certainty about them, you will not gain the certainty with regard to any Dharma that gladdens the Jina.

3 Meditation on emptiness becoming helpful for gaining certainty with respect to actions and their results

Some profess to have gained certainty about emptiness and do not have certainty with respect to actions and their results nor care about it. They have arrived at a mistaken understanding of emptiness for if you understand emptiness, having seen it to be the meaning of dependent
relation, it becomes helpful for gaining certainty with respect to actions and their results. From the same sutra:

   Like an illusion, a bubble, a mirage or lightning, 
   All phenomena are like the moon in water. 
   Although human beings who after death 
   Pass to other worlds do not perceive this, 
   {118} Actions once they are done do not disappear, 
   White or black they cause like effects to ripen. 
   The logical approach is good, but the subtle, 
   And hard to see is the Jina’s object of thought. 

4 The uselessness of mere knowledge, if you do not think about the karmic process

Therefore you should generate certainty about the two [types of] karma, the causes along with their effects, and constantly, day and night, cut [yourself off from] rebirths in bad migrations by means of examining the three gates. Not to be proficient at first in the distinctions of cause and effect and to know a bit but still to act carefree with regard to the three gates is nothing but opening the gate to bad migrations. In the Sutra Requested by [the Naga king] Sagara it says:

   Lord of Nagas, one Dharma of bodhisattvas cuts right through falling back down and being born in bad migrations. What is that one Dharma? It is this: the individual investigation regarding virtuous phenomena thinking: ‘How am I [doing]? Am I straying away [from them] or abiding [in them] night and day?’ 

5 How to turn away from faulty conduct having thought about it in this manner

As for how to turn away from faulty conduct having thought about it in this manner, it says in the Chapter of the Truthful One:

   O king, do not commit the act of killing, 
   For every being life is a great loss 
   Therefore, we all wish to keep it long. 
   Even deep down you should not consider killing. 

Like this, you should get used to relying on the mind of restraint a lot without your motivation even moving towards misdeeds such as the ten non-virtues.

6 The principle of action in accordance with statements of the former Kadampas

Said Khamlungpa to Puchungwa: “Geshe [Dromdon]pa taught only actions and their results are of vital importance, however, nowadays explaining this, listening to it or meditating on it are made out to be worthless. I wonder, is this just because it is difficult to practice?” and Puchungwa said: {119} “Just so.”

Dromtonpa said: “Followers of Jowo, audacity is totally inappropriate – dependent origination is subtle.” Puchungwa said: “In my old age I am [at last] getting on with the Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish.”
And Sharawa said: “The Buddha taught that whatever errors and faults come about, they should not be blamed on a bad direction or a bricklayer’s work; it is simply that ‘this action having been done this is produced’.

Second: If despite your effort not to be tainted by such fault conduct, some fault occurs under the influence of non-conscientiousness or a multitude of mental afflictions etc., it is inappropriate to let the matter rest, without giving it any consideration. It is, therefore, necessary to make an effort at the means for redressing it taught by the compassionate teacher.

More specifically, as regards redressing downfalls, this should be done as explained according to the three individual [types of] vows.

Redressing negativites should be done by means of the four powers. The first of those is the power of remorse, which is much regret about the non-virtuous deeds one has done since beginningless times. For it to arise it is necessary to meditate on how the three [types of] effects such as the fully ripened ones, are produced. When applying this [power], you should do it through the confession in the Sacred Golden Light Sutra and the confession by means of the 35 buddhas.

The second one, the power of thorough application of antidotes, has six points: based on the profound sets of sutras, aspiration for emptiness, based on recitation, based on images, based on making offerings, and based on names.

The first one is to absorb the words of sets of sutras like the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras, retain them, read them, and so forth.
The second one consists in to engage in the reality that is selflessness and clear light \(120\) and to be convinced with respect to primordial purity.

\[
\text{Based on recitation}
\]

**A** The need to make an effort at recitation until signs appear that the negativites have been purified

The third one is recitation of special dharanis like the 100 syllable one according to [the respective] ritual. In [the Sutra] *Requested by Subahu* it says:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{As the flames of forest fires in spring,} \\
\text{Uncontained burn all the underbrush} \\
\text{Discipline’s wind fans fires of recitation} \\
\text{Burning evil with flames of great joyous effort.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{As the sun strikes snow with rays of light} \\
\text{Which, overwhelmed, does not withstand his brilliance,} \\
\text{When discipline’s sun rays, recitation, strikes} \\
\text{The snow of negativities, it is exhausted.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{As bringing out a butter lamp in darkness,} \\
\text{Dispels the darkness so there’s nothing left} \\
\text{The darkness of evil collected in thousand lives} \\
\text{Is quickly dispelled by the lamp of recitation.} & \quad [56]
\end{align*}
\]

In fact [you should continue this recitation practice] until you see signs of the negativities being purified.

**B** The signs

In the *Dharani of Exhortation* the signs are said to be dreaming of vomiting bad food, of drinking and vomiting things like yoghurt or milk, of seeing the sun and moon, travelling in the sky, fire burning, withstanding buffaloes and black people, seeing a sangha of fully-ordained monks and nuns, climbing a tree from which milk emerges, an elephant or a chief bull, a mountain, a lion throne or a fine house, and of hearing the Dharma in your dreams.

\[
\text{Based on images}
\]

The fourth one is to create images of the Buddha, having gained confidence in him.

\[
\text{Based on making offerings}
\]

The fifth one is make various types of offerings to the Buddha and his stupas.

\[
\text{Based on names}
\]

The sixth one is to listen to and retain the names of buddhas and sons of the jinas.

These are the ones \(121\) that are explicitly mentioned in the *Compendium of Instructions*. There are many others.
1 The actual [power] and its benefits

The third one - the power of turning away from faults in the future – is to completely restrain yourself from the ten non-virtues. In the Sun Essence [Sutra] it says that thereby actions of the three doors [committed] by means of killing and so on, as well as the afflicting obscurations and obscurations to the Dharma, whatever you have done, caused others to do, or rejoiced in before, are destroyed.

2 The importance of sincere restraint

The Extensive Commentary [on Vinaya] explains that the intention of the question “[Is there] restraint henceforth?” being asked in the [basic] text is that a confession without sincere restraint is nothing but words. Therefore the mind of restraint of not doing it henceforth is important. Its development also depends on the first power.

2B4B-2B1A-2B3B-3D The power of the support

The fourth one – the power of the support – is to go for refuge and cultivate the mind of enlightenment.

2B4B-2B1A-2B3B-4 How all the antidotes to negativities are complete within the four powers

The Jina said that in general there is a diversity of ways for beginners to purify negativities, however, the altogether perfect antidote is the four powers in their entirety.

2B4B-2B1A-2B3B-5 The manner of purification

A How the karma is not absolutely certain [depending on] the antidotes being complete or incomplete etc. in the one doing the purification etc.

The manner in which negativities are purified is as follows. Whether causes for the arising of great suffering in the bad realms become causes for the arising of minor suffering, or whether despite one’s rebirth in the bad realms their sufferings are not experienced or purified in one’s present form as a mere headache, and likewise whether something that would need to be experienced for a long time becomes something short or does not have to be experienced at all, is not absolutely certain, because it is also depends on the power of the one doing the purification being great or small, as well as the antidote - the four powers - being complete or incomplete, intense or not [intense], the duration being long or short and so on.

B How even karma that is certain [to be experienced] is purified from the root

As for the statement in sutra and vinaya “Actions are not lost even in a hundred eons”, it implies without cultivating the antidote of the four powers. However, in the commentary on the Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses it says that through the antidote of the four powers, if purified in accordance with the explanations, even karma that is certain to be experienced is purified.

C Even if the one doing the purification does not completely purify karma of little strength, its effect will not come forth due to the full ripening having been weakened

In Blaze of Reasoning it says that once you have thus weakened the potential to bring forth fully ripened effects by means of confession, [the resolve to exercise] restraint and the like, the fully ripened effects will not come about even if other conditions are met. Likewise, the destruction of roots of virtue through wrong views and anger is also similar.

2B4B-2B1A-2B3B-6 How it is necessary to make an effort from the start not to be tainted by faults
Through confession and [the resolve to exercise] restraint you may be able to purify [karma] so that nothing at all remains, however, there is [still] a big difference between the purity of not being tainted by faults from the beginning and the purity after confession. For example in the *Bodhisattva Levels* it says that in case a root downfall has occurred, it can be restored by taking the bodhisattva vow [again], however, it will be impossible to reach the first ground in this life. In the *Sutra Gathering All the Threads*, too, it says that once the negativity of abandoning the Dharma, which is explained in that sutra, has occurred, it will be purified, if one confesses it three times every day over seven years, but still it will take ten eons even at the quickest to attain [the level of] tolerance [on the path of preparation]. Therefore purification without remainder means that the production of unpleasant effects is purified without remainder. However, since the arising of realizations of the path and so forth will be much delayed, you should endeavour not to be tainted from the beginning. Again, for that reason it says that aryas do not knowingly engage even in subtle negativities or downfalls not even for the sake of their lives, because [otherwise], if there was no difference between purifying them through confession and their not arising from the beginning there would be no need to act like that. In the world, {123} too, if a wounded arm, leg etc. heals again, it still will not be as if it had never been wounded from the start.

2B4B-2B1B The measure of the attitude [of lesser beings] having developed

Second: the measure of those thoughts [of lesser beings] having developed. Previously you had an uncontrived interest in this world only, and your interest in future existences was just a [vague] understanding fascinated with the words. When those two have been exchanged, future worlds have become the main interest, and this world nothing but a by-product, [the attitude of lesser beings] has developed. As it nevertheless needs to be made stable, you should strive, that is train, in it even after it have arisen.

2B4B-2B1C Eliminating misunderstandings about [the attitude of lesser beings]

1 Setting out the assertion
2 Its refutation

2B4B-2B1C-1 Setting out the assertion

In the scriptures it says that it is necessary to turn the mind away from all the excellence of cyclic existence, which has been a cause of confusion: Some [people] think it is inappropriate to develop interest in the high status of an excellent body, possessions, and so forth because they are [part of] cyclic existence.

2B4B-2B1C-2 Its refutation

A How a continuous succession of excellent bodies is necessary

With respect to that which is to be striven for, there are both temporary and ultimate goals to strive for. Even those who strive for liberation from the excellences of a body and so forth of cyclic existence need to temporarily strive for them since definite goodness is to be gained in the end from a continuous succession of such supports.

B Refutation looking at ultimately high status

Not all that is the high status of an excellent body, possessions, and retinue are included in cyclic existence, for the culmination of an excellent body etc. is the form body [of a buddha], the wealth of its field and its retinue. [It is] with this intention that the *Ornament of the Sutras* says that the first four perfections accomplish the high status of an excellent body,
possessions, retinue, and undertakings, (124) because many [other] scriptures state that they accomplish the form body.

That concludes the explanation of mental trainings on the stages of the path common to lesser beings.
CHAPTER III
INTERMEDIATE SCOPE

Explanation of the stages of the path common to intermediate beings

2B4B-2B2 Explanation of the stages of the path common to intermediate beings

A Transition
[B The actual training]

2B4B-2B2A Transition

Thus, having become mindful of death and reflected on the way you fall into the bad migrations after death, you have turned your mind away from this world and a striving for the happy migrations has developed. Then, through the common going for refuge and certainty regarding positive and negative karma and its effect, you will give up negativities, and by putting effort into accomplishing virtue you will indeed attain the state of the happy migrations. However, that is not held to be sufficient here. Rather, once the attitude common to lesser beings has developed, you develop the attitude common to intermediate beings, which counteracts attachment to cyclic existence as a whole, and then, based on that, you develop the mind of enlightenment so that you will be led into the path of great beings. Therefore, you need to train in the attitude common to intermediate beings, because even though you attain the state of a god or human being in this manner, you will not have passed beyond compounding suffering. Therefore, holding to that as happy by nature is mistaken since in reality they are devoid of happiness and in the end they are bad because you are certain to fall into the bad migrations again.

2B4B-2B2B The actual [training]

1 The actual training in that attitude
2 The measure of its development
3 Elimination of misconceptions about it
4 Determining the nature of the path leading to liberation

Therefore, the training of the mind on the stages of the path common to intermediate beings has four points: the actual training in that attitude, the measure of its development, elimination of misconceptions about it, and determining the nature of the path leading to liberation.

Explanation of how to develop the mind striving for liberation

2B4B-2B2B-1 The actual training in that attitude

A Identification of the mind striving for liberation
B The methods for generating [the mind striving for liberation]

The first one has two points: identification of the mind striving for liberation and the methods for generating [the mind striving for liberation].

2B4B-2B2B-1A Identification of the mind striving for liberation
First: “Liberation” is freedom from bondage. Specifically there are two things binding one in cyclic existence, karma and the afflictions. Through the power of these two, the very aggregates join. From the point of view of realms, they do so in the three realms, those of desire etc., when divided by way of migrating beings, as five or six\(^{93}\) types, gods etc. and in terms of birthplaces, in a womb and so on. This is the essence of bondage, therefore freedom from them is liberation.

2 The mind striving for [liberation]

The desire to attain that [liberation] is the mind striving for liberation.

2B4B-2B2B-1B The method[s] for generating [the mind striving for liberation]
1 Transition
2 The actual method[s]

2B4B-2B2B-1B1 Transition

Second: The development of the desire to obtain the pacification of the suffering of thirst, for instance, depends on seeing the torment due to thirst as undesirable. Likewise the development of the desire to attain the liberation that is the thorough pacification of the suffering of the appropriated aggregates also depends on seeing the shortcomings of the appropriated aggregates, i.e. that they have the nature of suffering. Therefore, if you meditate on the shortcomings of cyclic existence and the mind that desires to reject them does not arise, the desire to attain the pacification of suffering will not emerge either, because in the \textit{Four Hundred Verses} it says:

\begin{quote}
Who is not disenchanted here,  
How could he have respect for peace? \footnote{57}
\end{quote}

2B4B-2B2B-1B2 The actual method[s]

A Thinking about the shortcomings of cyclic existence, the truth of suffering  
B Thinking about the stages of involvement in cyclic existence, the origins

This being so there are two points with respect to that: thinking about the shortcomings of cyclic existence, the truth of suffering, and thinking about the stages of involvement in cyclic existence, the origins.

2B4B-2B2B-1B2A Thinking about the shortcomings of cyclic existence, the truth of suffering
1 Indicating the intention of stating the truth of suffering as the first of the four truths
2 The actual meditation on suffering

The first one has two points: indicating the intention of stating the truth of suffering as the first of the four truths and the actual meditation on suffering.

2B4B-2B2B-1B2A-1 Indicating the intention of stating the truth of suffering as the first of the four truths

A Setting out a doubt  
B Reply

2B4B-2B2B-1B2A-1A Setting out a doubt

First: You may wonder: “If origins are earlier and suffering later since the origins are causes and the \{126\} truth of suffering their effect, why is that the Bhagavan, contrary to this sequence, taught: ‘Monks, this is the noble truth of suffering. This is the noble truth of the origin.’?"
There is no fault in that, since the fact that our teacher stated cause and effect in reverse order has great significance for practice.

If you go on to ask: How so? It is like this: If the unerrring wish for liberation from cyclic existence has not initially arisen in the disciple himself, how should he be guided to liberation while lacking its root? In fact, initially, disciples are shrouded by the darkness of ignorance and deceived by the misconception that apprehends the suffering excellences of cyclic existence as happiness. In the Four Hundred [Verses] it says:

If the ocean of this suffering
Has no limits in any respect,
Child, you who are sinking in it,
Why are you not gripped with fear?

Thus, many aspects of suffering having been taught saying: “This, in reality, is not happiness but rather suffering,” it is necessary to develop disenchantment, which is why the truth of suffering was stated first. Then, having seen that you yourself have fallen into the ocean of suffering, if you want to be liberated from it, you see the need to ward off suffering. Having come to understand that unless you ward off its cause, you will not avert it, thinking “What is the cause?” you come to understand the truth of the origins. That is why the truth of the origins was stated next. Then, once an understanding of the truth of the origins has arisen - the fact that the suffering of cyclic existence is produced by contaminated actions, that they are produced by mental afflictions, and that the root of those is the apprehension of a self – and you see that the apprehension of a self can be opposed, you vow to actualise the cessation that puts a stop to suffering. Therefore, the truth of cessation was taught next.

You may wonder: “Well then, as the wish for liberation arises when the truth of suffering is presented, it would make sense to present the truth of cessation after the truth of suffering”. [However,] There is no fault, for, even though, at that point, the wish for liberation thinking “If only I achieved the cessation that pacifies suffering” is be present, since you have not identified the cause of suffering and do not see that the cause can be averted, you do not apprehend liberation as something to be attained thinking “I should actualise cessation”. In that manner, once you apprehend liberation, thinking “I should actualise cessation”, you will engage in the truth of the path, thinking “What is the path leading there?” That is why the truth of the path was stated at the end.

The four truths are taught many times in this manner, throughout the Mahayana and Hinayana. Since the Sugata condensed [in them] the crucial points of entry into cyclic
existence and its reversal they are extremely important for achieving complete liberation.

Since it is a major switch for their practical application, disciples need to be guided in this order. If your attachment to cyclic existence is not reversed and put to rest at all by way of reflection on the truth of suffering, the wish to achieve liberation will become mere words, because whatever you do will become an origin [of new suffering]. If you do not come to a good understanding of the root of cyclic existence - karma and the afflictions - by reflecting on origins, you will be like someone who does not see the target, shooting an arrow, for you will be missing the crucial points of the path. You will hold what it is not the path to freedom from existence to be that, whereupon and your hardships will be fruitless. And, if you do not know what should be abandoned, suffering [along with its] origin, you will not even identify the liberation that is their thorough pacification, whereby and therefore your striving for liberation (128) will also end up as nothing but an [arrogant] presumption.

2B4B-2B2B-1B2A-2 The actual meditation on suffering
   A Considering the suffering of cyclic existence in general
   B Considering the suffering of individual [realms]

The second one has two points: considering the suffering of cyclic existence in general and considering the suffering of individual [realms].

   1 Considering the eight [types of] suffering
   2 Considering the six [types of] suffering

The first one has two points: considering the eight [types of] suffering and considering the six [types of] suffering.

   A How to meditate by the level of the faculty
   B How it is necessary to be free from laxity and excitement
   C How all the qualities of the three vehicles are accomplished through such meditation
   D The eight types of suffering
   E Advice to cherish [this] manner of meditating on the essence

2B4B-2B2B-1B2A-2A1A How to meditate by the level of the faculty

First: With regard to sustaining the entire round of meditations common to intermediate beings, here you should also take up common points explained in the context of lesser beings. With regard to sustaining those that are not common [to both], if you have the mental strength, you should sustain them [in meditation] as explained [here], if your mental strength is small, you should discard the scriptural citations and sustain only the essential meaning of whatever falls in this context.

2B4B-2B2B-1B2A-2A1B How it is necessary to be free from laxity and excitement

Although these are analytical meditations, you should cease all excitement and so forth, focusing the mind on the objects of meditation without allowing it to go to virtuous, non-virtuous, or unspecified objects other than them. Not allowing [the mind] to fall under the influence of sleepy drowsiness or laxity, you should meditate continuously from a state of extreme clarity and lucidity, for it was taught that the results of all spiritual practice in which the mind is distracted to other things are small. In Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Conduct it says:

Reciting, austerities and things,
Even though engaged in long,
If done with one's mind distracted elsewhere
Are meaningless, the seer taught. [59]

And in the Sutra on the Development of Confidence in the Mahayana:

Son of the lineage, from this enumeration it should be understood that, in this manner, confidence in the Mahayana of bodhisattvas and anything that springs from the Mahayana springs from having correctly thought about the meaning and the Dharma with a mind that is utterly undistracted. [60]

In this regard {129} “a mind that is utterly undistracted” is a mind that does not stray away from the virtuous observed object to something else; “the meaning and the Dharma” refers to the meaning and the words; and “correctly thought” is to think having analysed with an awareness of individual investigation. That shows that for all accomplishment of the Dharma of good qualities both [non-distraction and investigation] are necessary.

How all the positive qualities of the three vehicles are accomplished through such meditation

This being so it was taught that for all accomplishment of the positive qualities of the three vehicles two [things] are necessary: actual calm abiding – a single-pointed mind that stays on a virtuous observed object without being distracted – or a facsimile of that, and actual special insight which individually analyses a virtuous object and differentiates modes and varieties, or a facsimile of that. In accordance with that it also says in the [Sutra] Unraveling the Intention:

Maitreya, you should understand that all virtuous qualities, whether mundane or supramundane, of hearers, bodhisattvas, or tathagatas are the result of calm abiding and special insight. [61]

If calm abiding and special insight were not divided in the two - the actual a facsimile to it - there would be no certainty that all positive qualities of the three vehicles come [forth] as effects of actual calm abiding and special insight.

The eight types of suffering

1  The suffering of birth
2  The suffering of aging
3  The suffering of illness
4  The suffering of death
5  The suffering of meeting with the unpleasant
6  The suffering of separation from what is pleasant
7  The suffering of seeking what you desire and not getting it
8  “In brief: the five appropriated aggregates are suffering”

The suffering of birth

Here the considerations on the suffering of birth, the first of eight types of suffering, have five points:
Birth is suffering, because it is associated with suffering. When the four-hell sentient beings, perpetually suffering hungry ghost, beings born from wombs, and beings born, they are born with a lot of violent sensations of pain.

Birth is associated with taking on bad states. Due to connecting with the seed for the arising, abidance and increase of mental afflictions, [130] [a rebirth] is unsuited to either being used for actions employing virtue or to being controlled at will.

Birth is the basis of suffering. In dependence on having taken birth in the three realms, the suffering of aging, illness, death etc. increases.

Birth is the basis of mental afflictions. Once you have been born in cyclic existence the three poisons of attachment, hatred, and ignorance arise with regard to objects. Again, due to that, body and mind being thoroughly unpacified, they suffer and consequently do not abide in happiness. Thus, body and mind are tormented in various ways by the mental afflictions.

Birth is suffering because it is in the very nature of involuntary separation. Death which is the end of everything born has not been transcended and is undesirable. It also only makes you experience suffering.

You [should] think about these [points] again and again.

Second: The considerations on the suffering of aging have five points:

1. [Deterioration of the body]

The complete deterioration of your fine body is such that your spine becomes curved like a bow, your head becomes white like moss flowers, your forehead becomes covered in wrinkles like a cutting board and so on whereby the splendour of youth deteriorates and you turn ugly.

2. [Deterioration of power and strength]

The deterioration of power and strength is such that when you sit down you resemble a sack of soil cut off its rope, when you get up you resemble tree roots being pulled up. When you speak you babble unintelligibly, when you walk you are completely bent over and so on.

3. [Deterioration of the senses]

The deterioration of the senses is such that your eyes and so forth do not clearly perceive forms and so forth any more and your mindfulness and so forth diminishes as you grow forgetful and so forth.
4 [Decline in sense pleasures]
The enjoyment of [sense] objects declines such that food and drink become difficult to digest and you can no longer enjoy other pleasures [131].

5 [Complete deterioration of the lifespan]
The suffering of the lifespan having deteriorated completely is that, due to the lifespan having been largely spent, you face death.

You [should] think about these [points] again and again.

Cheng[wa] said: “The suffering of death is bad, but brief. This aging [process] is vicious.” Kamapa said: “It’s good that old age comes gradually – if it came in a single moment, it would be unbearable”.

Third: The considerations on the suffering of illness have five points:

A [Bodily changes]
The nature of the body changes in that the flesh becomes loose, the skin dries up, etc.

B [Suffering and mental unhappiness increase]
Suffering and mental unhappiness increase and you predominantly abide in them. The bodily constituents, water and so forth, become disturbed in strength as they lose their proportional balance, producing pain in the body. That in turn causes mental unhappiness you have to surmount day and night.

C [Restriction of enjoyments]
You lack desire to enjoy pleasant things. Having been told that pleasant things are harmful when you are ill, you do not have the power to indulge as you wish or, likewise, you cannot do whatever you want.

D [Need for unpleasant measures]
You need to undergo the unpleasant against your will. You have to employ unpleasant medicine, food, drink and the so on. Likewise, you need to rely on rough [means of] examination such as being burnt with fire and pierced with sharp instruments.

E [Separation from life]
You will be separated from your life. Having seen that the illness is incurable, you suffer.

You [should] consider these points in detail.

Fourth: [132] The considerations on the suffering of death have five points: You are separated from your excellent possessions, relatives, companions and your dear body⁹⁵, and at the time of death you experience suffering and intense mental unhappiness.
As long as you have not become distressed at these [types of suffering] you [should] think them over again and again.

The way the first four become suffering is that having seen that you will be separated from those four, you suffer.

Fifth: The suffering of meeting with the unpleasant has five points:
- As soon as you meet, for instance, an enemy, suffering and mental unhappiness arise.
- Due to that you are beset by fear of being punished,
- fear of bad talk,
- and fear of dying dreadfully, and
- you suspect and fear going to bad migrations after death because of transgressing the Dharma.
You [should] think about these [types of suffering].

Sixth: The suffering of separation from what is pleasant has five points: When you are separated say from close ones that are dear to you:
- sorrow arises in your mind,
- lamentation comes out in your speech,
- harm is caused in your body,
- through remembering the good qualities of the object and longing for it, there is mental torment,
- you miss the pleasure of it.
You [should] think about these [types of suffering].

Seventh: The suffering of seeking what you desire and not getting it has five points that are similar to [those associated with] separation from what is pleasant.

Seeking what you desire and not getting it is the depressing suffering of not getting what you have been hoping for despite your effort in seeking it, such as doing farm work but not reaping a harvest and doing business but not accruing a profit.

Eighth: Thinking about the meaning of the statement: “In brief, the five appropriated aggregates are suffering” has five points:
- they are a vessel of suffering that will become manifest,
- they are a vessel of suffering based on what has [already] become manifest,
- they are a vessel for the suffering of suffering
- they are a vessel for the suffering of change, and
- they are in the nature of compounding suffering.
You [should] think about these [points] again and again.
B Extensive explanation

{133} Here the first [point] is that, in dependence on taking these appropriated aggregates, the sufferings of the next rebirth onward are induced.

The second one: the aggregates that have [already] been established become the basis for illness, aging, etc. that depend on them.

The third and fourth ones: [the aggregates] give rise to these two types of suffering due to their connection with the negative tendencies96 of the two.

The fifth one: due to the mere establishment of the appropriated aggregates they arise in the nature of compounding suffering, for all compounded phenomena are under to the control of other - previous karma and mental afflictions - are compounding suffering.


If no genuine disenchantment develops towards cyclic existence, which is of the nature of the appropriated aggregates, there is no way a genuine awareness striving for liberation will develop and great compassion with the sentient beings roaming about in cyclic existence cannot develop either. Therefore these considerations are extremely important whichever vehicle you enter, the Mahayana or Hinayana.


A Summarised presentation of the six [types of] suffering
B Presentation of them condensed in three groups
C How there is nothing in contaminated feelings that is of the essence of happiness


Second – Considering the six [types of] suffering -: The Letter to a Friend sets out the faults [of cyclic existence]:

- lack of certainty,
- insatiability,
- discarding one’s body again and again,
- being reborn again and again,
- changing from high to low [states] again and again, and
- lacking companions.

2B4B-2B2B-1B2A-2A2B Presentation of them in three groups

1 There is nothing reliable
2 No satisfaction
3 Beginninglessness

Summing them up in three [groups]:

- in cyclic existence there is nothing reliable,
- no matter how much of its happiness one enjoys, there is no final point of satisfaction, and
- one has been in it since beginningless times.

The first one has four points:

- the inappropriateness of relying on the body you have attained - you will discard your body again and again;
- the inappropriateness of relying on benefit and harm [done to you] - there is no certainty as to whether your father will be your son, your mother your wife, an enemy someone very close to you, and the like;
- the inappropriateness of relying on the excellences you have achieved - {134} you fall from high places to low ones; and
- the inappropriateness of relying on companions - you have to go on without them [in the end].

The third one is that you are reborn again and again, so that an end to the continuity of births is not in evident.

You should reflect in this manner again and again.

How there is nothing in contaminated feelings that is of the essence of happiness at present most of the happy feelings that increase our attachment are minds of happiness that arise with respect to a remedy of suffering. Yet, there is no happiness by way of an essence that is unrelated to suffering. For instance, if you suffer because you have walked a lot, the mind of happiness that arises due to sitting down appears to be happiness that arises gradually while the previous great suffering gradually ceases. However, it is not happiness by way of its essence, for if you sit too much, again, that will produce suffering as before. If they were causes of happiness by way of their essence, walking, sitting, lying, eating and drinking, as well as sun and shade etc. should result in happiness growing to the same extent as you have spent time indulging in them – just like suffering growing to the same extent as you are subject to the causes of suffering. However, it appears that after too long only [more] suffering is produced.

These points are also set out in [the Sutra of Nanda’s] Entry into the Womb and the root text of the Four Hundred [Verses] and its commentary.

Considering the suffering of the individual [realms]

1. The suffering of the three bad migrations
2. The suffering of humans
3. The suffering of demigods
4. The suffering of gods

The second one has four points: The suffering of the three bad migrations, the suffering of humans, the suffering of demigods, and the suffering of gods.

The first has already been explained.

The second one [consists in] the suffering of hunger and thirst, the unpleasant contact with heat and cold, frantic activity, and fatigue. In addition, you should come to understand the seven [types of suffering], birth, aging, illness, death and so forth by means of the previous explanations. Furthermore, in the Discourses of the Collections it says:

All the sufferings of bad migrations
Also appear to exist for humans.
{135} Troubled by suffering like beings in hell,
Subjects of Yama by poverty,
They also have the suffering of animals:
Powerful ones oppress the weak
By force, inflicting harm on them.
It is like a river [engulfing you]
And in *Four Hundred Verses*:

Higher ones have mental suffering,
Lower ones get physical pain.
These two types of suffering [truly]
Overwhelm the world each day.

You should reflect in accordance with these statements.


Third: It is said that the demigods are mentally tormented by envy that cannot bear the wealth of the gods. When based on that they fight with the gods, they experience many sufferings of having their bodies chopped up, split, etc. Although they possess intelligence, they have fully-ripened obscurations and consequently cannot see the truth on that basis.


A  The suffering of desire [realm] gods
B  The suffering of gods of the uppermost realms

The fourth one has two points: the suffering of desire [realm] gods and the suffering of gods of the uppermost realms.


1  The suffering of dying, transmigrating and falling
2  The suffering of despair
3  The suffering of being chopped up, split, killed or banished

The first one has three points: the suffering of dying, transmigrating and falling, the suffering of despair and the suffering of being chopped up, split, killed or banished.


A  The suffering of dying and passing
B  The suffering of falling to a lower place

The first one has two points: the suffering of dying and transmigrating, and the suffering of falling to a lower place.

A  The suffering of dying and transmigrating

First: At the time of dying and transmigrating, when a god has seen the five signs of death, the suffering that springs from this is far greater than the happiness that used to spring previously from indulging in the desirable objects of the gods. The five signs of death are: (1) a hideous bodily complexion, (2) a dislike for one's seat, (3) the wilting of one's flower garlands, (4) one's clothes becoming smelly, and (5) sweat, which did not exist before, appearing on one's body.

B  The suffering of falling

The second one is just like it says in *Letter to a Friend*:

As they transmigrate from the world of the gods
In case there is no remainder of anything virtuous

{136} They change without control into situations
Of animals, hungry ghosts and beings of hell. [64]

Second: For the gods with very extensive heaps of merit the most exquisite sense pleasures arise. When the sons of the gods with small merit see that, they despair and experience great suffering and mental unhappiness on that basis.

Third: When the gods fight with the demigods, they experience the suffering of having their limbs and minor body parts chopped off, their bodies split and being killed. If their heads are chopped off they die, but limbs and minor body parts that are chopped off or split grow back and they survive. As for banishment, when there is conflict, the more powerful gods drive the weaker sons of the gods out of their abodes.

Although gods in the two uppermost realms do not have the suffering of suffering, in possessing mental afflictions and obscurations, they lack control over their death, transmigration and [next] state which is why they suffer through taking on bad states.

Furthermore it says in Discourses of the Collections:

Someone in form or formless realms
Having transcended the suffering of suffering,
Possessed of the pleasure of samdhi
Who dwells immovable for eons
Is still not certain of freedom at all;
He will still fall from there again.
If he has emerged somewhere
Beyond the whirlpool of pain of bad realms,
Even with effort he won’t last long there.
Like a bird in flight up high,
Like an arrow shot by a child,
That one also ends up falling -
Like butterlamps that blaze for long
{137} While [actually] perishing moment by moment
He is completely oppressed by the suffering
Called ‘compounding, thoroughly changing’. [65]

The second one has three points: how the mental afflictions arise, how karma is thereby accumulated and how you die, transmigrate and take rebirth.
Although both karma and mental afflictions are necessary as causes that establish cyclic existence, the mental afflictions are chief. This is because if there are no mental afflictions, even though there is karma beyond calculation accumulated previously, since the cooperative conditions for karma are absent, the sprout of suffering is not established – just like a [real] sprout is not established from a seed lacking humidity, soil, and so forth. It is also because if there are mental afflictions, even though there may be no karma accumulated previously, it will immediately be accumulated anew and future aggregates will be taken. That is also how it is set out in the Commentary on Valid Cognition:

The karma of those who have fully transcended
The thirst for existence cannot project other ones
For what cooperates has been exhausted.

And about craving:

For if it’s present, it’ll happen again. [66]

Therefore it is of great importance to rely on the antidotes to mental afflictions and that again depends on knowing the mental afflictions, which is why you should become skilled in them.

Second: This has three points: [The actual] identification of the mental afflictions, the stages by which [the mental afflictions] arise, and the faults of the mental afflictions.

The first one has ten points. The first of those, desirous attachment, observes an attractive, pleasant, external or internal object and is subsequently attached to it. To illustrate: just as oil that has penetrated into cloth is hard to remove, desirous attachment, too, clinging to its object and pervading it only separates from that object with difficulty.
Anger is a hostile attitude upon observing a basis of suffering such as sentient beings, suffering, weapons, thorns, and so forth, a rough mind intending to inflict harm on those objects.

Based on the view of the transitory collection, pride is a puffed up mind upon observing one’s external or internal level or qualities. It engages them with an aspect of superiority.

Ignorance is afflicted not-knowing due to a mind that is unclear with regard to the nature of the four truths, actions and their results, and the three jewels.

Upon observing those three objects, the four truths etc., doubt is the thought: “Do they exist or do they not exist. Are they ... or are they not?”

The view of the transitory collection: an afflicted intelligence that, observing the appropriated aggregates, views them as a self or of the self and thinking ‘I’ or ‘mine’. Here ‘transitory’ implies impermanence and ‘collection’ many, so the base that it views is a mere impermanent and manifold phenomenon. In order to indicate “There is no permanent, unitary person,” it has been given the name ‘view of the transitory collection’.

View holding to an extreme: an afflicted intelligence which, observing that self apprehended by the view of the transitory collection, views it to be permanent and eternal or views it to cease without transmigration from this [existence] to a future one.

[The view] holding to a [bad] view as best is an afflicted intelligence that observes and holds to be best any of the three – the view of the transitory collection, the view holding to an extreme, or a wrong view – and the aggregates of the person holding the view that arises in dependence on them.

[The view] holding to [a bad] ethical discipline and ascetic practice as best is an afflicted intelligence that observes an ethical discipline of giving up immorality, an ascetic practice that sets a dress code, manners, and bodily and verbal behaviour as definite and the aggregates in dependence on which they arise. It views them as something purifying negativity, as liberating from mental afflictions, and definitely releasing from cyclic existence.

A wrong view is an afflicted intelligence that deprecates saying that past and future lives, actions and their results and the like do not exist, or superimposes the concept of Ishvara, a primal substance, etc. as the cause of migrating beings.

This is how the mental afflictions are identified from the common perspective of the higher and lower tenet systems. The Prasangika Madhyamika system will be explained [below].
The stages by which [the mental afflictions] arise

A The system of the Treatise on the Levels asserting that the view of the transitory collection and ignorance are in opposition to each other

Second: If the view of the transitory collection and ignorance are held to be distinct [the stages of how the mental afflictions arise must be understood in the following manner]. For instance with regard to a coiled rope, once darkness has fallen to some extent, if the mode of subsistence of the rope is not clear, a mind apprehending a snake arises. Likewise, through the darkness of ignorance obscuring the clear mode of subsistence of the aggregates, the deception regarding the aggregates as a self arises and from that the other mental afflictions arise.

B The system of Madhyamika and Dharmakirti asserting that the view of the transitory collection itself is ignorance

If those two are asserted to be the same, the view of the transitory collection itself is the root of mental afflictions.

C How the remaining root mental afflictions arise according to the two systems

Furthermore, whenever the view of the transitory collection apprehends a self, an arbitrary distinction is made between self and other. Once that is made, attachment towards one’s own side and hatred towards the other side arise. Also conceit arises upon observing that self; that very self is held to be permanent or annihilated and is viewed as the self etc., and the bad activities connected with it are held to be the best. Likewise wrong views that think “The teacher who taught selflessness, the actions and results he taught, the four truths, the three jewels, etc. do not exist” are generated[140] or, alternatively, the doubt that thinks “Do they exist or not? Are they ... or are they not...?” is generated. In the Commentary [on Valid Cognition] it says:

If there is self there's awareness of other
Dividing between them brings grasping and anger.
Closely connected with those [two] -
All the faults will come about.          [67]

The faults of the mental afflictions

A How to see the mental afflictions as enemies because of their great shortcomings

Third: In Ornament of the Sutras it says:

The mental afflictions destroy oneself, destroy sentient beings, and destroy ethical discipline.
Once that is debased, you become inferior in gain and guardians and teachers revile you.
There will be nasty disputes, you take rebirth elsewhere in unfree states.
Through the debasement of what you’ve attained or not [yet] attained there is great mental suffering.          [68]

And in Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Behaviour:

Enemies such as hatred and craving,
Do not have arms or legs nor other limbs,
They have no valour either, so why is it
That they have reduced me to servitude?

While residing in my mind they keep
Inflicting harm on me who lets them be.
But the patience that’s not angry at them
Is unsuitable patience – the object of blame.

Even if the gods and demigods
Were all to rise as enemies against me,
They would not be able to lead or put me
Into the fires of the Incessant Hell.

However, the mental afflictions, these powerful foes,
Within a single moment they throw me in there,
Where whatever meets with it, even Mount Meru,
[Is burnt so that] nothing is left - not even ashes.

Compared to those foes of mine, the mental afflictions,
Which have been with me without beginning nor end
None of all the other enemies
Would be able to last for such a long time.

If everyone benefits you and makes you happy,
If you had acted with reverence and in agreement –
In case you have attended to mental afflictions,
They inflict suffering and harm on you in return.

You should reflect on the shortcomings stated here. [141]

B Relating the cultivation of antidotes to the words of former master saints

Gonpapo said: “In order to abandon the mental afflictions it is necessary to know their shortcomings, their characteristics, their antidotes, and the causes for their arising. Once you have understood their shortcomings, you should see them as drawbacks, apprehend them as enemies. If you do not understand their shortcomings, you will not understand them to be enemies. Therefore you [should] consider them along the lines of statements from Ornament of the Sutras and Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Behaviour.” And: “In order to know the characteristics of the mental afflictions, you should also study abhidharma, at least the Differentiation of the Five Aggregates. Once you have got acquainted with the root and secondary afflictions, you will identify attachment, hatred, and so forth, whatever it is, as soon as they arise in your continuum thinking “This is that. Oh no! It has arisen,” and you will fight the mental afflictions.” That kind of understanding is necessary.
The second one has two points: identifying the karma that is accumulated, and how it is accumulated.

- Identifying the karma that is accumulated
  1. Intending action
  2. Intended action

First: Intending action - the mental factor that makes its concomitant mind move and urges it towards objects - is action of mind.

- Intended action
  1. The actions that have actually been intended
  2. Their essence
  3. Identifying three kinds of karma

First: The actions of body and speech that are motivated by that intention...

- Their essence
  ... are divided into the revelatory and non-revelatory and posited as only having form by the Vaibhashikas. Master Vasubandhu refutes that and maintains that they are the intentions that operate together with the revelatory physical and verbal actions whereby he explains both actions to be intentions.98

- Identifying three kinds of action
  In this regard non-virtuous actions are non-meritorious actions. Meritorious actions are virtuous actions included in the level of the desire realm. (142) Immovable actions are contaminated virtuous actions included in the levels of the form and formless realms.

- How [karma] is accumulated
  1. Explaining who accumulates the karma to be thrown [into a rebirth] within cyclic existence
  2. How [karma] is accumulated by that [person]

Second: Once you have directly realized selflessness, you can still be reborn in cyclic existence under the power of karma and mental afflictions, however, you do not newly accumulate any throwing karma. Therefore, those who accumulate the karma to be thrown [into a rebirth] within cyclic existence are all ordinary beings up to and including those [dwelling] on the great [level of] highest [mundane] qualities on the Mahayana path of preparation.

- How [karma] is accumulated by that [person]

If, with that basis, you create non-virtuous actions by means of the three doors, for instance killing, you will accumulate non-meritorious karma. If you create virtuous actions, such as giving gifts and guarding ethical discipline, you will accumulate meritorious karma. If you cultivate the calm abiding and so forth included in the levels of the concentrations and the formless realm you will accumulate immovable karma.

- How you die, transmigrate, and take rebirth
The third one has five points: conditions for death, the mind of death, from where the heat withdraws, how the intermediate state is accomplished after death, and how you take rebirth in a birth-existence.


A Death following the exhaustion of one’s life span

To die due to the exhaustion of one’s life span is to die when the time has come in which one’s entire life span projected by previous karma has been exhausted.

B Death following the exhaustion of one’s merit

To die following the exhaustion of one’s merit is the same as to die from a lack of basic requirements.

C Death due to dangers not being avoided

To die due to dangers not being avoided is the same as the nine causes and conditions of death, such as due to overeating, set out in the sutras.


1 The mind of death

2 Its appearances

3 For all three minds of death there is joining due to craving


A [Virtuous]

B [Non-virtuous]

C [Unspecified]

Both virtuous minds, such as confidence, and non-virtuous minds, such as attachment, arise in the mind, in dependence on one’s own actions or being made to recall them by others – as long as gross compositional factors operate. To die with an unspecified mind implies that one did not recall virtuous or non-virtuous minds by oneself nor was one reminded of them by others.


A [The appearance due to a virtuous mind]

B [The appearance due to a non-virtuous mind]

C [The appearance due to an unspecified mind]


For those who have created non-virtue, it is like going from light into thick darkness. At the time of death, various dreamlike repulsive forms appear to them, intense suffering feeling arises, and the interruption of life is very severe.


1 The actual [appearance]

For those who have created non-virtue, it is like going from light into thick darkness. At the time of death, various dreamlike repulsive forms appear to them, intense suffering feeling arises, and the interruption of life is very severe.
Clearing up doubts concerning the interruption of life

The interruption of life exists for all birth-places excluding the gods and hell beings.

**The appearance due to an unspecified mind**

In those who have an unspecified mind, the two, happiness and suffering, that were explained above do not arise.

What mind becomes manifest at death

At the time of death, whichever mind, virtuous or non-virtuous, is most familiar becomes manifest, whereas other minds do not subsequently operate. If they are equally familiar, that which is recalled first will become manifest, whereas others do no subsequently operate.

All the subtle minds of death are unspecified

At the time when the mind moves into its subtle part, virtuous and non-virtuous minds come to a stop and become an unspecified mind.

For all three minds of death there is joining due to craving

For all, at the time of death, as long as the state of unclear discrimination has not been reached, there arises attachment to a self which has long been familiarised with. After that, under the influence of attachment to a self thinking “I am becoming non-existent”, delight in a body arises. It is the cause for the intermediate state to come about. While attachment to self also arises in stream-enterers and once-returners, they investigate it with wisdom and abandon it rather than acquiescing in it; just like, for instance, a strong person beating someone weak. In non-returners that attachment to self does not arise.

From where the heat withdraws

Third: In those who have created non-virtue the heat first withdraws from the upper part of the corpse and dissipates down to the heart. In those who have created virtue the heat first withdraws from the lower part of the corpse and dissipates up to the heart. In both cases the consciousness transmigrates from the heart. That which the consciousness first entered into in the middle of the [mixture of] semen and [menstrual] blood transforms into the heart, and where it eventually transmigrates from is that very place it first enters into.

How the intermediate state is reached after death

Fourth: From the place where the consciousness transmigrates as explained above, death and the bardo are accomplished without a break, just like the swing on the armature of a scale.

The intermediate state being moreover has complete sense faculties such as the eyes, and has the aspect of the body of whatever migrating being it will be born as. As long as it does not take rebirth, its eye is unobstructed like the divine eye and its body, too, is unobstructed as though possessed of magical powers. It is seen by intermediate state beings of similar type and by the flawless divine eye arisen from mediation. While it is set out in the Treasury that once the intermediate state of any migrating being has been accomplished, there is no diverting it into some other rebirth, the Compendium of All [the Abhidharma] also explains reversals.
3. How the appearance of the intermediate existence appears to those who have created virtue and non-virtue

The intermediate existence of those who have created non-virtue appears like black cloth or like a dark night, and the intermediate existence of those who have created virtue appears like a white blanket or a moonlit night.

4. How it sees

It sees intermediate state beings of similar type, as well as their and its own birthplaces.

5. The colour

In [the Sutra] Entry into the Womb it says that the intermediate state of hell beings is like [the colour of] a burnt log, that of animals like smoke, that of hungry ghosts like water, that of desire realm gods and humans like gold, and the intermediate state of form realm gods is white.

6. Distinction whether there is or is not an intermediate state

If you are [re]born from the formless realm into the two lower realms, there is an intermediate state. However, If you are born from those two [realms] into the formless one, the aggregates of the formless [realm] are accomplished wherever you die, and there is no intermediate state.

7. How it travels

It is taught that the intermediate state of gods travels upward, that of humans travels straight ahead, and that of those who have done faulty actions, with eyes cast down, travels downward. For the three bad migrations the same meaning is intended.

8. The lifespan

If it does not find the conditions for rebirth, it abides for as many as seven days. If its finds them, the number of days is uncertain. Yet if it does not find them, it exchanges bodies and abides up to seven times seven days. However, it does not abide any longer than that since it will definitely find the conditions for rebirth by then.

9. The manner of changing into another intermediate state

Having died and transmigrated after seven days in the intermediate state of a god, for example, the intermediate state of a god, or alternatively the intermediate state of a human being etc., is accomplished because through the changing activity of other karma, the seed of the intermediate state is changed. It is the same for other [intermediate states].


1. How you transmigrate into an intermediate existence through a mind of attachment and so forth

Fifth: In Many Levels it is taught that, when you are born in a womb, a mistaken perception arises with regard to the semen and blood of your father and mother: in that moment, like an illusion, you see your parents to be having intercourse even though they are not and you develop attachment to them. However, the Commentary on the Treasury explains that you see your parents (actually) having intercourse. Furthermore, if you are born as a female you want to be rid of the woman, become attached to the man, and want to lie with him. If you are born as a male you want to be rid of the man, become attached to the woman, and want to lie with her. Once this kind of desire has arisen, the closer you approach, other body parts of that man and woman no longer appear and you only see the male and female
characteristics of your parents. Getting angry at that, the intermediate existence being dies, transmigrates, and is reborn\textsuperscript{101}.

2 What object the consciousness connects with and how

Furthermore, when there is a situation of intense attachment between father and mother, at the very end thick fluid emerges. After that, two drops of semen and blood doubtlessly emerge from the two. Once the two have mixed in the birth-place of the mother, they turn into something like for instance boiled milk that has cooled down and congealed. At the same time that the intermediate existence terminates, by the power of the consciousness that transmigrates, the subtle parts of the great elements of the sense powers, which are different from that congealed mass and the combination of semen and blood that accord with that mixture arise as other along with the sense powers\textsuperscript{102}. The consciousness that enters at this moment is posited as the basis-of-all by those who accept a mind basis-of-all. Those who do not accept a basis-of-all assert that it is the mental consciousness that transmigrates.

3 You are not born in bad birth-places unless the bardo being wishes to go there

If there is no desire to go to a birth-source, [the bardo being] will not go there and if it has not gone there it will not be born there. Therefore, the bardo being of someone possessing non-vows\textsuperscript{103} who created and accumulated an action for rebirth in hell, such as killing sheep or trading in poultry or pigs and the like, sees, as if in a dream, sheep and the like at his birth-place and rushes there with the delight of previous familiarity. \{147\} Then he becomes angry at the form of his birth-place, the intermediate existence ends, and he is born in the birth-existence. Likewise, rebirth as a hell being, a hungry ghost with goitre, etc. is similar to this.

4 How you are reborn somewhere bad, as an animal etc.

In the Actual Basis of the Levels it says that if you are born as an animal, hungry ghost, human being, or as a god revelling in the desire and form realms, you will see delightful beings of similar type to yourself at your birth-place. Then, having generated delight in and desire for that, you go there. As you get angry at your birth-place, the intermediate existence ceases and you are born in the birth-existence. The way in which someone who has non-vows who does not trade in poultry and pigs etc. is born in hell should be understood similarly to this.

5 From among the four birth-places, how you are born from heat and moisture and miraculously born

In the Treasury “Others long for smells and a place” is mentioned saying with the explanation that if you are born from heat and moisture, you are born through desiring smells, and if you are born miraculously, you are born through desiring a place. Moreover, the commentary explains that if you are born in the hot hells, you go to the intermediate existence desiring heat, whereas if you are born in the cold hells, you go to the intermediate existence desiring cooling. The Commentary on the Treasury explains rebirth from an egg to be similar to birth from a womb.
to the extent of being like the mind that does not want to be [stuck] in a house ablaze with fire or stay [locked up] in prison and [to the extent] that it desires liberation from them, and then it is still necessary to increase it.

B The development of nothing but an appearance of striving for liberation if nothing but mediocre renunciation has developed

{148} If this attitude is nothing more than mediocre, like flour thrown into sour milk as Sharawa put it, also the view that does not want the causes of cyclic existence - the origins - will not become more than that. Accordingly, one’s striving for liberation, the cessation that is the ceasing of sufferings and origins, will be the same. Because of that, the desire to accomplish the path of liberation will be mere words, and there will be no basis for the compassion that cannot bear the suffering of other beings who roam in cyclic either. The uncontrived mind of unsurpassed enlightenment that has the power to spur the mind on will not arise, so that you become a member of the Mahayana only in your understanding that follows upon words. For that reason you should cultivate [these thoughts] again and again.

2B4B-2B2B-3 Eliminating misconceptions about this
A The manner of misconceptions
B Their elimination

2B4B-2B2B-3A The manner of misconceptions

Third: You may think: “If you cultivate extreme revulsion and disenchantment for cyclic existence, you will fall into the extreme of peace like shravakas, because of your dislike for [re]entering cyclic existence. Therefore, it is becoming for Hinayanists to cultivate disenchantment, but it is inappropriate for bodhisattvas. That is how it is explained in [the Sutra of the] Unfathonable Secret.”

2B4B-2B2B-3B Their elimination
A The meaning of [statements in] scriptures that bodhisattvas are not terrified by cyclic existence

The meaning of the statement “Thus a bodhisattva should not be terrified by cyclic existence” is not to point out that he should not be repulsed at the suffering of birth, aging, illness, death and so on of roaming in existence under the power of karma and the mental afflictions. Rather, it is that, due to his mind of enlightenment, he should not be afraid to take rebirth in existence for the benefit of sentient beings under the power of the aspirational prayers. In fact, if roaming in existence under the power of karma and the mental afflictions, we are oppressed by many sufferings and unable to enact even our own welfare, what need is there to mention enacting others’ welfare? {149} Since it is the door to all degeneration there is a need to block it, having developed extreme disenchantment, more than the Hinayanists, while it is necessary to enjoy taking rebirth in existence under the power of aspirational prayers and compassion. In accordance with that it also says in the same sutra:

Bodhisattvas, having taken care of ripening sentient beings, view cyclic existence to be beneficial – unlike the great passage [to peace].

[69]
C. For those with vows of engagement [in bodhisattva behaviour] who express themselves in this manner not differentiating between rebirths due to karma and mental afflictions and rebirths due to aspirational prayers etc. infractions occur.

In the *Bodhisattva Levels* it is set out that if someone who expresses himself in the above manner without differentiating [between them] has bodhisattva vows, he commits an afflictive infraction.

D. Cherishing the way of conduct without falling into the extreme of peace despite great revulsion for cyclic existence.

Having developed revulsion for cyclic existence, to see those sentient beings as one’s relatives and thus generate the mind of enlightenment for their sake, is the intention of the *Four Hundred Verses* and is clearly set out by the great master Chandrakirti in his commentary on that [text].

**Explanation of how the nature of the path leading to liberation is established**

2B4B-2B2B-4 Establishment of the nature of the path leading to liberation

A Transition

[B The actual establishment of the nature of the path]

2B4B-2B2B-4A Transition

Fourth: Since meditation on the shortcomings of existence has generated an intense desire to definitely emerge from cyclic existence to arise as explained earlier, there is a need to reverse cyclic existence.

2B4B-2B2B-4B The actual establishment [of the nature of the path]

1. By what kind of basis is cyclic existence averted

2. By cultivating what kind of path it is averted

[What should the cultivated paths be like to reverse it]

Therefore two points [are being made] in this regard: by what kind of basis is cyclic existence averted and by cultivating what kind of path it is averted.

2B4B-2B2B-4B1 By what kind of basis is cyclic existence averted

A The need to avert it at this time when you have obtained a basis of leisure and endowments

From the *Letter to a Friend*:

Having obtained a birth of leisure that’s free

From the so-called defective eight unfree states

{150} Make an effort to avert rebirths. [70]

As is set out [here], you need to avert them at this time when you have the leisures and endowments, for it has already been explained that in the unfree [states] there is no opportunity to avert it.

B The need to make an effort now

The great yogi [Jangchup Rinchen] said: “Now is the time to distinguish ourselves from cattle.” Potowa also said: “Since it did not stop by itself when we were roaming about so long previously, it will also not stop by itself now. Therefore we must avert it. Yet the time to avert it is this time when we have obtained the leisures and endowments.”

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Middle Length Lam-Rim
Intermediate Scope

C How on that basis it is good to take ordination

Even more than that, lay people have many obstacles to the accomplishment of the Dharma and have the drawback of numerous faults. Since those who are ordained turn away from them, the ordained has the best basis for averting cyclic existence. That is why the discerning should develop a strong liking for ordination. In [the Sutra] Requested by Ugra it says that lay bodhisattvas should aspire for ordination. This mainly refers to aspiring for full ordination. In Ornament of the Sutras it also says:

Those on the side of the ordained
Have limitless good qualities
Thus those exerting themselves in vows
Excel over householder bodhisattvas. \[71\]

D How it is necessary to respect the vows of individual liberation since ordination is also praised by both sutra and tantra for the accomplishment of omniscience

Thus ordination is not only praised for the attainment of the complete release that is liberation from cyclic existence, but also presented as the best basis for the accomplishment of omniscience by the perfections and tantra [vehicles]. The vows of ordination, among the three vows, are those of individual liberation. That is why you should respect [the vows of] individual liberation, the root of the teachings.

2B4B-2B2B-4B2 By cultivating what kind of path is cyclic existence averted

A Identification of the path and transition
B Indication that the other trainings will be explained further on
C In particular how to train in ethical discipline


{151} Second: In the Letter to a Friend it says:

Even if your head or clothes caught fire
Give up preventing it; simply make an effort
To destroy [the occurrence] of [future] rebirths
There is nothing else that would be better.

Through pure discipline, wisdom and concentration
Attain the immaculate state of peace and taming -
Nirvana - that’s ageless, deathless and limitless,
Free of earth, water, fire, wind, the sun and the moon. \[72\]

You need to practice the three types of precious trainings of the path as set out in this statement.

2B4B-2B2B-4B2B Indication that the other trainings will be explained further on

If I were commenting on the path of intermediate beings for my own enjoyment, an extensive commentary on the three trainings would be necessary here. However, as this is not the case, the training in wisdom, special insight, and the training of the mind, the way to generate calm abiding will be explained in the context of great beings. Therefore, here I will only briefly state the way to train in ethical discipline.

2B4B-2B2B-4B2C How to train in ethical discipline
1 The benefits of guarding [ethical discipline]
2 The shortcomings of not guarding it
3 How the benefits of generating ethical discipline are great nowadays
4 The manner of training

In this regard you should initially consider the benefits of ethical discipline again and again, and increase your heartfelt enthusiasm for it. In the Letter to a Friend it says:

Rules are the base and foundation of all good qualities
So it says - like the earth for what moves and what doesn’t.

And in the Tantra Requested by Subahu:

Just as crops grow faultlessly in dependence
On the ground, depending on ethical discipline
Moistened by the water of compassion
The most superior wholesome qualities grow.

You should think about it according to these statements.

Just as guarding the ethical discipline you have assumed brings enormous benefits, likewise there are great shortcomings to not to guarding it. You should consider the shortcomings of not guarding it again and again as taught in the scriptures. In the Sutra on Cherishing Monks it says:

Discipline is happiness for some;
For others, discipline is suffering.
For those who have it, happiness,
For those who breach it, suffering.”

In the Manjushri Root Tantra it says:

If discipline decays in those who recite,
There will be no highest attainments,
Nor will there be middling attainments,
Even the least ones will remain absent.
The Kind of Sages did not teach
Mantra\textsuperscript{104} attainments for the immoral
Nor do they approach the place
That goes to the city of nirvana.
How could there be in such bad children
Any attainments of mantra [at all]?
For those disregarding ethical discipline
How could there be happy realms?
If they do not become higher beings,
Nor beings bound for highest bliss,
What need to mention their attaining
The mantras that the Jina taught? [76]

How the benefits of generating ethical discipline are great nowadays

In the King of Concentration [Sutra] it says:

The trainings that I taught to those
Who wear the laity’s grey clothes
Even monks who are fully ordained
Won’t have those trainings at that time. [77]

At that time when, according to the statement, the completely perfect guarding of the five bases of training taught to lay vow-holders is not present even in fully-ordained monks, striving in the trainings is special and has more effect. Therefore you should make an effort.

From the same sutra:

Those who at the time when the Dharma decays
And the Sugata’s teachings come to an end,
Practice a single training day and night
Their merit will extraordinarily exceed,
That of one who for eons like Ganges’ sand grains
And with a mind of faith honours billions of Buddhas
With food, drink, parasols, banners and garlands of light. [78]

The manner of training

A Instructions on the four antidotes for abandoning downfalls

As an antidote to not knowing, the first of four causes for the occurrence of downfalls, is to study the trainings and know them.

The antidote to non-conscientiousness is the mindfulness that does not forget the objects and aspects of what to adopt and what to abandon, the introspection individually investigates the three doors at every moment and brings to mind the good or faulty [actions] being engaged in, the shame that shuns faulty behaviour from the perspective of oneself or the Dharma, the embarrassment that shuns faulty behaviour thinking that others will criticize you, and the intimidation that fears the fully ripened effects of faulty conduct. You should train in these and others.

As an antidote to lack of respect you should be respectful towards the Teacher, his formulated rules, and those who perfectly observe them.

As an antidote to many mental afflictions you should examine your continuum and endeavour to apply the antidote to whatever mental affliction predominates.
If without putting effort into this you commit even minor transgressions and think: “It is a small mistake” this engagement in carelessness with respect to the formulated rules will only obtain suffering for you because it says in the *Classification of [Vinaya] Scriptures*:

> Those who are unconcerned with regard to the teachings Of the compassionate Teacher and slightly transgress them Will hence come under the influence of suffering, Like mango groves that are spoiled through clearing bamboos. Though some here transgress the royal decrees of the king And, if it’s not often, do not get punished [at all] If they transgressed the Muni’s words improperly They would migrate to the beasts like the naga Elapatra. [79]

Therefore, you should put effort into not being stained by faults and downfalls, but if you do become stained by them, you should not leave it at that indifferently, but put effort into undoing the transgression or negativity as has been taught.

If such guarding of morality is for those who hold the vows of individual liberation, it is also similar in the case of mantra because it says in the *Tantra Requested by Subahu*:

> Of all pure ethical disciplines of pratimoksha That I, the Jina, taught, practitioners Of mantra who are householders should abandon The rituals and signs while practicing the rest. [80]

If it is necessary for lay practitioners of mantra to behave as set out in the vinaya, except for that which pertains to the signs of ordination, the ritual actions, and some parts of the prescribed formulated rules, what need is there to mention ordained practitioners of mantra?

Khamlungpa also said: “If a famine breaks out, everything depends on barley. Likewise everything hinges on discipline, therefore, earnestly apply yourself to it. Pure ethical discipline, again, does not come about in someone who has not reflected on actions and their effects. Therefore, it is an essential instruction to reflect on that.” And Sharawa: “Generally, whatever excellent and faulty happens, depends on the Dharma. Out of that, if you even rely on what is suggested in the vinaya, you need not change anything. You will become sincere, withstand examination, enjoy practice, and have a good end.” And Geshe [Drom]Tonpa: “Many people rely on vinaya and miss out mantra or rely on mantra and miss out vinaya. Only in my teacher’s traditions does the vinaya become the companion of mantra and mantra the companion of vinaya.”
How the great beings in the land of aryas put into the practice the requirement that all activities accord with the three scriptural collections

Jowo [Atisha] said: “With us in India, whenever an important matter or temporary activity arose, those who upheld the scriptural collections convened and established whether it was not rejected by the three scriptural collections¹⁰⁵ or in contradiction to them and upon that it was decided. We from Vikramashila then had the task [to examine] whether it was rejected by bodhisattva behaviour or in contradiction to it, and the decision was upheld by the entire ordained community[?].

That concludes the explanation of training the mind on the stages of the path common to intermediate beings.
CHAPTER IV
GREAT SCOPE UP TO CALM ABIDING

How to train the mind on the stages of the path of great beings

2B4B-2B3  Training the mind on the path of great beings
A  The transition
B  The actual path

2B4B-2B3A  The transition

1  Even for the achievement of one’s own entire welfare it is inappropriate to disregard the welfare of
others, therefore it is necessary to enter the Mahayana from the start

Through meditating in this manner upon the disadvantages of cyclic existence from different
perspectives over a long time, you will see all existence as a pit of blazing fire, and your mind
will be thoroughly overcome by the wish to attain the liberation that completely pacifies
suffering. If, due to that, you train in the three trainings, you will attain liberation from cyclic
existence and, moreover, will not turn back again even to see the glory of high status.
Nonetheless, since extinguishing [one’s own] faults and achieving good qualities is limited,
one’s own welfare is not complete. For that very reason, others’ welfare is also temporarily
neglected and in the end, having been urged to do so by the buddhas, you will have to enter
the Mahayana. Therefore it is appropriate for the intelligent to enter the Mahayana from the
start. {156} In the Summary of the Perfections it says:

Having abandoned forever those two yanas
Which are without power to bring about all the world’s aims,
Those whose nature is of one taste with helping others
Enter the Jina’s vehicle taught with compassion.  [1]

2  Accomplishing the welfare of others, because it is worthy of great beings to accomplish it

It is the happiness and magnificence of beings, a being is capable of it: it is appropriate to take
responsibility for the welfare of others because to observe only one’s own welfare is something
we also share with animals. Therefore, the natural disposition of great beings is to
categorically strive for the benefit and happiness of others. In the Letter to a Student it says:

When cattle see a mouthful of grass that is easy to get they eat it themselves;
When they are greatly tormented by thirst and find some water they drink it
wish relish.-
Here, the effort they make to bring about the welfare of other beings,
That is their magnificence and the noble potential of happy beings.

Travelling, riding across the sky, the powerful sun illuminates all;
Regardless of the burden the earth supports the world with everything in it.
Those without the least self-interest, equal in nature to the great
Totally strive for that singular taste of benefit and of joy for the world.

[2]
It is worthy of beings and the wise to toil and strive for the goal of protecting others from suffering and to strive accordingly.

In accordance with that, those who see how migrating beings everywhere are tormented by suffering and who toil for their welfare are called “a being” (Skt., purusha) or “wise”. In the same text it says:

Those who have seen the beings, confused by dense grey clouds of worldly ignorance,  
As they fall without control into the blazing fire of suffering  
And who think and strive for them as if fire was spreading overhead  
Those ones, indeed, are beings; moreover those ones are the discerning.

Having generated delight that there exists an entrance to the path that accomplishes all your own and others’ welfare, you need to enter it.

There exists an entry to the Mahayana - the source of all your own and others’ excellence, medicine removing all problems, the great path traveled by all wise beings that nurtures and nourishes all beings through seeing, hearing, remembering, and touching - that possesses the great skilful means that by working for the benefit of others, by the way, you accomplish your own welfare without any incompleteness. Thinking: “Oh, I have found exactly what I was looking for!” you should engage in the best of vehicles with whatever ability of a being you have.

Now, there are three [headings] concerning the training of the mind on the states of the path of great beings: demonstrating that generating the mind of enlightenment is the only gateway to the Mahayana, how to generate this mind and having generated the mind of enlightenment how to train in the conduct.

Demonstrating that generating the mind of enlightenment is the only gateway to the Mahayana, including an explanation of its benefits

First: Therefore, as it is necessary to enter the Mahayana, you come to think how it is to be entered. There is no Great Vehicle apart from the two - the Perfection and Tantra Vehicles - taught by the Jina. Whichever of the two one may enter, the only gateway is the mind of enlightenment.

B Being posited as a follower of the Mahayana also only depends on this mind

Whenever it has arisen in the continuum, even though nothing else has arisen, one is posited as a Mahayana practitioner, whereas whenever one is separated from it, whatever good
qualities one has such as the realisation of emptiness and so forth, {158} one will fall down to the level of hearer and the like and fall away from the Mahayana. This is taught in numerous texts of the Mahayana and is also established by reasonings. Therefore, whether one is a Mahayana practitioner is determined by whether or not one has this mind.

Thus, in Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour it says that as soon as this mind has arisen, you become a son of the jinas. Likewise, in the Biography of Maitreya it says:

Son of the lineage, it is like this. For example, a diamond, even broken, outshines all gold jewelry, however refined; it does not lose its name of ‘diamond’ and averts all poverty. Son of the lineage, likewise the diamond that is the generated in the omniscient, even free from effort, outshines all the golden jewellery that is the good qualities of the hearers and solitary realizers; it does not lose the name ‘bodhisattva’ and it averts all the misfortunes of cyclic existence. [4]

If that mind exists even in someone untrained in conduct, he will be said to be a bodhisattva.

Therefore, it is not sufficient for the Dharma to be Mahayana Dharma, rather it is important that the person has entered the Mahayana. Whether you become a follower of the Mahayana depends on the mind of enlightenment itself. If that mind is only and intellectual understanding, you will be a facsimile of a Mahayana practitioner. One the other hand, if you have a fully qualified mind [of enlightenment], you will also become a completely pure Mahayana practitioner. That is why you should strive in it.

With respect to this it says in the Gandavyuha:

Son of the lineage, the mind of enlightenment is like the seed of all Dharma of the Buddha. [5]

{159} Since certainty regarding this must be gained, it will be explained.

Since water, manure, heat, soil etc. act as a cause for a rice sprout when combined with a rice grain, and act as causes for sprouts of wheat, pulses, and so forth when combined with their respective seeds, they are common causes. Since a barley seed, even though the conditions are gathered together, is not suitable as a cause of a rice sprout and so forth, it is the un-common cause of a barley sprout, while the water, manure, and so forth that cooperate with it are [the common cause] of the barley sprout. Similarly, among the causes for a buddha sprout, the mind of unsurpassed enlightenment, lie the seed, is the un-common cause, whereas the wisdom realizing emptiness, like the water, manure and so forth, is the common cause of the three enlightenments. That is why the statement in the Supreme Continuum:

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Dedication to the supreme vehicle [is] the seed; wisdom [is] the mother that gives birth to the Dharma of the Buddha. [6]

says that dedication to the supreme vehicle is like the father’s seed and the wisdom realizing selflessness is like the mother. For instance, since a Tibetan father cannot beget a son who is Indian or Mongolian, the father is the cause that determines the lineage. On the other hand, a Tibetan mother is like the common cause since she can give birth to different sons.

G. The Great and Lesser Vehicles are also distinguished in terms of conduct, generation of the mind and the like, and are not distinguished in terms of the view

In his *Praise to the Perfection of Wisdom*, Nagarjuna also [points out] that hearers and solitary realizers equally rely on it:

Buddhas, pratyekabuddhas, and hearers
Definitely rely on you,
Singular path to liberation,
It’s true to say there is no other. [7]

That is why the perfection of wisdom is also said to be “the mother”. Since it is the mother of the sons of both the Great and the Lesser Vehicles, it is not the wisdom realizing emptiness that distinguishes the Great and Lesser Vehicles. [160] Rather it is the mind of enlightenment and the vast conduct that distinguishes them. In the *Precious Garland* they are also taught to be differentiated not by the view but by the conduct:

The Hearers’ Vehicle does not explain
The bodhisattvas’ aspiration
Nor their conduct of full dedication.
How should bodhisattvas emerge from it? [8]

H. The inappropriateness of not familiarizing oneself mainly with the mind of enlightenment, but rather familiarizing oneself with other, secondary factors

Therefore, if even the wisdom realizing emptiness is not an uncommon path of the Mahayana, what need is there to mention other paths? For that reason it is necessary to train in the mind of enlightenment, having made instructions on it one’s main concern.

The explanation of how to generate the mind of enlightenment

2B4B-2B3B-2 How to generate this mind
A. The stages of training the mind of enlightenment
B. The measure of its development
C. The way to take it through a ritual

The second one has three [points]: the stages of training the mind of enlightenment, the measure of its development and the way to take it through a ritual.

2B4B-2B3B-2A The stages of training the mind of enlightenment
The sevenfold instruction on cause and effect transmitted from the great Jowo Atisha and the training based on that which occurs in the texts by Shantideva, son of the jinas.

Explanation of how to train the mind by means of the sevenfold instruction on cause and effect

The sevenfold cause and effect is the seven: a perfect buddha is born from the mind of enlightenment; this mind from the extraordinary attitude this attitude from compassion; compassion from love; love from the wish to repay the kindness; the wish to repay the kindness from remembering the kindness; and remembering the past kindness from viewing [beings] as one’s mother.

There are two [points]: Generating certainty concerning the stages and the actual gradual training

The first one has two [points]: demonstrating that compassion is the root of the Mahayana and the way in which the other causes and effects become causes and effects of that [compassion]

The first one has three [points]: the importance [of compassion] at the beginning, the importance [of compassion] in the middle and the importance [of compassion] at the end.

First: When the mind is moved by great compassion one will certainly resolve to get all the sentient beings out of cyclic existence. However, if one’s compassion is inferior, deeds that accord with that will not come about. Therefore, whether you take responsibility for liberating all beings without exception depends on that, and, if you do not take that responsibility, you will not enter the Mahayana. That is why compassion is important at the beginning.
B [Compassion] is the preliminary of all the paths of the Mahayana

In the Akshayamati Nirdesa Sutra [it says]:

Venerable son of Sharadvati, moreover the great compassion of the bodhisattvas is inexhaustible. Why is that? It is because it is a preliminary. Venerable son of Sharadvati, it is like this. By way of analogy, just as the inward and outward flow of the breath is a preliminary for the human life force faculty, likewise the great compassion of the bodhisattvas is a preliminary for perfectly accomplishing the Mahayana. [9]

C It causes the conduct of the bodhisattva

In the Gavagori [Sutra]:

‘Manjushri, what is the beginning of the conduct of bodhisattvas? What is its domain?’ Manjushri said: ‘Son of the gods, the beginning of the conduct of bodhisattvas is great compassion. Its domain is sentient beings.’ [10]

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-1A2 The importance [of compassion] in the middle

A If you do not cultivate compassion again and again, you fall into the Hinayana

Second: Although you enter [the Mahayana] once a mind like this has arisen, if you become discouraged upon seeing in view of the great number of beings and their bad actions, {162} the great difficulty of the trainings, the need to do them boundlessness and also limitless time scale, you will fall into the Hinayana.

B One does not despair with respect to others’ welfare and easily completes the collections

Due to having familiarized yourself increasingly with great compassion rather than generating it just once, you will not look at your own happiness and suffering and will not despair with respect to the welfare of others. That way you easily complete all the collections.

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-1A3 The importance [of compassion] at the end

A The actual importance at the end
B In particular, the advice to make the mind of enlightenment the focus of the instructions

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-1A3A The actual importance at the end

1 [Difference between buddhas and hearers]

Third: The fact that, even when the buddhas have achieved their result, they do not abide in peace like the Hinayanists but bring about the welfare of however many sentient beings there throughout space, is also due to the power of their compassion, for, without it, they would become like hearers.

2 All three [parts] of the external analogy symbolize compassion only

Glorious Chandrakirti said: “For the harvest, what is important in the beginning is the seed, in the middle the water and in the end the maturation. Likewise, for the harvest of buddhahood, what is important in the beginning, the end, and in the middle is compassion.”

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-1A3B In particular, the advice to make the mind of enlightenment the focus of instructions
1 The need to make it the essence of one’s practice

Shang Nachung Tonpa said: “Although I asked Jowo [Atisha] for [personal] instructions, nothing came out of it except for: ‘Abandon worldly thought, cultivate the mind of enlightenment!’ Geshe Tonpa derided him and said: “You got the central point of Jowo’s oral instructions! He knew the key point of the teaching, the Dharma”.

2 Since it is difficult to gain certainty [about this] it is necessary to rely on accumulation, purification, and the scriptures

Since it is also difficult to gain certainty [about this], you must accumulate and purify again and again, study the scriptures such as the Gandavyuha as well as their commentaries, and seek firm certainty. It is as Glorious Ashvagosha says [referring to the Buddha]:

Your precious mind, heroic one,  
The seed of perfect enlightenment -  
Only you know it to be the essence,  
{163} Other beings do not guess that.    [11]

The way in which the other causes and effects become causes and effects of compassion

1 The way in which the understanding as mothers through love are causes
2 The way in which the extraordinary attitude and generation of the mind [of enlightenment] are effects

With respect to the second one there are two [points]: the way in which the understanding as mothers through love are causes, and the way in which the extraordinary attitude and generation of the mind [of enlightenment] are effects.

The way in which the understanding as mothers through love are causes

A How to develop the intensive wish for all beings to be free from suffering

First: If you think again and again about the suffering of a living being, this will generally give rise to the mere wish that it be free from suffering. However, for this mind to arise easily and for it to arise as very with strong and stable, to start with, it must be a sentient being who has the aspect of being attractive and valuable. For, when someone close to us meets with suffering, we cannot bear it; when our enemies meet with suffering, we enjoy it; and when someone who is neither a friend nor an enemy meets with suffering mainly an equanimity that neglects him arises.

B The difference of development or non-development of attraction towards friends, enemies, and the in between

In this regard, since the former is attractive to our mind, the more we cherish him, the more his suffering will be unbearable to us, and the more compassion will arise for him. If we cherish him little or middling, our inability to bear [his suffering] will also be small. On the other hand, if we cherish someone very much, we cannot bear it at all when he meets with only slight suffering. When we see our enemy suffer, not only does the wish that he be free from it fail to arise, but rather the thought occurs to us “May [his suffering] increase and may he not be free from it”. That is our reaction to someone we find unattractive. Moreover, our joy at his suffering will also be greater or smaller, depending on how unattractive he is. With respect to the suffering of someone who is neither a friend nor an enemy, it is neither that we cannot bear it nor that we enjoy it. That is our reaction, when something is neither attractive nor unattractive.
C How to generate great love and great compassion, by establishing them as greatly attractive by means of the three recognizing them as our mothers, remembering their kindness, and wishing to repay it If this is done, meditating on sentient beings as our relatives (164) is for the sake of making them attractive to us. However, and since the person we are most closely related to is our mother, the three – meditating on them as having been our mother, remembering their kindness, and wishing to repay this kindness – establishes them as dear and attractive. The love that holds living beings as delightful as an only child is the effect of these three. It produces compassion.

D With respect to mere love and compassion it is not certain which is the cause and which is the effect With respect to the love that wishes them to meet with happiness and compassion, there does not seem to be any certainty as to which one is the cause and which one is the effect.

E Whose system these instructions are These meditations on sentient beings as our relatives as the cause producing the mind [of enlightenment] has been explained by Acarya Chandrakirti, Venerable Chandra, and Acarya Kamalshila.

Although Hearers and Solitary Realizers also have the immeasurable compassion and the love that think, “If only sentient beings were to meet with happiness and if only they were free from suffering!,” still, those who are not Mahayanists do not take the responsibility to accomplish happiness for all sentient beings and to eliminate their suffering. Therefore it is necessary to generate the extraordinary attitude, an attitude of those with courageous hearts. You come to understand this from a quotation of the Sagaramatipariphriricca Sutra in the commentary on the Uttaratantra.
A  Training of the mind to strive for the welfare of others
B  Training the mind to strive for enlightenment
C  The result of the training: Identifying the generation of the mind [of enlightenment]

The second one - the actual training - has three [points]: training of the mind to strive for the welfare of others, training the mind to strive for enlightenment and the result of the training: identifying the generation of the mind [of enlightenment].

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A Training of the mind to strive for the welfare of others
   1  Laying the foundation for generating this mind
   2  Actual generation of that mind

Concerning the first [unit] there are two [statements]: Laying the foundation for generating this mind and actual generation of that mind.

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A1 Laying the foundation for generating this mind
   A  Producing an equanimous mind towards sentient beings
   B  Establishing them all as having an attractive aspect

The first [of those] has two [phrases]: Producing an equanimous mind towards sentient beings and establishing them all as having an attractive aspect.

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A1A Producing an equanimous mind towards sentient beings
   1  The preparatory steps
   2  How to meditate on equanimity

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A1A-1 The preparatory steps

First: The preparatory steps etc. as explained before in the context of beings of lesser and intermediate beings should be adopted and sustained here as well.

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A1A-2 How to meditate on equanimity
   A  The need for an equanimous mind where attachment and hatred have been stopped

To start with, if you do not accomplish an equanimous mind, having stopped the bias of attachment towards some sentient beings and hatred towards any love and compassion that arise will arise with partiality. As this does not occur if you observe them without impartiality, you should cultivate equanimity.

   B  What kind of equanimity needs to be meditated

Among the two types of equanimous mind that have been taught, one that has the aspect of establishing living beings as lacking mental afflictions, such as attachment, hatred, and so forth, and one in which oneself is free from attachment and hatred towards sentient beings, here it is the latter.

   C  The order of meditation

Since this is the order of meditation by which it will easily arise, initially, you should take a person who has neither done you harm nor benefit as your object of meditation, [166] and through eliminating attachment and anger accomplish an equanimous mind. When an equanimous mind toward that person has been accomplished, you then need to accomplish an equanimous mind with respect to friends and relatives. A non-equanimous mind towards them is to be biased due to attachment and hatred or not to be equanimous due to lesser or greater attachment. When you are equanimous towards that [person], you should cultivate an equanimous mind towards your enemies. The lack of equanimity towards them is due to hatred that derives from seeing them as totally incompatible [with yourself]. Having become
equanimous toward them, you should cultivate an equanimous mind toward all sentient beings.

D By meditating on what attachment and aversion are stopped.

Moreover, the following two thoughts are taught in [Kamalashila’s] Middling Stages of Mediation (Bhavanakrama): “Since from their side all living beings are the same in wanting happiness and not wanting suffering, it would be inappropriate for me to benefit some whom I consider close and harm or fail to benefit others whom I consider distant.” “Since, from my own side there is no [single] being who in beginningless cyclic existence has not been my relative hundreds of times, who should I have attachment for and who should I have hatred for?” Also with regard to attachment to our relatives, the *Sutra Requested by the Noble Daughter Chandrottama* says:

In former times I killed the lot[/each one] of you;
I was also formerly chopped up by you,
We all have been foes and murderers unto each other
How can a mind of attachment arise in you?

As was explained above in the context of the fault of uncertainty, you should think about the way in which friends and enemies change. Due to this, avert both anger and attachment.

E Ceasing attachment and hatred, although the mind of friend and enemy has not been ceased

We need to differentiate between friends and enemies having apprehended them to be the basis of respective features. Therefore, what is to be ceased is the mind that is biased due to attachment and hatred, taking as a reason that someone is a friend or enemy, whereas the mind of friend and enemy does not need to be averted.

**2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A1B** Establishing them all as having an attractive aspect

1 Meditating on them as one’s mother
2 Remembering their kindness
3 Meditating on repaying [their] kindness

The second one has three [points]: meditating on them as [one’s] mother, remembering their kindness, and meditating on repaying [their] kindness.

**2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A1B-1** Meditating on them as [one’s] mother

A The thought that they have been [our] mothers in the past

First: In the sutras it is taught that, since cyclic existence is beginningless, our births are also beginningless. Therefore we have been born and we have died incessantly, so that there no body in cyclic existence that we have not taken, no place in which we have not been born, and also none who has not been a relative such as our mother and so forth.

B The thought that they are still [our] mothers

Moreover, this is not only true of the past, they will again be in the future. Therefore reflecting in that way, you should try to gain unshakable certainty that all living beings have been your mother, for, once that certainty arises, it will be easy to remember their kindness and so forth. On the other hand, if it does not arise, there will be no foundation for remembering their kindness and so forth.

**2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A1B-2** Remembering their kindness
A  The thought that it is skilful and so forth to start with one’s mother of this life etc.

Second: [Geshe] Potowa maintained that [the thought remembering their kindness] will arise quickly if, after meditating on all sentient beings as [your] mothers, you initially meditate on your mother of this life. That is how you should meditate. You visualize your mother in front of you in a clear aspect and repeatedly reflect: “She has been my mother not only now, but times past counting since beginningless cyclic existence. That way, when she was my mother, she protected me from all harm and accomplished all happiness and benefit for me.

B The way in which she also protected one in this life

In particular, even in this life, she initially carried you in her womb for a long time. Then, when she had given birth to you, she pressed your yellow tousled hair against the heat of her body, she swung you on her fingertips, nursed you with her milk, fed you as an infant from her mouth, [168] wiped away your saliva with her mouth, cleaned your filth with her hands, caring for you unceasingly in many different ways. In addition, when you were hungry or thirsty, she gave you food and drink. When you were cold, she gave you clothing. When you were in need, she gave you her possessions that she herself had hardly used. When even the most basic necessities where hard to come by, she bore great hardship and spared herself no negativity, suffering or bad talk to get it and give them to you.

C A mother cherishes her child more than herself

Whenever her child suffers from a disease and so forth, she wishes from the depths of her heart to die, rather than for her child to die, to be ill rather than for her child to be ill, and so forth. With effort, she does whatever she can to eliminate [his suffering].

D How to meditate about the essential points separately

To summarize, by whatever level of knowledge and whatever level of ability she had, she thought single-pointedly about the way in which to accomplish your happiness and benefit, and to remove any harm and suffering [for] [you].

E How to meditate progressing gradually

If, meditating in this way, a mind remembering her kindness, that is not just words has arisen, you should meditate on recognizing other friends and relatives, your father and so forth, as also having been [your] mothers. Then, you should also meditate on recognizing neutral [persons] as having been your mothers. Once a similar mind arises towards them as that towards your friends and relatives, you should also meditate on recognizing your enemies as having been your mothers. Once a similar mind arises towards them as that towards your mother has developed, you should proceed from the recognition of all beings as having been your mothers, and meditate, gradually extending it more and more.

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A1B-3 The wish to repay [their] kindness

A Even though you do not recognize them due to birth, death, and transmigration, it would be shameless to neglect them.

Third: There is nothing less shameful than carelessly neglecting your suffering, protectorless, kind mothers, just because you do not recognize them anymore due to birth, death, and transmigration, and being preoccupied with freeing yourself from cyclic existence. In the Letter to a Student it says:

My relatives have got immersed in the ocean of cyclic existence
And seem to have fallen into an abyss; if I neglected them, Unrecognised due to birth and death and transmigration And sought liberation alone, there would be nothing more shameless. [13]

B To neglect those who have been kind does not accord with the well-mannered

Thus, thinking “If neglecting such kind beings is unacceptable even to the ill-mannered, how can I reconcile it with my own ways?” you should take the responsibility to reciprocate their kindness.

C As it would be inappropriate to repay the benefit with something contaminated, one should liberate them from ignorance

If someone asks: “Well then, how should I repay the benefit?” Whatever happiness and wealth of cyclic existence your mothers obtain, they are deceived by all of them. Thus, we should repay the benefit thinking “I, in the past, by the power of conceit of the mental afflictions once again produced various suffering in those who were already suffering by nature, like putting salt and so forth on the injured who were already severely wounded. I will establish all those who have benefited me out of love in the happiness of liberation, nirvana.”

D How to meditate [on the essential points] separately

In brief, if even your own kind mother who, restless and insane, blind and without anyone to guide her, is stumbling with each step and approaching a fearsome abyss, getting close with each step, cannot put her hope in her child, who can she count on? If it is not for her child to free its mother from fear, who else should do it? Likewise the sentient beings who have been our mothers, their minds in a state of confusion due to the evil spirits of the mental afflictions, insane and without control over their minds by the fever of mental afflictions, without eyes to see the path to high status and certain goodness, without a blind person’s guide of perfect knowledge, in each instant stumble due to being distracted by faulty behaviour, and wander toward the abyss of cyclic existence in general and the bad migrations in particular. Seeing them, consider how these mothers necessarily put their hopes in their child, and that it is [also] for the child to get his mother out of there, you will repay their kindness by definitely getting them out of cyclic existence. In the Compendium of Instructions (Shiksasamuccaya) [it says]:

Insane with afflictions, blinded by ignorance
On a path with many abysses
Stumbling with every step, myself and others are always the basis of sorrow.
Migrators are the same in suffering. [14]

In view of this, although it is indeed said that it is inappropriate to look for faults in others and when seeing the slightest good quality to hold it amazement, here it is reasonable to relate these statements to misery.

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A2 \hspace{1cm} Actual generation of the mind striving for the welfare of others
A Meditating on love
B Meditating on compassion
C Meditating on the extraordinary attitude

The second one has three [points]: meditating on love, meditating on compassion, and meditating on the extraordinary attitude.

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A2A Generation of loving kindness

1 The observed object

First: The observed object of love is sentient beings who do not have happiness.

2 The aspect [of love]

Its aspect is the thought: "How wonderful it would be if they met with happiness. May they meet with happiness!" And: "I will make them meet with happiness!"

3 The merit is even greater than constantly making offerings to the buddhas

As regards the benefit, it says in the King of Meditative Stabilization Sutra:

Many kinds of immeasurable offerings
In myriads of neighbouring pure fields
Constantly offered to the most excellent beings,
Fall short of a fraction of the mind of love. [15]

This is to say that the merit is much greater than that of constantly making offerings to the field that is the final object with very vast things.

4 If you cultivate love in this field, [the merit] will exceed even the former

Also, in Arraying the Buddha Field of Manjushri it is explained:

In the world sphere called “Thousand Ornaments” of the great king Buddheshvara, at the northeastern border, [171] sentient beings possess a happiness similar to that of monks who have entered cessation. If a mind of love towards all sentient beings, generated in this field for as little as the duration of a finger snap produces far more merit than practicing pure conduct there for hundred thousand millions of years, what need is there to mention that of abiding in [that mind] day and night? [However,] if compared to the pure conduct there [sustained] over hundred thousands of millions of years, the mind of loving kindness towards all beings, generated in this realm for as little as the time of snapping produces far more merit than the former...."

And

5 Achievement of the eight benefits such as being loved by gods and human beings

in the [Nagarjuna’s] Ratnavali we also find:

Three hundred small pots of food one offers
Three times every day fall short
Of the merit of love sustained
For the duration of just one moment.
You are loved by gods and humans,
They protect you as well and you have
Mental happiness and much happiness
Poisons and weapons can do no more harm,

You achieve your goals without effort
And will be born in the world of Brahma.
Even if you do not reach liberation,
You will win the eight qualities of love. [16]

If you have love, you are loved by gods and humans, and they naturally gather around you. Since even the jinas defeat the hosts of Mara by the force of love, it becomes the best of protections and so forth.

6 The stages of meditation on love

The stages of meditation on love are to respectively meditate initially [on love] for your friends and relatives, then for neutral persons, then for your enemies, and then towards all sentient beings.

7 The way in which to meditate [on love]

The way in which to meditate [on love] is as follows. Just as compassion arises when you reflect again and again on how sentient beings have the suffering of suffering, likewise you should reflect again and again on the fact that sentient beings lack contaminated and uncontaminated happiness and on the manners in which they are devoid of happiness. Once you have familiarized yourself with this, the wish for them to find happiness will arise naturally. In addition, directing your mind to the various kinds of happiness, you will then provide sentient beings with them.

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A2B Meditating on compassion
1 The observed object [of compassion]

Second: The observed object of compassion is sentient beings who are suffering due to any of the three kinds of suffering.

2 The aspect [of compassion]

The aspect is the thought: “If only they were free from these sufferings”, “May they be free from them,” and “I will free them from them”.

3 The sequence of the meditation [on compassion]

The sequence of meditation is to meditate [on compassion] first for your friends and relatives, then for neutrals persons, then for your enemies, and then for all sentient beings of the ten directions.

4 The main point of meditating in that sequence

This gradual meditation on equanimity, love, and compassion where you divide the objects into specific categories was developed by Acharya Kamalashila following the Abhidharma Sutra. This is a very important point, because if, from the start, you train in observing [sentient beings] in general without diving them into specific categories, it will seem as though [these attitudes] have arisen, but when you then think about them individually, it will appear
that it does not arise for any of them. However, if you experience a change in your mind towards the individual [persons] as explained above, and then extend it to many, when at the end you observe them in general and sustain [that attitude], it will arise purely regardless of who is observed, whether a group or an individual.

5 The way to meditate

The way to meditate is in terms of the sufferings that were explained when considering how the sentient beings who have been our mothers have fallen into existence and are experience the general and specific sufferings.

6 The measure for the development of compassion

The measure for the development of compassion is taught in the First Stages of Meditation (Bhavanakrama) [by Kamalashila]:

At the point where the compassion that has the aspect of the desire constantly to remove the suffering of all beings - just as if your own beloved child was unhappy - operates naturally in you spontaneously and operates in accordance with your own nature, it is complete. Thereby, it obtains the name "great compassion", as it is then complete.

173 [Thus] if compassion towards all sentient beings naturally arises to the extent it arises in a mother when the child she loves with all her heart suffers, it is said to be a fully-qualified great compassion. By that token, the same is true for the measure of the generation of great love.

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2A2C Meditating on the extraordinary attitude

1 The actual way to meditate [on the extraordinary attitude]

Third: Having meditated on love and compassion in this manner, finally, you will think: “Alas! If these sentient beings who are pleasant and attractive to me are thus deprived of happiness and tormented by suffering, how shall I make them meet with happiness and how shall I free them from suffering?” In taking upon yourself, at least in mere words, the responsibility to liberate them, your mind is trained.

2 Clearing up doubt

Although this point has already been made briefly in the context of repaying the kindness, it is shown here that the love and compassion that think: “If only they were to meet with happiness” and “If only they were free from suffering” are not sufficient. This is because it was taught it is necessary to generate the love and compassion that are able to induce the thought: “I myself will accomplish the happiness and benefit of sentient beings.” This is not to be done just during meditation sessions, but is to be sustained continuously, remembering it during all behaviours after the session and so forth, as is taught in the (Middle Stages of Meditation) Bhavanakrama.

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2B Training in the mind striving for enlightenment

Second: When, inspired by the steps explained so far, you see that it is necessary to become a buddha for the welfare of others, you will also develop the wish to attain it. Nonetheless,
since that in itself is not sufficient, at the beginning you should increase your faith through thinking about the good qualities of the exalted body, exalted speech, exalted mind, and enlightened activities as they were explained earlier in the context of going for refuge. Then, since that faith is said to act as the basis for aspiration, you will generate the wish to attain those qualities from the bottom of your heart. That will induce certainty that the achievement of an exalted knower of all aspects is indispensable also for your own welfare.

2B4B-2B3B-2A1B-2C The result of the training: Identifying the mind generation

Third: The general definition is as taught in the Ornament for Clear Realizations (Abhisamaya-alamkara):

The mind generation is the desire for perfectly complete enlightenment for the welfare of others. [18]

2 Divisions

Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour, following the Gandavyuha [Sutra], teaches the two - the aspiring and engaging [mind generations] saying:

The wish to go and actually going -
The way that difference is understood
Is how the discerning should understand
The difference between those two in turn. [19]

If there appear to be a lot of inconsistencies in this respect, there is also the statement in the First Stages of Meditation that the mind that thinks: “May I become a Buddha for the welfare of sentient beings” is the aspiring mind and that, after the vow has been taken, that mind is the engaging mind.

Explanation of how to train the mind through equalizing and exchanging oneself and others

2B4B-2B3B-2A2 The training based on the texts by Shantideva

A Thinking about the advantages of exchanging and the disadvantages of not exchanging oneself with others
B Demonstrating that you can generate this mind if you familiarize yourself with it
C The stages of meditating on how to exchange oneself and others

The second one - the training based on the texts by Shantideva - has three [points]: Thinking about the advantages and disadvantages of exchanging and not exchanging oneself with others respectively, demonstrating that you can generate this mind if you familiarize yourself with it and the stages of meditating on how to exchange yourself and others.

2B4B-2B3B-2A2A Thinking about the advantages of exchanging and the disadvantages of not exchanging oneself with others

1 To quickly accomplish the two welfares, it is appropriate to exchange oneself with others

First: In Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour it says:

Whoever wishes to protect
Himself and others rapidly
Should practice the secret instructions [which
Consist in] exchanging oneself and others.  [21]

2  The advantages of exchanging and the disadvantages of not exchanging oneself with others

All happiness that exists in the world
Arises from wanting others’ happiness.
All suffering that exists in the world
Arises from wanting one’s own happiness.

What need is there to say any more:
The childish work for their own welfare
{175} The Munis for the welfare of others.
Look at the difference between the two!

3  Therefore buddhahood etc. are therefore difficult to attain if one does not exchange oneself with
others.

One’s happiness and the suffering of others -
If one fails to exchange them correctly,
One will not reach buddhahood,
Samsara will be without happiness too.”  [22]

Just as it is expressed here, you should think of cherishing oneself as the door to all problems
and cherishing others as the basis of all excellences.

2B4B-2B3B-2A2B  Demonstrating that you can generate this mind if you familiarize yourself with it

1  The actual [topic]

Second: In the same way that fear used to arise in us even upon hearing our enemy’s name
but later on, having come to an agreement, we befriended him and got very sad if he was
absent, likewise due to the mind following habits, we can get used to seeing oneself like
someone else and others like oneself. In the same text [it says]:

Do not avoid things because they are difficult
By the strength of familiarisation
One whose name was frightful to hear
Will make you sad, if he is away.  [23]

And:

It is not all that difficult
To posit my body as that of others.  [24]

2  Clearing up doubt

If you think: “As someone else’s body is not my own body, how could it be appropriate to
generate the same attitude towards it [as to] to my own one?” - This body was also created from
the semen and blood of our parents and even though it was created from parts of others’
Bodies, we hold it to be “I” by the power of previous familiarisation; likewise if we familiarize
ourselves with cherishing others’ bodies as if they were our own, [this mind] will arise. The
same text says:
Therefore, with regard to the drops
Of someone else’s semen and blood,
You hold them to be “I” – like that
Get used to it with regard to others! [25]

Through thorough reflection on the advantages and disadvantages along these lines, a strong
{176} enthusiasm for this meditation will develop from the depths of the heart. Having seen
that, if you familiarize yourself with it, you can generate [this attitude], you should meditate
on it.

2B4B-2B3B-2A2C The stages of meditation on how to exchange yourself and others
1 Removing obstacles
2 The actual way to meditate

The third one has two [points]: Removing obstacles and the actual way to meditate.

2B4B-2B3B-2A2C-1 Removing obstacles
A Identifying the mind of exchanging oneself and others
B Removing obstacles to it

2B4B-2B3B-2A2C-1A Identifying the mind of exchanging oneself and others

First: To say “exchanging oneself and others”, “making oneself into the other and making
others into oneself” does not mean to train in the mind that thinks: “That other [peson] is
me” and “His eyes and so forth are my eyes and so forth.” Rather it is to exchange the rank of
the two: (1) the mind that cherishes oneself and (2) the mind that neglects others, and to
generate the mind that cherishes others like we do ourselves and neglects ourselves like we do
others. That is also why it is taught that one’s own happiness and others’ suffering should be
exchanged. Having perceived self-cherishing as our enemy, we will stop considering our own
happiness to be a priority. Having perceived cherishing others as a quality and stopped
neglecting the suffering of others, it will become a priority to eliminate it. In short, we will act
for the sake of eliminating the suffering of others without concern for our own happiness.

2B4B-2B3B-2A2C-1B Removing obstacles to it

When training in this mind, there are two obstacles.

1 Removing the obstacle of considering oneself and others as distinct individuals
2 [Removing the obstacle of thinking: “As the suffering of others does not harm me, I need not make an
effort to remove it”]

2B4B-2B3B-2A2C-1B1 Removing the obstacle of considering oneself and others as distinct individuals
A The actual [topic]

Separating the two, oneself and others – the basis of one’s own and others’ happiness and
suffering – into distinct entities, like blue and yellow, you hold them to be established [in this
way]. Then, with respect to the happiness and suffering based on them, you think: “Since it is
mine, it should be accomplished or removed. Since it is someone else’s, it is to be neglected”.
Therefore, as an antidote to this [think]: “Myself and others are not inherently distinct.
Rather, as we look at one another the mind “other” arises in me, whereas the mind “I” arises
in the other [person] like with “this mountain” and “that mountain over there”. For instance,
although from this perspective the mind “the mountain over there” arises with respect to the
mountain over there, when you go to the mountain over there, the mind “this mountain
here” arises. Therefore this {177} is not the same as [with] the colour blue: a mind of blueness will arise in whoever looks at it, whereas a mind of another colour will not.

B The scriptural sources

In this manner, the Compendium of All Trainings (Shiksasamuccaya) also teaches that [self and other] are not established by their own nature, but merely posited in dependence on the point of view:

Through familiarity with the equality
Of other and self bodhicitta grows stable.
‘Self’ and ‘other’ are related;
As fictitious as ‘that side’ and ‘this side’.

That mountain is not ‘that side’ by itself.
Depending on where it becomes ‘this side’,
The ‘self’ in itself is not established.
Depending on who it becomes ‘other’. [26]

Removing the obstacle of thinking: “As the suffering of others does not harm me, I need not make an effort to remove it”.

A Refutation in terms of the actions of a youth and an elderly person

If this were the case, there would be no need to accumulate wealth when young out of concern for the sufferings of old age, as the sufferings of the elderly person would not harm the youth.

B Refutation in terms of different parts of the body and different times

It is said: “Likewise, the hand would not remove the sufferings of the foot, because they are other.” This is a mere illustration and should also be applied to [the sufferings of] the morning and [those of] the evening, and so forth.

C Abandoning the doubt that these [analogies] are not the same as ‘self’ and ‘other’ since they deal with the same continuum or collection

If you think: “The two, self and other, are not the same since the elderly [person] and the youth are the same continuum, while the hand and the foot are the same collection.” ‘Continuum’ and ‘collection’ are designated on many instants and a combination of many parts; they lack an autonomous essence. Since your own self and others’ self must be posited on that continuum or collection, they are not established by way of an own essence, that would not just be self and other posited in relation.

D Since this is so by the power of familiarization, [the mind] cherishing others can also develop

Yet your own suffering is unbearable due to the power of familiarization, from beginningless time, with self-cherishing. Therefore, if you familiarize yourself with cherishing others, their suffering will also become unbearable.

2B4B-2B3B-2A2C-2 The actual way to meditate

A Thinking about the disadvantages of cherishing oneself and the advantages of cherishing others

Second: By the power of attachment to the self, this self-cherishing has produced much that is undesirable from beginningless time up to now. Despite the fact that you wanted to create
excellence for yourself, you engaged in unsuitable means, considering your own welfare paramount. Due to this, neither your own welfare nor that of others was accomplished although an incalculably great number of eons passed. Not only did you not accomplish that, you were tormented only by suffering. If I had shifted the concern for your own welfare to that of others, you would have become a buddha a long time ago and both your own and others’s welfare would have, without doubt become excellent. But, as you did not do that, the time has been spent with meaningless exertion.

B The need to put an end to self-cherishing by regarding it as the enemy

Think: “With this understanding, I shall rely on the mindfulness and introspection that my self-cherishing is my worst enemy, and make much effort so that [the self-cherishing that] has not arisen does not arise and that which has arisen does not last long.” Having made this certainty stable, you should familiarize yourself with it many times.

C Generating the mind cherishing others

Thinking about the advantages of cherishing others again and again in this way, you will generate strong enthusiasm [to do so] from the bottom of your heart. Then, you will not generate the mind neglecting others that has not [yet] arisen, and that which has arisen will not last long. By means of the [thought] that others are dear, pleasant, and attractive, as far as it has arisen, you should generate the mind cherishing others, just as you previously cherished yourself.

D How to meditate remembering the teachings of earlier holy beings

{179} Jowo [Atisha] said: “The Tibetans know bodhisattvas who do not know how to train in love and compassion. Well then, how do you do it? You should do it having trained sequentially from the beginning.”

Langri Thangpa said: “Shawopa and I have eighteen human methods and one horse method, nineteen altogether. The method of humans is, having generated the mind of supreme enlightenment, to train in doing whatever one does for the welfare of sentient beings. The method of horses is the self-cherishing that does not allow the mind of enlightenment that has not arisen to arise and that which has arisen to remain and increase. Therefore, you train in whatever harms it, [this] having been taught in passing. As for sentient beings, you train in whatever benefits them, [this] having been taught as the fundamental point.”

Khamlungpa said: “Since we act deviously towards our brethren sentient beings, they will do the same towards us.”

E The appropriateness of putting effort by many approaches into the methods for generating the mind of enlightenment

It is good if a habit develops that constantly checks to what extent this mind has been generated, since everything stems from it: whether or not the root of the Mahayana has been planted and whether or not one is included among Mahayanists. Even if it does not develop, do not leave it at that but rely on a virtuous spiritual friends who teaches it and always be accompanied by the companion that is mind training. this and thereby make the companion of mind training your steady friend. Read the scriptures of the Teacher and their commentaries. As its cause, accumulate the collections and purify obscurations. Since it is
certain that if you train your mind in this way, the seed will be fully planted, the[se] actions are of no little importance and a reason for joy. It is as the great Jowo [Atisha] said:

For those who wish to enter the gate of
Mahayana Dharma it’s worth an eon
Of effort for bodhicitta to grow
Which like the sun and moon eliminate
Darkness and pacify scorching heat.

The second: {180} that should be understood from what was already explained above.

**Explanation of how to assume the mind generation by means of a ritual**

1. Receiving that which has not yet been received
2. Guarding that which has been received without degenerating it
3. The method for restoring it if it has been degenerated

The third one has three [points]: receiving that which has not yet been received, guarding that which has been received without degenerating it, and the method for restoring it if it has been degenerated.

1A From whom: the object from whom it is taken
1B By whom: the basis that takes it
1C How: the ritual by which it is taken

Thus, it should be someone who has gained a little experience of transforming his mind into the mind of enlightenment due to having trained the mind in the stages of the path as explained previously.
The third one has three [points]: the preparatory ritual, the actual ritual, and the concluding ritual.

2B4B-2B3B-2C1C-1 The preparatory ritual
   A Special going for refuge
   B Accumulating the collection
   C Training the mind

The first one has three [points]: the special going for refuge, accumulating the collection, and training the mind.

2B4B-2B3B-2C1C-1A Special going for refuge
   1 Decorating the place, displaying representations, and setting up offering substances
   2 Making a request and going for refuge
   3 Stating the trainings of having gone for refuge

The first one is divided into three [points]: Decorating the place, displaying representations, and setting up offering substances; making a request and going for refuge; and stating the trainings of having gone for refuge.

2B4B-2B3B-2C1C-1A1 Decorating the place, displaying representations, and setting up offering substances
   A General indications concerning the place, the representations, offerings, etc.

First: Clean an isolated place, smear it with the five cow substances, sprinkle it with superb fragrant water such as sandalwood, and scatter fragrant flowers. Set out representations of the three jewels – metal status and so forth, texts and so forth, and images of bodhisattvas - on a throne, table, or a raised platform. Do the preparatory ritual with as valuable offering items such as canopies, flowers, and so forth as possible, as well as music and food and so forth. Arrange a throne for the virtuous spiritual friend also adorn it with flowers. You accumulate the collections [of merit] by paying respect to the former masters, the sangha, and giving a torma to the elemental spirits.

B Clearing up doubts about this

If you do not have any offerings at all, as described in the Sutra of the Good Eon, it can be accomplished even with cloth fringes. If you do have offerings, they should have been obtained through great effort without deceit, and should be arrayed in such a way that your friends cannot help marvelling. When Jowo [Atisha] was requested by Tibetan teachers in Mangyul and Samye for the mind generation, he reportedly said that it did not arise through inferior offerings. He said that also as representation a consecrated statue of the main master of the teachings was imperative, and also as a text the Abbreviated Perfection of Wisdom on upward should be used as the text.

C The steps to be performed by the lama and student

Then, the assembly of aryas is invoked. The disciple, washed and well dressed, with his hands joined, is encouraged by the lama to generate clear faith in the good qualities of the merit field from the bottom of his heart. He should then slowly make the seven-limb prayer, imagining that he is in front of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

2B4B-2B3B-2C1C-1A2 Making a request and going for refuge
Second: Then [the student], having generated the discrimination of his lama as the Teacher, prostrates to him and makes offerings, including a mandala, to him. With his right knee on the floor, palms joined, he makes a request for the purpose of the mind of enlightenment:

Just as the previous tathagatas, arhats, {182} perfectly complete buddhas, as well as the great bodhisattvas abiding on the great grounds, first generated the mind of unsurpassed, perfectly complete enlightenment, likewise I, whose name is..., request the master to generate the mind of unsurpassed, perfectly complete enlightenment.

Repeat this three times.

Then, [the student] goes for refuge, with the behaviour explained earlier, to the objects - the Buddha, the Dharma (the true paths that mainly bring about the cessations), and the Sangha (the irreversible aryabodhisattvas) - with the general attitude thinking: “From now until I achieve enlightenment, in order to protect all sentient beings, [I go for refuge] to the Buddha, the teacher of refuge; [I go for refuge] to the Dharma, the actual refuge; [I go for refuge] to the Sangha, those who “I ask for help to achieve refuge”; and with the special attitude of making the strong aspiration: “I will never turn away from this attitude at any time.”

Repeat this three times.

Master, please grant me your attention. I, whose name is (...), from now until I reach the essence of enlightenment, go for refuge to the best of men, the Buddha Bhagavans.

Master, please grant me your attention. I, whose name is (...), from now until I reach the essence of enlightenment, go for refuge to the best of Dharma, the Dharma that is peace, free from attachment.

Master, please grant me your attention. I, whose name is (...), from now until I reach the essence of enlightenment, go for refuge to the best of assemblies, {183} the Sangha of irreversible aryabodhisattvas.
Repeat this three times. The request for attention when going for refuge to each of the Jewels and the unusual words of going for refuge to the Dharma accord with the ritual composed by Jowo [Atisha].

Third: Here too the master should express the trainings that were explained before in the context of lesser beings.

Second: As before the seven-limb prayer should be done in the presence of the direct and lineage gurus and the merit field explained previously.

Third: As explained previously, the observed objects and aspects of loving kindness and compassion should be visualised.

Second: In front of the master, [the student] should kneel down on his right knee; alternatively sitting in a crouching position is also appropriate. With palms joined, he should generate the mind [of enlightenment].

The distinction of the mind generation

[The mind generation here] is not the mere mind generation that thinks “I will attain buddhahood for others’ welfare.” Rather, it is the promise that, observing the mind that has been generated, thinks, “I shall not give it up as long as I have not attained enlightenment.” This is why that attitude should be generated in dependence on a ritual.

If you unable to train in the trainings of the aspiring mind, you should not [make this promise]. On the other hand, if the mere thought “I will become a buddha for the welfare of all sentient beings” is generated by means of a ritual, everyone can do it, regardless of whether or not they are able or not to train in the trainings of the mind generation.

With respect to the aspiring mind, these two [systems] may be appropriate, however, with respect to taking the engaging mind by means of a ritual, it is inappropriate to take it without training in the trainings. Therefore, it is inadmissible to assert that there is a difference with respect to it being appropriate and inappropriate in the many rituals for the vow transmitted from Nagarjuna and Asanga. {184}

Although it is appropriate for someone not training in the trainings to generate the aspiring mind, the engagement vow is inappropriate.

The Advice to King Prasenajit says that if one cannot train in the trainings of generosity, etc., a great amount of merit is accomplished from merely generating the mind [of enlightenment]. Taking this as its source, the First Stages of Meditation says:
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Great Scope up to Calm Abiding

Whoever cannot train in the perfections fully in all their aspects should also generate the mind of enlightenment thoroughly conjoined with method because the results will be great. [28]

Thus, it is clear that it is appropriate for someone incapable of training in the trainings of generosity and so forth to generate the mind of enlightenment, but inappropriate to hold the vow.

F The ritual for assuming the mind generation

The ritual for assuming the mind generation is:

All buddhas and bodhisattvas residing in the ten directions, please grant me your attention. Master, please grant me your attention. I, whose name is (...), by means of the roots of virtue of the nature of generosity, the nature of morality, and the nature of meditation that I have created, caused to be created, and rejoiced in the creation of in this life and in previous lives, just as the previous tathagatas, arhats, perfectly complete buddhas and great bodhisattvas thoroughly abiding on the great grounds, generated the mind of unsurpassed perfectly complete enlightenment, in the same way also I, whose name is (...), from now until I reach the essence of enlightenment, will generate the mind of unsurpassed, perfectly complete, great enlightenment, I will liberate the beings that are not liberated, free those who are not free, give breath to those unable to breathe, and cause those who have not completely passed beyond sorrow to completely pass beyond sorrow.

Say this three times. Even though it is not clearly mentioned in the refuge [ceremony] and in this ritual, it is necessary so repeat [these words] after the master.

G The method for taking [the mind generation] by oneself in a ritual

This is the manner [of taking the mind generation] in the presence of a master. From Jowo [Atisha]’s Mind Generation Ritual what to do if we cannot find a master is taught:

The ritual for generating the mind of enlightenment oneself in the absence of a master is as follows. Having brought to mind Tathagata Shakyamuni and all the tathagatas of the ten directions, prostrate to them and do the rite of offerings and so forth. Then, according to the previous order, make the request, go for while leaving out the word “Master,” and so forth.

The concluding ritual

Third: The master should mention the trainings in the aspiring mind to the student.
A Training in the cause that assures the mind generation will not degenerate in this life
B Training in the cause that assures one will not be separated from [the mind generation] again in future lives

The second one has two [points]: Training in the cause that assures the mind generation will not degenerate in this life and training in the cause that assures one will not be separated from [the mind generation] again in future lives.

2B4B-2B3B-2C2A Training in the cause that assures the mind generation will not degenerate in this life
1 Training in remembering the advantages, so that the strength of one’s delight in the mind generation increases
2 Training in generating it six times, so that the actual mind generation increases
3 Training in not mentally abandoning any sentient being for whose welfare the mind has been generated
4 Training in accumulating the collections of merit and wisdom

The first one has four [points]: Training in remembering the advantages, so that the strength of one’s delight in the mind generation increases, training in generating it six times, so that the actual mind generation increases, training in not mentally abandoning any sentient being for whose welfare the mind has been generated, and training in accumulating the collections of merit and wisdom.

2B4B-2B3B-2C2A-1 Training in remembering the advantages, so that the strength of one’s delight in the mind generation increases
  A The way [the advantages] are explained in the scriptures
  B The way [the mind of enlightenment] is praised in the writings of the holy beings
  C The instruction to exert oneself as it is this very [mind] that the Buddhas and their children have seen to be the exalted method

2B4B-2B3B-2C2A-1A The way [the advantages] are explained in the scriptures
  1 The uncommon cause
  2 Showing the advantages

2B4B-2B3B-2C2A-1A1 The uncommon cause

{186} First: You consider the advantages of the mind of enlightenment studying the sutras or hearing them from the guru. Since they have been taught extensively in the Gandhavyuha [Sutra], they should be studied there. As the quotation above from it says: “It is the seed of all Buddha qualities and all the conduct and aspirational prayers of the bodhisattvas are summarized in it, it is said to be like a brief presentation. Although the extensive explanation of the branches is boundless, since the brief presentation contains everything, the brief presentation, like a synthesis of them, teaches a synthesis that summarises the essential points of all the paths of bodhisattvas.

2B4B-2B3B-2C2A-1A2 Showing the advantages
  A The transition
  B The actual [advantages]

2B4B-2B3B-2C2A-1A2A The transition

As the advantages taught in [Asanga’s] Bodhisattva Levels concern the aspiring mind [of enlightenment], from among them the two advantages of generating a stable mind generation are mentioned first.

2B4B-2B3B-2C2A-1A2B The actual [advantages]
  1 You become a holy field
  2 You thoroughly hold the merit of non-harm

You become a holy field and thoroughly hold the merit of non-harm.
You become a holy field

A [Object of veneration]
First: Like it says in the scriptures: “The world with its gods and men will prostrate [to you]”, as soon as you generate this mind, you become an object of veneration for all sentient beings.

B [One becomes an exalted being]
As it says [in the scriptures], you outshine the arhat great beings by way of your lineage as soon as this mental attitude arises. You become a guru or an exalted being.

C [One becomes a field of merit]
You become a field of merit due to yielding limitless results even through doing minor meritorious actions.

D [One becomes a support for the whole world]
As it says: “Due to supporting the whole world, you are like the earth”; you become like a father of the nine beings.

You thoroughly hold the merit of non-harm

A The way you are guarded by protectors
Second: Since you are guarded by twice as many protectors as protect a wheel-turning king, yakshas and non-human primordial [local guardians] cannot harm you even when you are asleep, intoxicated or non-conscientious.

B Mantras and the like will succeed more easily
You easily pacify calamities, harm and infectious diseases with the words of secret mantra and knowledge mantra. If even things that cannot be accomplished in the hands of sentient beings, will be accomplished when they come into your hands, what need is there to mention that [other things] will be accomplished? Due to this, the collection of activities, pacification and so forth, are shown to be easily accomplished in dependence on the mind generation. Therefore, if that exists, the common attainments will also quickly be accomplished.

C Famines and the like will not occur
Fear, famine, and harm from non-human beings will not occur in those places in which they have not occurred, and after you die and transfer, you will have little damage, will be without illness, and so forth.

D One is without anger and patient
Due to being endowed with patience and a gentle disposition, you will bear harm that is done to you and will not return the harm, and so forth.

E It will be difficult for one to be reborn in the bad migrations and one will quickly be freed
Also it will be difficult for you to be reborn in the bad migrations and, if it happens, you will quickly be freed. While there you will have little suffering and thereby, as a result, become extremely disenchanted with cyclic existence. Also compassion for those living beings will arise.

F How the advantages are immeasurable
If the merit of the mind of enlightenment were to become form, it could not be contained in space itself. Making offerings of material things to the buddhas does not compare to it even partially. In [the Sutra Requested by Viradatta] it says:
If the merit of bodhicitta
Had a form [that was physical],
All the realm of space would be filled -
It would be surpassed by it.
Buddha fields as numerous as
The sand grains of the river Ganges,
{188} Offered by someone, filled with jewels,
To the protector of the world –
If someone joins his palms and bows
To bodhicitta that is distinctly
Superior to that offering made.
As for that, it has no limit. [29]

The way [the mind of enlightenment] is praised in the teachings of the holy beings
When the great Jowo [Atisha] circumambulated the Vajra Seat and thought about what to do to attain complete enlightenment quickly, the smaller statues got up and asked the bigger ones: “What should those who want to quickly reach buddhahood train in?” whereupon the latter replied: “They should train in the mind of enlightenment.” When, in the celestial realm above the Gandhola statue, a young woman questioned an older woman, the reply was like the previous. It is said that due to hearing this, his mind became very certain with respect to the mind of enlightenment.

The instruction to exert oneself as it is this very [mental attitude] that the buddhas and their children have seen to be the supreme method
In that way, you should understand that the mind of enlightenment is the condensed essential point of all the Mahayana instructions, the great treasure of all spiritual attainments, the special feature distinguishing the Mahayana from the Hinayana, the exalted basis that exhorts one to the vast conduct of the Jinas’ children. You should increase the strength of your delight in meditating on it and act like someone thirsty hearing of water, because the buddhas and their children, having made it more and more subtle by means of their marvellous exalted knowledge over many eons, when analysing the paths saw it to be the supreme method for attaining buddhahood. Thus, it also says in Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour:

Having reflected thoroughly for many eons
the buddhas see this above all as beneficial. [30]

Training in generating it six times so that the actual mind generation increases
A Training in not giving up the aspiring mind generation
B Training in increasing the aspiring mind generation
The second one has two [points]: training in not {189} giving up and increasing the aspiring mind generation.
Giving it up is heavier than a defeat of the vows individual liberation and [as a consequence], one must wander in the bad migrations for a long time.

First: In the Abbreviated [Perfection of Wisdom Sutra] it was taught that if you take the buddhas, bodhisattvas, and your spiritual friend as your witnesses and, in their presence, vow to liberate the sentient beings that are not liberated and so forth, [but] then lay down the burden of mind generation as a result of discouragement due to seeing the enormous number of sentient beings and their bad actions, the long time for which you need to exert yourself over many eons, that it is necessary to train in the limitless two collections and difficult practices, it will be a greater negativity than a defeat of individual liberation. In the Bodhicaryavatara it says that if you give up the promised mind, you will have to wander in the bad migrations for a long time.

Not giving it up, due to delight like that of finding a jewel in a rubbish heap

Also that same [text] says:

As a blind man finds a jewel
In a heap of dust, like that,
Effortlessly bodhicitta
Has arisen within me.       [31]

You should think “What I found is just as amazing” and “I shall not give it up under any circumstances.” Observing this, reinforce the decision not to give it up even for an instant.

Second: Since it is not enough to merely not abandon it, you should reinforce it three times a day and three times at night with great effort.

If the extensive ritual explained above can be accomplished, do it according to that. If it cannot be accomplished, you should train in love and compassion, having visualized the merit field and made offerings. You should do this six times a day. The ritual for that is to say the following three times:

I go for refuge until I am enlightened to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Supreme Assembly.
{190} Through the practice of generosity and the other [perfections], May I attain buddhahood in order to benefit migrating beings.

Third: The measure of mentally abandoning a sentient being is the occurrence of the thought: “I will not work for his welfare now or ever after” in dependence on the condition of unreasonable behaviour and so forth.
Fourth: Having assumed the aspiring mind by a ritual, you should strive to accumulate the collections through daily offerings to the jewels, etc., as the cause for increasing the mind of enlightenment.

Training in the cause of not being separated from [the aspiring mind] in other lives

1. Training in abandoning the four black dharmas that cause it to degenerate
2. Training in adopting the four white dharmas that do not allow it to degenerate

The second one has two [points]: training in abandoning the four black dharmas that cause it to degenerate and training in adopting the four white dharmas that do not allow it to degenerate.

Training in abandoning the four black dharmas that cause it to degenerate

A [Deceiving one’s abbot, master, guru, or those worthy of offerings]
B [Causing others to regret the virtuous deeds they do not regret]
C [Saying something infamous about a person who has entered the Mahayana]
D [Actions committed with the intention to deceive or dissimulate, but without the extraordinary attitude]

Training in adopting the four white dharmas that do not allow it to degenerate

1 Object and action

First: Among the four black dharmas, with respect to that of deceiving one’s abbot, master, guru, or those worthy of offerings, the objects that are one’s abbot and master are easy to understand. The guru is someone who wishes to benefit you, and those worthy of offerings are endowed with good qualities, even though they do not belong to the previous two. If you wonder about what deed becomes a black dharma with respect to them, to knowingly cheat them by any means is a black dharma.

Clearing up doubts

However, as the deceit and dissimulation that are not lies are indicated below, it has to be cheating through lying. This is because in [Asanga’s] Compendium of Manifest Dharma it is taught that abandoning a black dharma constitutes a white dharma, and that the antidote of this [black dharma] is the first of the four white dharmas.

Training in causing others to regret virtues that they do not regret

1 Object and Action

With respect to causing others to regret [virtues] they do not regret, the object is another person without regrets about a virtue that he has done. What one does towards him is (191) that, with the intention to make him regret, one generates regret for that which is not an object of regret.

Clearing up doubts

As regards these two, it is the same whether or not [the person] is deceived and whether or not [the person] has regrets.

Training in saying that which is not praise and so forth about a sentient being who has entered the Mahayana

1 Object and Action

With respect to saying that which is not praise and so forth about a sentient being who has entered the Mahayana, the object is someone who has generated the mind of enlightenment and now possesses it. What one does towards him is to say something unpleasant motivated by hatred.
The object to whom it was said understands the meaning.

It is easy for this to occur and it is also a very great disadvantage. That has already been mentioned previously in brief. Furthermore, it is taught in the *Sutra of the Miracle of Complete Certainty of Perfect Peace* that if a bodhisattva generates a mind of contempt towards a bodhisattva, he must remain in hell for that many eons and that apart from deprecating a bodhisattva nothing can make a bodhisattva fall into the bad migrations.

In the *Abbreviated* [*Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*] it also says that if a bodhisattva, who has not yet obtained a prediction argues out of anger with a bodhisattva who has obtained a prediction, for however long a mind of anger arose he will have to spend that many eons longer on the path.

Because of that, it is also taught in the same [text] that it is necessary to put an end to anger in all its aspects and to put effort into confessing it and restraining from it immediately whenever it arises.

With respect to an activity done out of deceit and dissimulation but without the extraordinary attitude the object is any other sentient being. What one does towards him is to engage in deceit and dissimulation.

In this regard, deceit and dissimulation are explained in terms of deceiving with respect to measures and weights and so forth and the like of what Gyalwa Yechung did: in order to send someone off to Ragma, he caused him to be sent to Tolung first so afterwards he would accept Ragma. According to the *Compendium of All Trainings* deceit is to display qualities that actually do not exist, and dissimulation is to take measures for defaults not to become evident.

Second: The object of the first white dharma is all sentient beings. The action is to abandon lying to them knowingly even for the sake of one’s life or for as little as a joke. If you act in this way, you will be sure not to cheat special objects such as your abbot, master, etc. through lies.

The object of the second white dharma is all sentient beings. The action is to abide with the extraordinary attitude towards them without deceit or dissimulation, that is, to abide with an honest attitude. It is the antidote to the fourth black dharma.
The object of the third white dharma is all bodhisattvas. The action is to generate the discrimination of them as if they were the Teacher and to proclaim truthful praise about them in the four directions.

Sharawa said: Although we are constantly busy scraping together something like virtue, there is no sign of its increase and many signs of its exhaustion. Virtue is exhausted by hatred towards bodhisattvas and our companions, disdain towards them and through insulting them. Therefore, if we are able to abandon insulting them and bodhisattvas, we will no longer experience what is referred to in the Compendium of All Trainings as “harm dependent on persons”. Since we do not know in whom the mind of enlightenment exists, we act from the perspective of training in pure appearances generating the discrimination of all sentient beings as the Teacher in accordance with the Sutra Requested by Kashyapa.

If there is an opportunity to express their good qualities and an audience, do so. However, if you do not go to all four directions and proclaim them, this is not a fault. This [white dharma] is the antidote to the third black dharma.

The object of the fourth white dharma is the sentient beings who are ripened by oneself. The action is to make them hold to perfect enlightenment without wishing for a temporary vehicle. Moreover, while from your side you should cause the disciple to make a connection with it, if that thought does not arise in the disciple, it does not become a mistake, because you were unable to accomplish that.

By means of this [white dharma] you abandon the second black dharma, for, if you wish, from the bottom of your heart, to place others in the final of all happinesses, you do not practice it in order to connect them to the generation of mental unhappiness for the sake of generating mere regret which is [still] mental unhappiness.

In the [Sutra] Requested by Simha:

‘By means of what is bodhicitta
Not given up in all one’s lives
If not even in one’s dreams,
Much less while one is not asleep?’
He spoke:
‘In cities or in villages
In the countries where you live,
Guide [others] correctly to enlightenment.'
By that, bodhicitta will not be abandoned.\footnote{32}

\textbf{B} The statement that by abandoning pride and the like the mind generation will not to be abandoned

Furthermore, in \textit{Arraying the Buddha Field of Manjushri} it is taught that the aspiring mind\footnote{107} is not abandoned if one possesses four \{qualities\}: having abandoned pride, having abandoned jealousy, having abandoned miserliness, and being mentally joyful when seeing others’ wealth.

\textbf{C} If all actions and conduct are done conjoined with the mind generation, one will not be separated from the mind of enlightenment in all lives

This is clearly taught by the \textit{Jewel Cloud Sutra} (\textit{Ratnamegha Sutra})\footnote{194} and the like \{the causes for sustaining the mind of enlightenment\} are expressed clearly:

If you train in the mind of enlightenment in all behaviours and generate the mind of enlightenment before starting any virtuous activity, you will not be separated from this precious mind in other lives either. If you do not investigate time and time again how...

\footnote{33}

\textbf{2B4B-2B3B-2C3} The means of restoring \{the vow\}, if it has degenerated

Third: If you transgress the trainings, excluding the two of giving up the aspiring mind and mentally giving up sentient beings, as long as you do not have bodhisattva vows there is no downfall from the point of view of a bodhisattva. However, since it does transgress the trainings of the promise of intermediate virtue, it becomes faulty conduct and therefore should be confessed by means of the four powers.

\textbf{Explanation of how to train in the conduct having generated the mind \{of enlightenment\}}

\textbf{2B4B-2B3B-3} Having generated the mind of enlightenment how to train in the conduct

\textbf{A} The reason why it is necessary to train in the trainings, having generated the mind \{of enlightenment\}

\textbf{B} Demonstration that buddhahood is not achieved by training in method or wisdom alone

\textbf{C} Explanation of the actual stages of training in the trainings

The third one has three \{points\}: The reason why it is necessary to train in the trainings, having generated the mind \{of enlightenment\}; demonstration that buddhahood is not achieved by training in method or wisdom alone; and explanation of the actual stages of training in the trainings

\textbf{2B4B-2B3B-3A} The reason why it is necessary to train in the trainings, having generated the mind \{of enlightenment\}

1 Buddhahood is not achieved by not accomplishing \{the trainings\}.

First: Although, having thus generated the mind \{of enlightenment\}, you do not train in the trainings of generosity and so forth, it will still be of great benefit, as \{expressed\} in the above quotation from the \textit{Biography of Maitreya}. However, if you do not make the bodhisattva trainings your essential practice, it will be impossible to become a Buddha. Therefore you should train in the conduct. In the \textit{King of Concentration} it says:
One should make it the essential practice. Why? Because, oh youthful one, for one who has made it his essential practice it will not be difficult to obtain unsurpassed perfectly complete enlightenment. [34]

2  First of all taming oneself, since others will not be tamed without taming oneself

Also [Kamalashila says] in the First Stages of Meditation:

{195} A bodhisattva who has generated the mind, understands that he cannot tame others without taming himself, and thoroughly applies himself to the practice of generosity and so forth. Without them enlightenment is not achieved. [35]

3 What is to be accomplished once the vow has been taken is to train in those very trainings associated with it.

2B4B-2B3B-3B Demonstration that buddhahood is not achieved by training in method or wisdom alone

1 How to train in the unmistaken and complete method
2 Refutation of wrong conceptions about this
3 Refutation of the answers to objections about this

2B4B-2B3B-3B1 How to train in the unmistaken and complete method

A The need to be unmistaken concerning the complete path

Second: In the Middle Stages of Meditation [Kamalashila] says: One who engages in the method for accomplishing buddhahood needs an unmistaken method, for, however hard you try, a mistaken path will not lead to the [desired] result, just as pulling a cow by its horn, if you want milk. If, although faultless, it is incomplete, the result will not come about despite your effort, just as a sprout will not grow if either the seed, water, earth, and the like are incomplete.

B Identifying the complete path

Well then, what are the complete and unmistaken causes and conditions? In Vairocana’s Manifest Enlightenment (Vairocana’s Abhisambodhi) it says:

Oh, Lord of the Secret, the exalted wisdom of omniscience arises from the root that is compassion. It arises from the cause that is the mind of enlightenment. It is consummated by method.

In this regard “compassion” has already been explained. “The mind of enlightenment” is the two: the conventional and ultimate mind of enlightenment. “Method” is fully perfected generosity and so forth. This was explained by the great trailblazer Kamalashila.

2B4B-2B3B-3B2 Refutation of wrong conceptions about this

A Wrong modes of conception
B Their refutation

2B4B-2B3B-3B2A Wrong modes of conception
Wrong modes of apprehension

One such mistaken conception regarding the path is held up by the Chinese Hashang and others who say: “As long as they are discursive thoughts – no need to talk about it if they are bad conceptions, but even if they are good conceptions – they will bind us in cyclic existence. Therefore, their results cannot transcend cyclic existence, just as one can be bound with fetters of gold or ropes, {196} and just as both white and black clouds obscure the sky, and just as pain is produced regardless of whether one is bitten by a white or a black dog. That is why just equipoise without conceptions about anything is the path to buddhahood. Generosity, ethical discipline, and the like were only taught for the welfare of dull beings incapable of meditating on this definitive meaning. Therefore, having found the definitive meaning, to engage in those conducts is like a king becoming a commoner or like, having found the elephant, looking for its footprints.”

Wrong indication explanation of their sources

The Hashang substantiate [their position] by quoting eighty passages from sutra that praise non-conceptuality.

Their refutation

1 How scholars refute the worst of wrong views
2 How some unfortunate beings adhere to it despite those refutations
3 How non-abiding nirvana has to be accomplished by a path of both wisdom and method
4 How the emptiness possessing the highest of all aspects is necessary for the attainment of buddhahood
5 How the position that only accepts wisdom is refuted in the treatises

How scholars refute the worst of wrong views

The statement by them that “All the factors of method are not a genuine path to buddhahood” is a grave deprecation, and, by refuting the application of the essence of the Jina’s teachings – selflessness – by means of the wisdom of individual investigation, they abandon the mode of the highest meaning [erring] far away from it. Although Kamalashila has refuted them well with stainless scriptural passages and reasonings, and although he has presented in detail the good path that pleases the jinas...

How some unfortunate beings adhere to it despite those refutations

...there are still some who scorn the side of conduct, such as guarding and restraining, and who discard it while cultivating the paths, acting as has been described above. It appears that some, apart from deprecating the factor of method, discard the way of understanding the view, while others discard the search for the view of suchness by means of the wisdom of individual investigation, and then skilfully assert the meditation of the Chinese [sect] of not thinking about anything.

How non-abiding nirvana has to be accomplished by a path of both wisdom and method

A That there is no need for method and wisdom to be complete contradicts all scriptures as well as logic.

This {197} does not even seem to be in the category of meditation on emptiness. However, even if it were permitted to be meditation on emptiness, the statement “Those who meditate well on the meaning of emptiness should meditate on emptiness alone and need not cultivate concousnesses of conventionalities, the side of conduct” contradicts all the scriptures [of the Buddha], and simply seems to have gone beyond the path of reasoning. The object to be achieved by Mahayanists is non-abiding nirvana. With respect to that, non-abiding in cyclic existence is achieved through what is called “the wisdom realizing suchness”, “the stages of the
path relying on the ultimate”, “the path of the profound”, and what is called “the collection of exalted wisdom” and “the factor of wisdom”, whereas non-abiding in nirvana or peace is necessarily achieved through what is called “the wisdom cognizing varieties”, “the stages of the path relying on conventional truth”, “the path of the vast”, “the collection of method”, and “the factor of merit”.

B Establishing by way of scriptural passages how wisdom and method refute the two extremes

The following words are taken from the Sutra of Inconceivable Perfect Secret:

The collection of exalted wisdom is what abandons all mental afflictions. The collection of merit is what fully nurtures all sentient beings. As this is so, Bhagavan, the bodhisattva mahasattvas strive in the collection of merit and exalted wisdom. [36]

C Establishing by way of scriptural passages how we are bound to the extremes of existence and peace as long as method and wisdom are not complete

Also, in the Sutra Taught at the Request of Vimalakirti it says:

In response to the questions “What is the bondage of bodhisattvas?” and “What is liberation?":

Wisdom not conjoined with method is bondage.
Wisdom conjoined with method is liberation.
Method not conjoined with wisdom is bondage.
{198} Method conjoined with wisdom is liberation.. [37]

D The achievement of buddhahood depends on both wisdom and method

And in the Gayagori Sutra:

The bodhisattva path, in brief, is made up of two. What are the two?
They are the following: method and wisdom. [38]

Their significance is also taught clearly in the Lamp on the Path:

Through wisdom divorced from perfection practice
The obscurations will not be exhausted
Therefore, in order to abandon
All obscurations – afflictive and cognitive,
Yoga of the perfection of wisdom
Should always be practiced combined with method.
That is why method divorced from wisdom
As well as wisdom divorced from method
Are referred to as “bondage”, therefore
You should not abandon either.

And:

Omitting the perfection of wisdom,
The perfections of generosity
And so forth - all collections of virtue,
Are explained by the jinas as method.
Great beings who train in the wisdom aspect,
Through familiarity with the methods,
Will thereby quickly achieve enlightenment;
Not by meditating on just selflessness.
The understanding of natural emptiness
Realizing that aggregates, realms,
And sources are without production
Is thoroughly explained as “wisdom”. [39]

In the *Crown Jewel Sutra* it is taught that it is necessary to meditate on the emptiness that possesses the best of all aspects which is complete in all the factors of method, such as generosity and so forth.

Foolish people intend to repudiate the bodhisattvas’ practice of the six perfections for the sake of enlightenment saying: “You should train in the perfection of wisdom alone. [199] What is the use of training in the remaining?” [40]

And:

Foolish people also say: “One becomes enlightened through only one approach, that is, through the approach of emptiness.” However, they do not have completely pure conduct.

[The refutation is:] If this were so, the jinas’ children who have attained the first ground and so forth, and especially the jinas’ children on the eighth ground who have achieved power over non-conceptual wisdom, would not need the conduct. However, this is inappropriate, for in the *Sutra of the Ten Grounds* it is taught:
On each of the ten grounds, one, such as generosity, also becomes paramount. However, it is not that the remaining ones are not practiced.” Therefore, on each of the grounds all six or all ten are said to be practiced. [41]

B How even with the highest realization of emptiness, method and wisdom are necessary

In particular on the occasion of the eighth ground, when [the bodhisattva] abides in the ultimate where all elaborations are pacified owing to the exhaustion of all the mental afflictions, the buddhas exort [him saying:] “Buddhahood cannot be achieved through this mere realization of emptiness; this [realization] is also achieved by shravakas and solitary realizers.”

C How it is therefore inappropriate [to think] that there is no need for wisdom and method right from the beginning.

“My bodies, my exalted wisdom, my [buddha] fields and so on are immeasurable. Look at them! Nor do you have my powers ant the like. Therefore, start to exert yourselves! Think of the unpacified sentient beings agitated by various mental afflictions! [200] Do not give up patience either!”

If [the buddhas] are so emphatic in explaining [to eighth ground bodhisattvas] the need to train in the bodhisattva conduct, this obviously applies even more to others.

D How even on the high paths of mantra, the way to generate the mind and train in the six perfections is the same by and large

Although in the context of the high paths of the unsurpassed mantra there are indeed differences in this regard, it has already been explained that, in general, the two – the mantra and perfection [vehicles] – are the same by and large in sharing the same overall structure of the path of training in generating the two minds of enlightenment and the six perfections.

2B4B-2B3B-3B3B Refutation of the objection stating that method is unnecessary because in the view of emptiness all six perfections are complete

1 The objection thinking: “Since the six perfections are complete when you do not think about anything, this is sufficient”
2 Its refutation

2B4B-2B3B-3B3B-1 The objection thinking: “Since the six perfections are complete when you do not think of anything at all, this is sufficient”: - how they are complete according to that way of reckoning

[The objection is:] “We do not assert that generosity and so forth are unnecessary, but they are complete when you do not think about anything, because by not adhering to the recipient, the act of giving nor the substance given, non-observing generosity is complete, and likewise the remaining [perfections] are complete. Also, because it says in sutra that the six perfections are contained in each one of them.”

2B4B-2B3B-3B3B-2 Refutation of this with a digression

A The absurd consequences [that would ensue] if this were so

If [all the perfections] were complete simply through this, they would also be complete in the calm abiding of a tirthika’s single-pointed mind when it is placed in meditative equipoise, since he does not adhere to them. In particular, as it says in the Sutra of the Ten Grounds, shravakas and pratyekabuddhas who have a non-conceptual exalted wisdom with respect to reality, when meditatively equipoised on it, would become Mahayanists since the entire bodhisattva conduct would be complete.
If you assert that this alone is sufficient, because it is taught that in each [perfection] all six are included, then, while offering a mandala with [the verse] “Giving cow dung together with water ...” it would also be appropriate to do just that since it is said that all six are present.

C How wisdom and method, undivided, influence each other

The [following] analogy [is given] in order to illustrate conduct conjoined with the view and wisdom conjoined with method: When a mother tormented by sorrow at the death of her beloved child engages in something like talking with other people, due to the power of her sorrow it is not given up, no matter what minds arise. Yet not all her minds are minds of sorrow. Similarly, if the wisdom realizing emptiness is very powerful, the minds that observe the giving of gifts, prostrations, circumambulations, and so forth as they are being carried out, are not realizing emptiness, but that does not contradict their being performed possessing its power. If you start off with the intense power of the mind of enlightenment, as you do at the beginning of a meditation session, although the mind of enlightenment is not manifest during the meditative stabilisation of emptiness, that does not contradict its being influenced by it. The way in which wisdom and method are inseparable is also like that.

2B4B-2B3B-3B3C Demonstration of contradictions in others’ assertions

1 It is incorrect that the causes for high status and certain goodness are contradictory
2 One’s words will be contradictory like the speech of madmen
3 Its reason for the lack of objects and its inconsistencies
4 [Contradiction to bringing about any certainty]
5 Contradictions with the sutras teaching the absence of an object - has four units
6 [Clarification of the position that applies equally to sutra and tantra]

2B4B-2B3B-3B3C-1 It is incorrect that the causes for high status and certain goodness are contradictory

You should not be misled with regard to the statement that the results of the collection of merit are your [present] body, resources, long life, and so forth of cyclic existence. If method is divorced from wisdom, this is indeed the case. However, if it is conjoined with it, it is altogether suitable to be the cause of liberation and omniscience. There are infinite scriptural passages for this, like in [Nagarjuna’s] Precious Garland (Ratnavali):

The form body, in brief, Your Highness, is born from the collection of merit. [43]

2B4B-2B3B-3B3C-2 One’s words will be contradictory like the speech of madmen

Furthermore, sometimes you seem to say that faulty conduct and all the mental afflictions that become the causes of the bad migrations can also become causes for buddhahood, and sometimes that virtues like generosity, ethical discipline, and so on that become the causes of high status are causes of cyclic existence, rather than the causes of enlightenment. {202} You should set your mind at ease before talking!

2B4B-2B3B-3B3C-3 The reason for its lack of observed objects and its contradictions

A The presentation in the sutras

It also says in the sutras:

Strong adherence to the six, generosity and so forth, is the action of Mara.”

In the [Sutra of the] Three Heaps it also explains:
Giving gifts falling into observing, guarding one’s ethics considering it supreme ethics and so forth; these should be confessed individually.

[44]

Also from [the Sutra] Requested by Brahma:

However much conduct exists, all of it is conceptual. Thorough non-conceptuality is enlightenment.

[45]

You should not be mistaken with respect to these statements.

B The contradiction to the way in which the first passage is explained

The meaning of the first one is that generosity motivated by mistaken adherence to the two [types of] self is explained as an action of Mara since it is impure. However, generosity and so forth are not presented as the actions of Mara.

C The contradiction to grasping the words of the second passage since, because it actually says: “falling into observing”

Otherwise you would have to say “Giving should be confessed in general” without the need to fall into observing saying “Bestowing gifts having fallen into observing.” Therefore it follows that this has not been taught like that. In [Kamalashila’s] Last Stages of Meditation it becomes a very crucial point [for Kamalashila] to give this kind of answer, for if this is misunderstood, one will hold to signs of a self of persons or phenomena and assert the entire side of conduct to be with signs.

2B4B-2B3B-3B3C-4 [Contradiction to bringing about any certainty]  
A It contradicts the teachings that one should rely on abandoning negativities and so forth  
B The mistake that this [view] contradicts any kind of logic and makes it impossible to establish anything with certainty  
C [Understanding the statements in the context of the two truths]

2B4B-2B3B-3B3C-4A It contradicts the teachings that one should rely on abandoning negativities and so forth

If the mind of giving that thinks “I will give away this substance” and the mind of restraint that thinks “I will restrain myself from this faulty conduct” and all such virtuous conceptions were conceptions of a self of phenomena apprehending the three spheres, it would make sense for those who have found the view of selflessness of phenomena {203} to cease them in every way just like hatred, pride, etc. and it would be inappropriate to rely on them for that purpose.

2B4B-2B3B-3B3C-4B The fault that this [assertion] contradicts all reasonings and makes it impossible to gain certainty with respect to anything

If any conception that thinks “This is this” were considered to be a conception of a self of phenomena that conceives the three spheres, then thinking about the good qualities of a spiritual teacher, the great significance of the pleasures and endowments, etc., remembering death, thinking about the sufferings of the bad migrations, going for refuge, and contemplating that from this action arises that result, training in love, compassion, and the mind of enlightenment, and training in the trainings of the engaging mind of enlightenment would be thoughts thinking “This is this”, “From this that arises”, “This has these qualities and those disadvantages”. Since that would necessarily just induce certainty, the conception
of a self of phenomena would increase more and more as certainty with respect to those [above-mentioned topics] increases. Moreover, the certainty with respect to those paths would decrease, as certainty with respect to the selflessness of phenomena is nurtured more and more. Thereby, the side of conduct and the side of view having come to contradict each other like hot and cold, a strong ascertaining consciousness with respect to both them could not be generated for long.

2B4B-2B3B-3B3C-4C  [Understanding the statements in the context of the two truths]

1  Method and wisdom are not contradictory like hot and cold

At the time of the result [both] the truth body is posited as the object to be obtained and the form body is considered as the object to be obtained. In accordance with the two not being contradictory, the following two at the time of the path must also not be contradictory: an ascertaining consciousness that is induced with respect to the freedom from all elaborations - even from their merest traces - of an observed object that is apprehended as having signs of the two [types of] self, and an ascertaining consciousness that is induced with respect to “From this, that arises” and “This has that fault or quality.”

2  How the two valid cognitions that posit the two truths assist one another

How the two valid cognitions that posit the two truths assist one another

This again depends on how [204] the view of the basis, the two truths, is settled. The valid cognition thoroughly posits the ultimate, settling the mode of subsistence or the manner of being of all the phenomena of cyclic existence and nirvana as without the merest trace of inherent existence. The valid cognition of designations thoroughly posits causes and results, individually ascertaining phenomena that are causes or results without the slightest confusion. Once you gain certainty, by way of scriptures and reasoning, that these two do not harm each other in the least but rather assist each other, then you will realize the meaning of the two truths and you will come to count yourself among “those who have found the intention of the Jina.”

3  [Clarification of the misconception expressed in the third quotation]

The meaning of the third quotation is explained in the Last Stages of Meditation. Since the context of this sutra is the context of an analysis of production and so forth, with respect to the teaching that generosity and so forth are not really produced, they are taught to be merely imputed by conception saying “They are conceived”, however they are not taught to be objects to be discarded and not relied upon.

2B4B-2B3B-3B3C-5  It contradicts the many sutras and so forth that teach the lack of observed object

A  [It contradicts the Compendium of All Sutras]

As regards [the statement] that a one-sided path is not enough, it is also clearly said in the Compendium of All the Sutras:

Bodhisattvas who are separated from skill in means should not make strong efforts in the profound dharma. [46]

2B4B-2B3B-3B3C-5  It contradicts the sutras since omniscience does not arise when there is no observed object

B  It contradicts the sutras since omniscience does not arise when there is no observed object

In the [Sutra of] Inconceivable Secrets it says:
Son of the lineage, it is like this. For instance, a fire burns due to a cause; if the cause is absent it will subside. Likewise, a mind blazes due to an observed object; if the observed object is absent, it will subside.

C. How it is necessary to individually investigate the meaning of the presence or absence of observed objects

Therefore, the bodhisattva skilled in means knows how to completely extinguish observed objects by means of the thoroughly pure perfection of wisdom, (205) but he does not completely extinguish observed objects with respect to the roots of virtue. He does not allow the observed objects with respect to the mental afflictions to arise, but settles on the observed objects of the perfections. He also individually investigates the observed object that is emptiness, but looks upon the observed object - all sentient beings - with great compassion. [47]

The individual statements regarding the way in which there is an observed object and the way in which there is no observed object need to be differentiated.

D. Although the bonds of the mental afflictions and apprehending signs have been loosened, it is inappropriate to grow lax in guarding and restraining

Likewise, the bonds of the mental afflictions and apprehending signs need to be loosened, whereas the ropes of the trainings need to be tightened. The two misdeeds need to be destroyed, whereas virtuous actions do not need to be destroyed. Therefore, being restrained by the trainings and being bound by the apprehension of signs are not the same, nor are loosened guarding and restraining and loosened bonds of the conception of a self the same. Therefore the meaning of destruction and self-liberation etc. need to be examined well.

2B4B-2B3B-3B3C-6 [Clarification of the position that applies equally to sutra and tantra]

A. [The object of rejection by Kamalashila]

The way in which Master Kamalashila refuted mental inattention does not refute meditation where [the mind] is placed into the view that has settled the meaning of the manner of being and placed single-pointedly on that without mentally attending to anything else. However, it does refute that the mere placement that places the mind in not conceiving anything without placing it on the meaning settled by the view, the manner of being, constitutes meditation on emptiness.

B. Pointing out that it will be explained that although the trainings in thoroughly complete method and wisdom are the same in both sutra and mantra, when individually investigated and so forth there are differences

This is the same for the mantra and the perfection [vehicles]. However, I will explain the way in which there are similarities and differences in the two systems regarding sustaining [meditation] through analyzing by means of wisdom of individual investigation.

2B4B-2B3B-3C Explanation of the actual stages of training in the trainings

1. How to train in the Mahayana in general
2. In particular how to train in the vajra vehicle

The third one (206) has two [points]: How to train in the Mahayana in general and in particular how to train in the vajra vehicle.
Explanation how to train in the conduct of the jinas’ children in general

2B4B-2B3B-3C1 How to train in the Mahayana in general
   A Developing the wish to train in the trainings of bodhisattvas
   B Having developed the wish, taking the vows of the jinas’ children
   C Having taken them, the way in which to train in them

The first one has three [points]: Developing the wish to train in the trainings of bodhisattvas; having developed the wish, taking the vows of the jinas’ children; and having taken them the way in which to train in them.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1A Developing the wish to train in the trainings of bodhisattvas

First: With respect to vinaya and tantra it is inappropriate to listen to the trainings without taking the respective vows, but this is different from them. First you come to understand the trainings, so that the continuum is purified. Then, if you feel enthusiasm for holding them, the vows are imparted [on you]. If you take the vows after having understood the trainings, taken them to mind as an object, and developed a heartfelt wish to train in them, they will be very stable. That is why this is a good method.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1B Having developed the wish, taking the vows of the jinas’ children

Second: In the commentary on the Ethics Chapter [of Asanga’s treatise on the Bodhisattva Levels] I already extensively settled how to first take [the vows] and, following that, how to guard against the root downfalls and downfalls that are infractions, and how to restore [the vows] if they have been degenerated. Therefore, the vows definitely need to be looked into before they are taken, so you should come to understand it there.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C How to train having taken them

The third one has three [points]: what the foundation of the trainings is, how the trainings are contained in it, and the stages by which to train in them.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-1 What the foundation of the trainings consists in

First: Although there are infinite clear divisions, when grouped together by type, all the trainings of bodhisattvas are contained in the six perfections. Therefore, the six perfections constitute the great synopsis that condenses all the essential points of the bodhisattva path.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-2 How the trainings are contained in it

The second one has two [points]: The actual meaning: the definite number [of the perfections] and, in addition to that, their definite order.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-2A The actual meaning: the definite number [of the perfections]

First: {207} The Bhagavan made a mere synopsis of the six perfections, whereas the holy regent of the jinas, [Maitreya,] elucidated, as they had been intended, the essential points of the reasons for it having been made in that way and produced certainty. The way in which
their number is definite is those very points. Therefore, when you find certainty which captivates the mind with respect to this, hold the instructions regarding the practice of the six perfections as supreme.

With regard to the perfections, the number is definite as six from the point of view of high status, the accomplishment of the two welfares, the complete accomplishment of the welfare of others in all aspects, comprising the entire Mahayana, how they influence all aspects of the path or method, and the three trainings.

First: In order to bring the vast conduct of a bodhisattva to completion, you need many consecutive lives and, in order to progress along the path in each of them, you need a support that is complete in all its features. Without it, even though you practice with something that merely has all the parts like our current support, there will be no progress whatsoever. Thus, a support that is excellent in all its parts is necessary.

Furthermore, you need [a support] that is endowed with the four excellences: (1) resources at your disposal, (2) a body with which to practice, (3) companions with whom to practice, (4) the ends of actions that are to be undertaken. However, due merely to their being excellent, many become conditions for the mental afflictions. Thus it is also necessary not to come under the power of the mental afflictions. But that too is not enough, you need to distinguish well the observed objects that are to be unmistakenly engaged in and turned away from with respect to the essential point of what is to be adopted and what is to be discarded, because otherwise the excellences will destroy themselves, just like bamboo and plantain trees are destroyed by bearing fruit and like a mule is destroyed by pregnancy. If you have wisdom, you will understand that [the excellences] are the results of previous good actions and you will strive in the causes again so that they will increase. If you do not have wisdom, you will use the results you previously accumulated and thereby exhaust them. Since you do not newly increase them, they will become the beginning of suffering in future lives. Hence, the emergence of those six [perfections] in other lives does not come about without a cause nor from a cause that does not correspond with them and the perfections are definite as six like their corresponding sequential causes.

The resources and so forth on the occasion of the path are temporary high status. Consumate high status – an excellent body and so forth - exist on the buddha ground. It is also stated like that in Ornament for the Sutras (Sutralamkara):

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-2A2 A The number is definite from the point of view of high status
B The number is definite from the point of view of the accomplishment of the two welfares
C The number is definite from the point of view of the complete accomplishment of the welfare of others in all aspects
D The number is definite from the point of view of comprising the entire Mahayana
E The number is definite from the point of view of [how the perfections] influence all aspects of the path or method
F The number is definite from the point of view of the three trainings

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-2A2A The number is definite from the point of view of high status

1 How the support has to be excellent in all its parts

2 Having identified the excellent support, how the corresponding causes are achieved

3 Relating what has been said above with the scriptures and distinguishing high status of the time of the path and the result in detail
Excellent body and resources and excellent
Retinue and undertakings are high status,
And never to be controlled by mental afflictions,
And being unmistaken regarding activities.\textsuperscript{108} \[48\]

Second: When you train in bodhisattva conduct with such a support, the activities of bodhisattvas are exhausted in the two: those that accomplish one’s own welfare and those that accomplish others’ welfare.

Specifically, in order to accomplish the welfare of others it is necessary, first of all, to benefit them by means of material gifts. Since generosity accompanied by harm to sentient beings does not lead to anything, it is itself of great profit to others to excellently turn away from actions that harm others together with their bases. Therefore, ethics is necessary. [However,] given that pure ethics cannot come about if you retaliate once or twice due to being unable to bear being harmed, [209] the patience that in the face of harm thinks “It does not matter” is necessary to consummate [ethics]. Since you do not retaliate out of [patience], others are prevented from accumulating a lot of negativities and, inspired by that, apply themselves to virtue, whereby it is of great benefit to others.

A How the first three of the six perfections bring about the welfare of others

B What brings about one’s own welfare

If your own welfare is to attain the happiness of complete liberation through the power of wisdom, you should furthermore place you mind in equipoise by means of concentration through not allowing you mind to become distracted. Thus, is necessary to achieve a serviceability of body that abides on the observed object as long as you wish.

C How joyous effort becomes the foundation of both welfares

Since this does not arise in the lazy, you need to undertake it with the joyous effort that does not relent day and night. Therefore, this is their foundation.

D A scriptural passage to that effect

Therefore, in order to bring about the two welfares, the perfections are definite in being six. [In the Ornament of the Sutras (Sutra-alamkara)] it says:

Great effort for the welfare of beings
Is made by giving, not harming, and patience.
Abiding and freeing with their foundation
Enact your own welfare in all aspects. \[49\]

E One does not establish others in complete liberation in dependence on wisdom

This does not comprise others’ welfare in all aspects
Identifying the respective sequence of the last two [perfections]

In the statement “abiding and freeing,” the mind abiding on the observed object is said to be the work of meditative concentration and liberation from cyclic existence to be the work of wisdom. When these two are distinguished, calm abiding will not be mistaken to be special insight.

Third: At the outset eliminate the poverty of sentient beings through material things. Following that, do not harm any sentient being whatsoever. Not only that, be patient when harmed. Due to being his companion, act with undaunted joyous effort. Rely on concentration and, with magical emanations and so forth, provide whatever he wishes for. When he has become a suitable vessel, give him good explanations in dependence on wisdom, so that by severing his doubt, you liberate him. Because of this, the perfections are definite as six.

Without poverty and without harming at all
Patient with harm, unthwarted by what’s to be done
Being joyful, and speaking well - for these reasons
The welfare of others is one’s own welfare. [50]

Fourth: Thus, you will not be attached to resources you have acquired and you will not view resources that you have not acquired with interest. When that is present, you will be able to guard the trainings, so that you will take up ethical discipline and respect it. Due to patience towards sufferings that arise in dependence on sentient beings and non-sentient phenomena, you will not be discouraged. Due to applying yourself to and delighting in any kind of virtuous activities, you will not be discouraged by them. You will cultivate the non-conceptual yoga of calm abiding and special insight. These six encompasses the entire Mahayana of migrating beings. They are sequentially realized through the six perfections and nothing more is necessary. Therefore:

No joy in resources, highest respect
Not being discouraged regarding the two,
And the non-conceptual yoga;
In this all Mahayana is exhausted. [51]

Fifth: The path or the method of non-attachment to resources that are objects you have already acquired is generosity because by familiarizing yourself with giving them away you become free from attachment to them.
2 The way in which ethical discipline acts as a method
The method for restraining the distraction of exerting oneself for the sake of acquiring objects that have not yet been acquired is ethical discipline because in one with the vows of a fully ordained monk all the distractions of ends of actions do not arise.

3 The way in which patience acts as a method
The method for not giving up sentient beings is patience because one is not depressed by all the sufferings of being harmed.

4 How joyous effort is a method and what for
(211) The method for increasing virtue is joyous effort because through undertaking [virtue] with joyous effort it increases.

5 The way in which the last two [perfections] acts as method
The method for completely purifying the obscurations is the last two perfections because the afflictions are completely purified by concentration and the obscurations to objects of knowledge are completely purified by wisdom. That is why the perfections are definite as six.

The path of non-attachment to objects
Is gained and that of restraining distractions.
Not giving up sentient beings, increasing, and
Purging obscurations are further paths. [52]

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-2A2F The number is definite from the point of view of the three trainings

1 How [the perfections] are contained in the three higher trainings

Sixth: The essence of training in ethical discipline is ethical discipline. Moreover, since it is adopted when there is the generosity that is indifferent to resources, [generosity] is the collection of ethical discipline. Also [when ethical discipline] is adopted, it is protected by patience that does not return abuse for abuse, so [patience] is in its sphere. Concentration is training of the mind whereas wisdom is training in wisdom. Joyous effort is included in all three trainings. Therefore, the perfections are definite as six.

From the perspective of the three trainings,
The Jina perfectly explained
The six perfections: first the three
Two are aspects of the last two,
And one is included in all three. [53]

2 Hence the importance of understanding that the number is definite

Hence the importance of understanding that the number is definite

Thus, by means of whatever excellent support one thoroughly completes whatever welfare, one’s own or others’, through however many types of methods one possesses after abiding in whichever vehicle - that which thoroughly completes and synthesizes the support that accomplishes any of the trainings, the welfare, the Mahayana, the method, and the trainings should be understood to be those very six perfections. (212) You should think about this until you reach certainty that they are the sum of all the essential points of bodhisattva practices.
In addition to that, their order is definite. The second one three [points]: the order in which they arise, the order in terms of the inferior and superior, and the order in terms of coarser and subtler.

1. The order in which they arise

First: If there is generosity that is indifferent to and unattached to resources, you will adopt ethical discipline. If you possess ethical discipline that refrains from faulty behaviour, you will be patient with regard to harm. If you have patience that does not despair with respect to hardships, you will be able to act with joyous effort, since adverse circumstances will be few. As you act with joyous effort day and night, the concentration that is able to establish the mind in virtue will arise. When the mind is in meditative equipoise, you will have the realisation of reality just as it is.

2. The order in terms of inferior and superior

Second: The previous ones are inferior, and the latter ones are superior.

3. The order in terms of coarser and subtler

Third: Since the previous ones are easier to engage in and do than the latter ones, they are coarser. Since the latter ones are more difficult to engage in and do than the previous, they are more subtle. In Ornament of the Sutras is says:

The later grow due to the previous ones
Since they abide as inferior and superior
Since they are coarser and more subtle
They were taught in stages [like that].

The third one has two [points]: How to train in the conduct in general and how to train in the last two perfections in particular. The first has two [points].

1. How to train in the conduct in general

A. Extensive explanation of how to train in the conduct in general
B. Summarized meaning

2. How to train in the last two perfections in particular

A. Training in the perfections that ripen one’s own buddha qualities
B. Training in the four ways of gathering that ripen others’ mental continuua

The first one has two [points]: Training in the perfections that ripen one’s own buddha qualities and training in the four ways of gathering that ripen others’ mental continuua.

1. How to train in generosity
2. How to train in ethical discipline
3. How to train in patience
4. How to train in joyous effort
5. How to train in concentration
6. How to train in wisdom

The first one has six [points]: how you train in generosity, ethical discipline, patience, joyous effort, concentration, and wisdom.
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Great Scope up to Calm Abiding

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-1 How to train in generosity
   A The essence of generosity
   B Subdivisions
   C How to generate [generosity] in one’s mental continuum

The first one has three points: the essence of generosity, the divisions and how to generate [generosity] in one’s mental continuum.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-1A  The essence of generosity
   1 Essence
   First: [The essence of generosity] is a virtuous intention to give and the actions of body and mind motivated by it. (213) It is the intention at the time the body and speech engage in generosity.

   2 The measure of its perfection
   The completion of the perfection of generosity does not depend on having eliminated the poverty of migrating beings by giving away to others substance to be given. Rather it becomes the perfection of generosity through destroying the grasping of miserliness and thoroughly completing familiarisation with the mind of giving to others, along with the results of giving.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-1B  Subdivisions
   1 Subdivisions from the point of view of individual support
   2 Subdivisions of the essence of generosity itself

The second one has two [points]: Subdivisions from the point of view of individual supports, and subdivisions of the essence of generosity itself.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-1B1 Subdivisions from the point of view of individual supports
   A Explanation of the individual generosities for the individual supports
   In the Bodhisattva Pratimoksha it is taught that generosity of material things is generally practiced by lay bodhisattvas, whereas ordained bodhisattvas should practice the generosity of the Dharma rather than generosity of material gifts.

   B The acquisition and giving of material things that interrupts the studies and so forth of the ordained is prohibited, whereas if they are obtained without harm [to their studies] they should given
   Moreover, in the Compendium of Trainings, intending that which interrupts studies and so forth, it says that the giving of gifts by the ordained having worked for the sake of material things is prohibited. However, if they obtain them in plenty through the power of previous merit without harm to their virtuous activities, they should give material things. Sharawa also said: “To you I will not talk about the advantages of giving, but I will talk about the disadvantages of grasping.” This is the talk of one who was not pleased that the ordained were giving away gifts, having toiled to obtain and accumulate wealth and often damaged their ethical discipline.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-1B2 Subdivisions of the essence of generosity itself
   A The generosity of the Dharma
   Second: The generosity of the Dharma is to unmistakably teach the holy Dharma, to teach properly, without misdeeds, the worldly aims of actions such as crafts and so forth, and to make [others] engage in upholding the basis of the trainings.
B. The generosity of fearlessness

The generosity of fearlessness is to thoroughly protect others from the fear of humans such as kings, bandits, and so forth, from the fear of non-humans such as lions, tigers, and so forth, and fear of the elements such as water, fire, and so forth.

C. The generosity of material things

The generosity of material things is to give away material things to others.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-1C How to generate generosity in one’s mental continuum.

1. How in order to complete the perfection of generosity the mind giving away all one’s possessions rather than the mere destruction of miserliness is necessary
2. Thinking about the advantages of giving and the disadvantages of not giving
3. The actual method for engaging in [generosity]

Third: By merely destroying all miserliness without exception regarding one’s body and possessions, it does not become the perfection of generosity because, since miserliness is included in the factor of attachment, the two types of arhats of the Hinayana have also abandoned it without exception along with all its seeds. Hence it is necessary not only to eliminate the obstacle to giving, the holding on to all [things] that is miserliness, but to generate the thought, from the bottom of one’s heart, to give away all one’s possessions to others.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-1C2 Thinking about the advantages of giving and the disadvantages of not giving

For that, it is necessary to meditate both on the disadvantages of thoroughly holding on to things and on the advantages of giving. The former are as taught in the Moon Lamp [Sutra]:

Since the body is not pure, and the life force fluctuates like water gushing down a steep mountain, and both body and life force are controlled by karma thus lacking an independent self, you should see them to be false, like a dream or a mirage, and cease attachment to them. If you do not reverse it, you will come under the control of attachment, accumulate great faulty conduct and go to the bad migrations.

The second [the advantages of giving] are as taught in the Compendium of Trainings:

In this way my body and mind
Pass away in every instant.
If I attain, with this body that is
Tainted and impermanent,
Permanent, untainted enlightenment,
Is it not obtained for free? [55]

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-1C3  The actual method for engaging in generosity

A. [How to actually generate generosity]
B. [Importance of the inner attitude]
C. Generosity through mere thought
D. How to make generosity into a practice with [the] six perfections

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-1C3A  [How to actually generate generosity]
Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour [describes] how [generosity] should actually be generated:

My body as well as my resources,
All my virtues of the three times,
I give away without sense of loss to
Accomplish the welfare of all sentient beings. [56]

Like that, taking the three-body, resources, and roots of virtue – as the observed object, you should familiarize yourself again and again with the thought of giving them away to all sentient beings.

How beginners should act

Since presently this wish is immature and of little strength, you should not actually give away your flesh and so forth, even though you have already given away your body in thought to sentient beings. Nonetheless, since the Compendium of Trainings says that if we do not train in the thought to give away our body and life, due to lack of familiarity with it we will not be able to do so in the future either, it is necessary to train in the thought from now on.

Importance of the inner attitude

Thus, if you use food, clothing, etc. that you have given away to sentient beings with a sincere thought, if, having forgotten the thought “I will use these for the welfare of others,” you instead use them out of craving for your own welfare, it is an afflicted downfall. If, without this craving, you forget the discrimination that observes all sentient beings or have attachment for the sake of another sentient being, it is a non-afflicted downfall. If you use for your own sake those [things] dedicated to others, having discriminated them to be others’ substance, it becomes taking what has not been given (stealing) and, if it is something valuable, it becomes a defeat of the pratimoksha [vow]. [On the other hand,] if you use them thinking: “I will use the resources of this sentient being for his own welfare,” there is no fault. This is mentioned in the Compendium of Trainings.

Clearing up doubt concerning a defeat

The intention is as follows. The way in which it becomes a defeat is that, having dedicated something with a sincere thought to a migrating being who is a human being and when he too, having cognized it, holds it to be his, you take it for your own welfare with the discrimination that it belongs to someone else, if it is of some value, then the factors for it to become a defeat are present.

Generosity that is mere thought

Apart from that, the Bodhisattva Levels teaches that the training in the aspiration to emanate immeasurable varieties of phenomena, objects to be offered, and to give them to sentient beings with clear faith from the bottom of one’s heart increases immeasurable merit with little effort and is the generosity of the wise bodhisattva.
If at the time of training in the perfection of generosity, it is made to possess the six perfections the training that occurs will be very powerful. The six are made complete in that, in addition, at that time there is: the ethical discipline that restrains the mental attention of shravakas and solitary realizers; the aspiration for and patience with respect to the qualities of a knower of all aspects and patience when abused by others; the joyous effort that generates the aspiration for the sake of increasing them more and more; the concentration that is a single-pointed mind not mixed with the Hinayana that dedicates that virtue to complete enlightenment; and the wisdom that understands the object given, the giving, and the recipient to be like illusions.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-2 Training in ethical discipline
A The essence of ethical discipline
B Its subdivisions
C How to generate [ethical discipline] in one’s mental continuum

The second one has three points: The essence of ethical discipline, its subdivisions, and how to generate [ethical discipline] in one’s mental continuum.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-2A The essence of ethical discipline
1 The essence of ethical discipline
First: Ethical discipline is the mind of abandonment that is a mind turned away from harming others, together with its base. This is mainly from the point of view of the ethical discipline of restraint.

2 The essence of the perfection
Through thoroughly completing the familiarity with this mind more and more, it becomes the perfection of ethical discipline becomes a perfection. It is not that you externally establish all sentient beings in freedom from all harm without exception. In Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour it says:

Achieving the mind of abandonment
Is taught as perfection of ethical discipline. [56]

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-2B The subdivisions
1 The ethical discipline of restraint
2 [The ethical discipline of accumulating virtuous qualities]
3 [The ethical discipline of working for the welfare of beings]

The second one has three points.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-2B1 The ethical discipline of restraint
A General presentation
The ethical discipline restraint, {217} from the point of view of being together with the motivations, is the ten abandonments that abandon the ten non-virtues. From the point of view of its essence it is the seven abandonments of body and speech that abandon the seven non-virtues.

B Precise features
The intention of the Bodhisattva Levels in stating that the ethical discipline of restraint in the mental continuum of a bodhisattva is the seven types of [vows of] individual liberation is [as follows]. When those possessing the vows of individual liberation possess the bodhisattva...
vows, the ethical discipline of restraint is the actual vows of individual liberation of the class of the laity or the ordained and the abandonments and vows that are common to them in their continua. When those who are unsuitable as a support for the vows of individual liberation possess bodhisattva vows, the ethical discipline of restraint is the abandonments and restraints of abandoning either the natural misdeeds or formulated misdeeds that are common to individual liberation. Although the vows of individual liberation in the continuum of a bodhisattva are vows of ethical discipline in the continuum of a bodhisattva, they are not the actual bodhisattva vows, whereas the rest have a common basis with the bodhisattva vows.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-2B2  [The ethical discipline of gathering virtuous qualities]

The ethical discipline of gathering virtuous qualities is to observe virtues such as the six perfections and to generate that which has not yet been generated in one’s own continuum, to not degenerate that which has been arisen, and to increase it more and more.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-2B3  [The ethical discipline of bringing about the welfare of sentient beings]

The ethical discipline of bringing about the welfare of sentient beings is to accomplish the welfare of sentient beings in this and future lives through ethical discipline without any misdeeds as appropriate.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-2C  How to generate [ethical discipline] in one’s mental continuum

1  [Preconditions and advantages of ethical discipline]
2  [The essence of ethical discipline]
3  [Making [ethical discipline] into [a practice] [combined] with the six perfections]

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-2C1  [Preconditions and advantages of ethical discipline]

A  What is the cause of pure ethical discipline and what it depends on

Third: Pure ethical discipline depends on putting into practice what should be engaged in and what should be avoided according to the formulated [rules of the Buddha]. Furthermore, it follows the strong and firm wish to guard [ethical discipline]. For it to arise, you must meditate for a long time meditating on the disadvantages of not guarding it and the advantages of guarding it. [218] This was explained above in the context of intermediate beings.

B  Considering advantages and disadvantages of upholding and not upholding [ethical discipline].

and in the Summary of Perfections it also says:

You cannot [attain] your own with degenerate discipline,
So where would you get the power for others’ welfare?
Therefore, it is inappropriate, if you strive well
For others’ welfare, to loosen your respect for it. [57]

And:

This ethical discipline, special path of attainment,
Accomplish it like the naturally compassionate
It is of the excellent nature of pure wisdom
Free from errors, it’s called “the best of ornaments”.
Pleasant fragrance guarded in all three realms,
It is a balm not at odds with ordination
Those who get ethically disciplined, though conforming
Outwardly, will become nobles among men.  [58]

This says that in dependence on [ethical discipline], one’s mental continuum improves more and more; one becomes similar in training to the great beings filled who are naturally compassionate; one attains the pure wisdom that has abandoned all the seeds of faulty conduct; although other ornaments do not beautify the very young or very old, the ornament of ethical discipline is the supreme ornament for whoever possesses it, whether young, old or in between, since it pleases everyone; although other fine fragrances only spread in the direction of the wind carries them and do not spread in other directions whereby they are one-sided, the scent of ethical discipline’s fame spreads in all in all directions; although ointments such as sandalwood, which cool the torment of heat, contradict ordination, the ointment that protects from the torment of the heat of the afflictions is not at odds with ordination but rather accords with it; and even though you only seem to have the signs of ordination, to be endowed with the jewel of ethical discipline is more excellent than anything else.

Again from the same text:

Without expressing a word, without much effort,
Resources and services needed for practice gather.
(219) The world bows low without intimidation;
Power and wealth are gained without effort and work.
Although his lineage may be unworthy of mention,
Although he did not help or benefit them
All beings, including the ones he never knew
Bow to a being possessed of ethical discipline.
Even the dust made auspicious by his feet,
Is raised to the head for its sanctity. Gods and humans
prostrate so it touches their heads, take and carry it everywhere.  [59]

Thus, one should think about [the advantages] as expressed [here].

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-2C2  [The essence of ethical discipline]
A Instruction on the importance of how you train in ethical discipline

Although there are three [kinds] of ethical discipline, the ethical discipline of restraint – practicing the engagements and avoidances for the formulated rules of individual liberation or what is common to them - is itself important for bodhisattvas in the beginning. If it is guarded, the others will also be guarded, whereas if they are not guarded, the others will not be guarded either. Therefore the Compendium says that if the ethical discipline of vows degenerates, all the vows are degenerated. Whoever thinks that the vows of individual liberation are for hearers and rejects their formulated rules of engagement and avoidance saying: “I must train in the other bodhisattva trainings” has thus not grasped the essential point of the training in ethical discipline of bodhisattvas, for it is taught many times that the
ethical discipline of restraint is the basis and source of the two subsequent ethical disciplines.

B The main ethical discipline of restraint: how the of restraining from natural misdeeds should be 
[generated] again and again

The main ethical discipline of restraint is to abandon the natural misdeeds. The synthesized essential points of the great disadvantages of the natural [misdeeds] is to abandon the ten non-virtues. Therefore, the mind of restraint that does not even move toward their motivations should be [generated] again and again. [220] From the Summary of Perfections:

The path to the bliss of high status and liberation.
Is not to degenerate from the ten paths of action
Abiding in them you will have the special result,
The thought that thinks to benefit migrating beings.
“Completely restraining one’s speech, one’s body, one’s mind,
In brief, is ethical discipline” said the Jina.
They are the basis comprising all ethical discipline,
Without exception, so thoroughly train in them. [60]

C Summarised presentation

In brief, to take this as the basis and train again and again in the mind of restraint that trains in the trainings of whatever ethical discipline one has promised is the practice of ethical discipline.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-2C Making [ethical discipline] possess the six perfections

Ethical discipline is made to possess the six perfections like this. Abiding in ethical discipline oneself and establishing others in it is generosity. The remaining [perfections] are as before.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-3 Training in patience

A The essence of patience
B Its subdivisions
C How to generate [patience] in one’s continuum

The third one has three [points]: the essence of patience, its subdivision, and how to generate [patience] in one’s continuum.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-3A The essence of patience
1 [Explanation of] the essence of patience

First: The essence of patience is the mind abiding at ease without being overwhelmed by harm and the occurrence of suffering and very abiding dedication to the Dharma. Its opposite are hatred, disheartenment, lack of appreciation, and lack of desire.

2 The completion of the perfection of patience

The completion of the perfection of patience is the mere complete familiarity of the mind with ceasing one’s own belligerence and so forth; it does not depend on freeing [other] sentient beings from their unrufulness.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-3B Its subdivisions

Second: There is the patience of not paying heed to harm by others, the patience of accepting the suffering that arises in one’s own continuum, and the patience of a mind certain with respect to the Dharma.
How to generate [patience] in one's continuum

1 Meditating on the advantages of patience and the disadvantages of impatience
2 The actual way of cultivating patience

It is necessary to meditate on the advantages of patience and the disadvantages of impatience.

A The advantages of patience
B The disadvantages of impatience

First: You think about the fact that later on you will have few enemies, you will not be separated from close ones, you will experience much happiness and mental happiness, you will die without regret, and you will be reborn among the gods after this body has perished. The Summary of Perfections says:

For those with the mind that neglects the welfare of others
It was taught “The best of ways is patience.”
That which is good and excellent in the world
Patience protects it from the faults of anger.
It is the best of ornaments of the strong,
Peak of power for those embracing austerities,
Torrent of water for prairie fires of malice,
All harm is removed by patience in this life and others,
Against the armour of patience of excellent beings
The arrows of words of unruly beings are wrecked.
Thereby they turn into excellent flowers of praise
And become attractive garlands of fame. [61]

And:

Patience is also the workshop where forms are accomplished
With beautiful qualities and adorned with the signs... [62]

You should meditate on the advantages as taught until a strong and stable certainty is reached with regard to them.

A How anger destroys the roots of virtue
B How they are destroyed even if the object of anger is an ordained person who is not a bodhisattva
C Clearing up doubts concerning their destruction
D Details regarding the way in which they are destroyed

Second: In Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour it says:

What has been gathered in thousand eons
Like giving and offerings to the sugatas
All those good deeds, whatever there is,
An instant of anger destroys it all. [63]

This appears to be set forth in accordance with Aryasura’s work [Summary of Perfections]. The Sutra of the Displays of Manjushri says that it destroys the virtue accumulated over a hundred eons.

2 Differences in the object [of anger]

With respect to the object, some explain that it must be a bodhisattva, whereas some assert it to be a general object. The former accords with the [Madhyamaka]avatara:

Therefore, through anger toward a child of the jinas
The virtue from giving and discipline one has amassed
Over a hundred eons is crushed in an instant. [64]

3 The support

As regards the support of the one in whom anger arises, since even if a bodhisattva gets angry it destroys his roots of virtue, there is no need to mention that this is the case for one who is not a bodhisattva who gets angry at a bodhisattva. The Commentary on the Guide [to the Middle Way] says that whether it is certain that the object is a bodhisattva or not and whether the reasons for the anger, seeing faults, are true or not, the destruction of virtue like that explained above is similar.

In general, anger does not need to be directed at a bodhisattva in order for it to destroy roots of virtue. A passage quoted from the Sarvastivadin scriptures in the Compendium of Trainings says:

If a monk prostrates to a stupa of hair and nail [relics] with extended limbs and a pure mind, he will come to enjoy as many kingdoms of wheel-turning monarchs as there are particles of dust in the ground covered up to the golden foundation.” And: “Even those roots of virtue will be exhausted if he injures or disparages one of pure conduct. Therefore, if one should not even be angry at a charred log, how much less so at a body endowed with consciousness! [65]

Clearing up doubts concerning this destruction

Some scholars say that the meaning of ”the destruction of roots of virtue” is that the potential of earlier virtue to bring about its effect quickly is destroyed and the emergence of their effect is delayed, so that the effects of hatred and so forth emerge first. However, if they meet with [suitable] conditions afterward, it is not that their respective effects do not emerge, for if there is no mundane path whatsoever that can eliminate the seeds of the objects of abandonment, it is impossible for seeds to be eliminated by the mental afflictions.

Their refutation
A The seed is uncertain
B How ‘destruction’ does not just mean postponement

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-3C1B-1C2A The seed is uncertain

1 How the result does not arise due to conditions, even though the seed is present

The reason that it is not certain is because even though ordinary beings purify non-virtues by means of the four opponent powers, their seeds are not abandoned, but still, although the conditions are met later on, it is impossible for the fully ripened effects to emerge.

2 Even if the seed is not removed, its effect does not emerge once tolerance is achieved

Once the peak and tolerance levels of the path of preparation have been attained, although wrong views and the seeds of non-virtues that become the causes of the bad migrations have not been abandoned, wrong views and rebirths in the bad migrations are impossible even if these seeds meet with their conditions.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-3C1B-1C2B How “destruction” does not just mean postponement

According to the statement “What’s heaviest in cyclic existence with karma…”, a virtuous or non-virtuous karma, by ripening sooner, can temporarily block the occasion for another karma to ripen. However, it cannot be posited nor has it been taught that virtuous or non-virtuous karma is destroyed by merely that. The temporary postponement of its ripening is not suitable to be the meaning of the destruction of roots of virtue, as otherwise it would have been necessary to teach that all strong non-virtues destroy the roots of virtue.

2 Analogy for how the effect does not emerge although the seed has not been abandoned

That is why master Bhavaviveka said with respect to this:
“As explained above, neither non-virtues that have been purified by the four powers nor roots of virtue that have been destroyed by wrong views or harmful intent can bring about their effects even if later on they meet with the conditions; just like a seed that has been damaged does not give rise to a sprout even though the conditions are met.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-3C1B-1C2B Details regarding the way in which they are destroyed

Moreover, even though negativities that have been accumulated are cleared away by purifying them with the four powers as described above, this does not contradict the fact that they delay the arising of higher paths. Thus, in some [people] the results of giving gifts and guarding ethical discipline, such as the arising of excellent resources and bodies are destroyed. However, due to [the result] corresponding to the cause, familiarisation with giving and the mind of abandonment, the roots of virtue of generosity and ethical discipline arise again easily and cannot be destroyed. In others the arising of [the result] corresponding to the cause as a continuum of similar type, inner ethical discipline and so forth, is destroyed, but the arising of an excellent body, resources, and so forth is not destroyed. Again others, as described previously, will have some realizations of the path that enable them to completely traverse it within one eon, unless they allow anger to arise towards a bodhisattva who has obtained his prophecy. If one thought of anger arises, their traversal of the path within one eon will be delayed, although the path that exists in their continua is not relinquished. In brief, what I mean is that, with respect to purifying non-virtues, not all its efficacy is necessarily purified and likewise, with respect to the destruction of virtue, not all its efficacy is necessarily destroyed.
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Great Scope up to Calm Abiding

2 How that depends exclusively on the scriptures
Nonetheless, this is an important point and since it seems necessary to analyze it in dependence on the Buddha’s scriptures and the reasonings based on them, you should look at the Buddha’s excellent teachings and analyze it.

3 How the two great actions operate
Thus, the invisible disadvantages [of anger] are that it projects very unpleasant fully ripened results and prevents the emergence of other very pleasant fully ripened results.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-3C1B-2 Visible disadvantages along with supplementary remarks

A How peace of mind and so forth are not experienced

The visible disadvantages [of anger] are taught in Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour: you do not experience mental peace and certainty, previous joy and happiness are ruined and later on are not achieved, sleep does not come and the mind does not abide at ease, if your hatred is strong, even those you nurtured with kindness forget about the kindness and kill you, even friends and relatives abandon you out of irritation, and even those you gather with gifts do not stay, and so forth.

B How to gain certainty regarding the faults
Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour says:

There’s no negativity equal to hatred
There’s no austerity equal to patience.
Therefore patience should be practiced Earnestly, in various ways.

Thus we should consider the advantages and disadvantages and make an effort to develop patience in many ways.

C Supplementary remarks
It is to be understood from the Compendium of Trainings that hatred is not ascertained to be the only faulty conduct that collects both grave fully-ripened results and the destruction of roots of virtue. (225) There is the wrong view that deprecates [the law of cause and effect], the abandonment of the holy Dharma, contempt, generation of pride, and so forth towards bodhisattvas, gurus, and so forth.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-3C2 The actual way of cultivating patience

A How to cultivate the patience that is unconcerned with respect to harm
B How to cultivate the patience that accepts suffering
C How to cultivate the patience devoted to a mind of certainty regarding the Dharma

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-3C2A How to cultivate the patience that is unconcerned with respect to harm

How to cultivate the patience that is unconcerned with respect to harm.

1 [The offender’s lack of freedom]
If you investigate whether or not someone who harmed you was free not to harm you, [you will find that] he did not harm you while being autonomous, for he generated the wish to harm you out of causes and conditions such as the seeds of mental afflictions from previous familiarity and improper mental attention, and due to them, he engaged in activities that
inflicted harm and thereby produced suffering in others. Thus, under the power of other, the mental afflictions, he had become as if their slave.

2 The inappropriateness of anger given that [the harmer] has no freedom

Even if someone, driven by something else without freedom, has harmed you, anger is inappropriate. For instance, if someone, having been possessed by an evil spirit, were to come under its power and wish to harm you who would benefit him by freeing him from it and strike you, you would not get even the slightest bit angry at him but instead think: “He is acting like this now because the evil spirit has deprived him of his freedom.” You would put effort into doing whatever you could to free him from the evil spirit. A bodhisattva should also act like that.

3 The scriptural source for this

From the *Four Hundred Verses*:

> Just as a doctor who is not upset
> By one who is gripped by a spirit and angry
> The Muni sees the mental afflictions
> not the person afflicted by them. [67]

Master Chandrakirti also says:

> “This is no fault of sentient beings
> It is a fault of the mental affictions.”
> The wise who have analysed this in detail
> Are not upset by sentient beings. [68]

Moreover, the experience of suffering produced by the harmer (226) is the experience of the result of a negative action accumulated by oneself in the past and, in dependence on that, the action will be exhausted. If you cultivate patience with respect to it, you will not newly accumulate causes for experiencing suffering later on, whereas, if you get angry, you will have to experience suffering that is even greater than that.

4 How anger is inappropriate if you think of your own karma

It is therefore quite appropriate to be patient with minor suffering in order to avert greater suffering, such as being patient with bloodletting, burning, and so forth as a method for curing a grave illness.

284B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-3C2B How to cultivate the patience that accepts suffering

How to cultivate the patience that accepts suffering.

1 Countering the categorical aversion for suffering that arises

If the suffering that has arisen is curable, aversion is unnecessary. If it is not suitable to be cured, again, dislike for it is of no benefit, therefore useless and even disadvantageous, for even tiny suffering becomes extremely hard to bear if one is very intolerant, whereas even great suffering is bearable if one is less intolerant.
2 Considering the good qualities of suffering itself

The way to mentally take the side of suffering is to train the mind again and again thinking “If there was no such suffering, the wish to definitely emerge from cyclic existence would not arise, therefore it has the good quality of exhorting the mind to liberation; it has the good quality of eliminating my arrogance since, when I am beset with suffering, my conceited superiority is destroyed; it has the good quality of [making] me shun negativities, because when I experience an intense feeling of suffering, since it arises from non-virtue, if I do not want this result, I must turn away from its cause; it has the good quality of [making] me delight in accomplishing virtue since, due to being tormented by suffering, I want happiness and for that purpose I must accomplish virtue; and, having understood that compassion is generated for the beings of cyclic existence as I think “In proportion to my own experience, others also suffer”, this suffering is the abode of what I want.”

3 It is not difficult if you familiarize yourself in small steps

Here again [it says]:

Something that does not [227] get easier
If you get used to it, does not exist.
Therefore endure even major harm
By getting used to minor harm. 

Thus, if you put on the armour of the intention to accept suffering and increase suffering in small steps, your strength to accept suffering will grow.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-3C2C How to cultivate the patience that is devoted to a mind of certainty regarding the Dharma

The way to cultivate the patience that is devoted to a mind of certainty regarding the Dharma is to train in devotion to the following without bias: the objects of clear faith, the Three Jewels; the objects to be actualized, the two [types of] selflessness; the object of desire, the great power of the buddhas and bodhisattvas; the objects to be adopted and discarded, the causes that are excellent conduct and faulty conduct as well as their results; the object of meditation, enlightenment, the meaning to be achieved; the method for attaining that, the path of the bodhisattva trainings; the objects of hearing and thinking, the holy Dharma of the twelve scriptural branches, and so forth.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-4 Training in joyous effort

A The essence of joyous effort
B Its subdivisions
C How to generate [joyous effort] in one’s continuum

The fourth one has three [points]: the essence of joyous effort, its subdivision, and how to generate it in one’s continuum.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-4A The essence of joyous effort

First: In the Bodhisattva Levels [joyous effort] is explained as a mind that delights strongly for the sake of gathering virtue and working for the welfare of sentient beings, as well as the actions of the three doors motivated by it.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-4B Its subdivisions
1 Armour-like joyous effort

Second: From the three, the first is armour-like joyous effort. When bodhisattvas undertake joyous effort, prior to applying themselves, they put on the armour of the thought that first delights the mind. That is, they delight, even if they are to attain buddhahood after abiding only in hell for 100,000 times 10 million rounds of three immeasurable eons in order to eliminate the suffering of one single being. Also with respect to making effort to attain complete enlightenment, they wear the armour of the thought “If I will not give up engaging in joyous effort for that length of time, what need is there to mention [that I will not give it up] if the time is less than that and if the suffering is less?”

2 [The] joyous effort of gathering virtuous dharmas

[The] joyous effort of gathering virtuous dharmas is to apply oneself to them for the sake of accomplishing the six perfections.

3 The joyous effort of working for the welfare of sentient beings

The joyous effort of working for the welfare of sentient beings is similar to the above.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-4C How to generate [joyous effort] in one’s continuum

1 Advantages to undertaking joyous effort

2 The disadvantages of not undertaking joyous effort

3 How to actually generate joyous effort

4 How joyous effort is made to possess the six perfections

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-4C1 Advantages to undertaking joyous effort

Third: how to generate [joyous effort] in one’s continuum: the advantages to undertaking joyous effort.

A You will not be overcome by distraction and so forth and will achieve the two attainments

From the Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras:

Joyous effort is best among virtue’s collection.
Thus, relying on it, one attains that which follows.
Through joyous effort, immediately, best source of happiness,
Including mundane and supramundane attainments.
Through joyous effort, one gains worldly wealth one desires.
Through joyous effort, one becomes totally pure.
Through joyous effort, one is liberated
Passing beyond the transitory collection.
Through joyous effort, you become a buddha,
[As you reach] supreme enlightenment. [69]

B How those endowed with joyous effort not only develop these qualities but also non-human like them

In the Summary of Perfections it also says:

For him who has great joyous effort and does not dismay,
there’s nothing that can’t be attained, that can’t be accomplished. [70]

And:

Also all non-humans like to benefit him.
He achieves all manners of samadhi.
He passes days and nights having results.  
He won’t decline because of his mass of good qualities,  
Through aims more noble than concerns of man  
He flourishes like an utpala flower.  

The disadvantages of not undertaking joyous effort are described in the [Sutra] Requested by Sagaramati:

For the lazy, enlightenment is very far and far in all ways. In the lazy, generosity through wisdom do not exist. For the lazy, the welfare of others does not exist.  

And the Close Placement of Mindfulness also says:

The one foundation of mental afflictions  
Is lazyness, no matter in whom.  
He who has that one, laziness,  
Does not have qualities whatsoever.  

You should think like this.

There are two adverse circumstances for joyous effort: seeing that one is able to accomplish virtuous dharmas but not engaging in them and the discouragement that thinks: “How could I ever accomplish anything like that?”

The first has two [points]:

One postpones things till later thinking “There is still time”, and if not that, one is overcome by attachment to bad activities.  

The antidote to the first, [the laziness of procrastination,] is to meditate on the three: this body that you have obtained quickly disintegrates, after death you will fall into the bad migrations, and it will be difficult to find such a good support once again. This was already taught before.

[The following considerations are] the antidote to attachment [to bad activities]: the holy Dharma is the cause for the arising of boundless joy in this and future lives, meaningless idle chatter and the distractions of excitement and so forth degenerate the great aim in this life,
and seeing it to be the source that generates manifold suffering in future lives, it should be stopped.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-4C3A-2 The second adverse condition: the discouragement thinking: “How could I ever accomplish anything like that?”

A The actual [topic]
B The antidotes

Discouragement is also of three [types]:
- The discouragement that thinks: “Since the objects to be attained, the good qualities of a buddha, are limitless, I cannot attain them.”
- The discouragement that thinks: “Since the method, giving away my arms, legs, and the like is immensely difficult, I cannot accomplish it.”
- The discouragement that thinks: “[As for] the place, since it is necessary to take infinite rebirths in cyclic existence, at that time I will be harmed by the sufferings of cyclic existence.”

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-4C3A-2B The antidotes

[Accordingly], there are also three antidotes.

1 The antidote to the discouragement with respect to the object to be attained

The antidote to the first one is the thought: “Even the buddhas did not already attain elevated paths right from the start. Rather they were like me and became buddhas by treading increasingly higher paths. Since the Bhagavan also said that even those who are greatly inferior to me will attain buddhahood, why should I not attain it too unless I do not make the effort?”

2 The antidote to discouragement with respect to the method

The antidote to the second is to think: “As long as the discrimination arises that it is difficult to give away my body and so forth, I will not give them away. However, when it is time to give them away, it will not be difficult but will be like giving away cooked vegetables.”

3 The antidote to discouragement with respect to the place of accomplishment

The antidote to the third (230) is to stop discouragement, thinking: “Due to the abandonment of negativities by a bodhisattva, their results, suffering feelings, do not arise. Due to his stable realization that cyclic existence lacks inherent existence, like an illusion, there is no suffering in his mind. If he thrives due to physical and mental happiness even if he remains in cyclic existence, despair is senseless.”

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-4C3 Relying on favourable conditions for joyous effort

Relying on favourable conditions for joyous effort has four [types]:

1 The power of devotion

The power of devotion is to meditates on causes and effects, so as to aspire to discard and adopt.

2 The power of stability

The power of stability is not to engage in anything haphazardly without investigating it, and, having investigated it and engaged in it, to consummate it.
3 The power of joy

The power of joy makes one’s undertaking of joyous effort uninterrupted and insatiable, like a child engaged in play.

4 The power of suspension

The power of suspension is to rest, when your body and mind are worn out due to your joyous effort. As soon as you have recovered, you start again.

In this way, in dependence on stopping adverse conditions and relying on favourable conditions, you should undertake joyous effort until body and mind become light, like a piece of cotton carried by the wind.

When you train in joyous effort, you should do it with the six perfections. Abiding in joyous effort yourself and establishing others in it is the generosity of joyous effort. The remaining are as before.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-5 Training in concentration

A The essence of concentration
B Its subdivisions
C How to generate [concentration] in one’s continuum

The fifth one has three [points]: the essence of concentration, its subdivisions and how to develop it in one’s continuum.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-5A The essence of concentration

First: The essence of concentration is a mind that abides single-pointedly on any suitable virtues object.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-5B Its subdivisions

By way of essence, there are the two: mundane and supramundane. By way of class, there are the three: the class of calm abiding, the class of special insight, and the class that is a union of the two. When it is divided by way of function, there is the concentration that causes one to abide in physical and mental happiness in this life, the concentration that manifestly accomplishes good qualities, and the concentration that brings about the welfare of sentient beings.

1 Meditative concentration that causes you to abide in physical and mental happiness in this life

The first of these is the concentration that generates physical and mental pliancy, if one places the mind in meditative equipoise.

2 The concentration that manifestly accomplishes good qualities

The second one is a concentration that accomplishes the good qualities shared with the shravakas, such as the clairvoyances, complete liberations, totalities, masteries.

3 Concentration that brings about the welfare of sentient beings

The third one is the concentration that accomplishes the welfares in eleven ways by means of concentration.
The thoughts regarding the advantages of cultivating meditative concentration and the disadvantages of not cultivating it will be explained in the chapter on calm abiding.

The generosity of training in concentration possessing the six perfections is to abide in concentration oneself and establish others in it. The remaining are as before.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-6 Training in wisdom
   A The essence of wisdom
   B Its subdivisions
   C How to generate [wisdom] in one’s continuum

The sixth one has three [points]: the essence of wisdom, its subdivisions, and how to generate [wisdom] in one’s continuum.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-6A The essence of wisdom
First: In general wisdom is that which very thoroughly distinguishes the qualities in the thing that is being investigated. Here it is the wisdom that is skilled in the five sciences and so forth.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-6B Its divisions
Second: There are three: the wisdom realizing the ultimate, the wisdom realizing conventionalities, and the wisdom realizing the welfare of sentient beings.
   1 Wisdom realizing the ultimate
   The first one is [the wisdom] comprehending the suchness that is selflessness by means of a meaning generality and [the wisdom] comprehending the suchness that is selflessness by means of direct perceiver.
   2 Wisdom realizing conventionalities
   The second one is the wisdom that is skilled in the five sciences.
   3 Wisdom realizing the welfare of sentient beings
   The third one consists in knowing how to accomplish, without misdeeds, the welfare of sentient beings in this and future lives.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-6C How to generate [wisdom] in one’s continuum
   1 The advantages of generating wisdom
   2 The disadvantages of not generating wisdom

The third one is to think about the advantages of generating wisdom and the disadvantages of not generating it.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-6C1 The advantages of generating wisdom
   A It is the root of all good qualities
   First: In the Hundred Verses on Wisdom it says:

   The root of all good qualities,
   The seen and the unseen, is wisdom.
   Thus, for the sake of accomplishing both,
   Wisdom should be fully embraced. [74]

   B The fact that a bodhisattva is not perturbed by good or bad conditions and that he is skilled in methods such as generosity and so forth depends on wisdom

Although a bodhisattva gives his own flesh to someone who asks him for it, [232] like taking [a leaf] from a medicinal plant it is not done with the conceptualizations of pride,
discouragement, and so forth, but it is done from a direct perception of suchness by means of wisdom. By means of the wisdom seeing the problems of existence and peace, he practices ethical discipline for the welfare of others, thereby purifying ethical discipline. By means of the wisdom realizing the faults of impatience and the good qualities of patience, his mind is subdued, due to which he is not captivated by heretical practices and suffering. By means of wisdom, he understands the excellent basis that is undertaking joyous effort and exerts himself in that, whereby there is great progress on the path. By means of the wisdom relying on a process of reasoning, he achieves the supreme joy and happiness of the concentration abiding on the meaning of suchness. In this way, the complete purity of the first five perfections, generosity, and so forth, depends on wisdom.

C One possessing wisdom can accomplish without contradiction even those actions that appear contradictory to common beings

Those endowed with wisdom can accomplish two qualities that appear to be opposed without any contradiction. If a bodhisattva were to become a wheel-turning monarch with power over the four continents, that he does not come under the power of desirable objects is due to the force of the minister of wisdom. Likewise, although his love that sees sentient beings as attractive is very strong, it is not even slightly mixed with attachment. Although his intense compassion cannot bear the suffering of sentient beings lasts for a long time, he is without the laziness that is oppressed by sorrow and does not delight in virtue. Although he possesses immeasurable joy, he is without the restlessness that distracts the mind from the observed object. Although he possesses great and continuous equanimity, he does not neglect the welfare of migrating beings even for an instant. All this is done out of wisdom because the obstacles to accomplishing them with corresponding strength are ceased by wisdom.

D That the two truths are considered non-contradictory is also due to wisdom

The Praise of the Praiseworthy says:

Without discarding reality,

{233} It also accords with conventionalities. [75]

Thus, there is no need to discard reality, the great certainty having been gained that not even a mere atom of the reference object whose signs are being apprehended is established. That is non-contradictory and compatible with the fact that conventionalities are found through deep certainty that individual results arise from their individual inner and outer causes and conditions. Although they are extremely contradictory for those without the power of awareness, for those possessing wisdom they are non-contradictory and compatible.

E That permissions and prohibitions are not contradictory also depends on wisdom

In the same text it also says:

Regarding permissions and prohibitions
Some of your words are definite as one.
Whereas others are not as definite,
Still there is no contradiction between them. [76]
Thus, there are many different prohibitions and permissions in the higher and lower vehicles and in sutra and tantra. For those seeking the intention of the infinite scriptures regarding the two being practiced by a single person, to those who do not have the strength of intelligence they are contradictory, whereas to the skilled they are not. This too is due to wisdom.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-6C2 The disadvantages of not generating wisdom

A The faults of being separated from wisdom
B Causes of wisdom and so forth
C How [wisdom] comes to possess the six perfections

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-6C2A The faults of being separated from wisdom: the fault that, if wisdom is lacking, generosity and so forth will not become completely pure

If they are separated from wisdom, the five - generosity and so forth - and the view will not be pure. In the Summary of the Perfections it says:

In those who strive for results in the absence of wisdom,
The nature of giving is not completely pure.
To give others welfare is taught as “the best of gifts”.
The rest are applications for increasing wealth. [77]

And:
If wisdom’s light does not dispel the darkness,
One will not come to possess pure ethical discipline.
Mostly, that discipline, due to the absence of wisdom,
Will be disturbed by afflictions through flawed understanding. [78]

And:
Good qualities of patience won’t stay in one’s mind
If it’s disturbed by faults of distorted wisdom.
Nor will fame in a king without good qualities,
Who hates to examine the excellent and the faulty.[79]

And:
{234} It is extolled as sublime for the discerning.
There is nothing more subtle and deep than it.
Completely unobscurred by the fault of attachment,
The mind won’t take the straight path without wisdom. [80]

And:
Those holding that wisdom’s way does not involve effort,
Their view will not become completely pure. [81]

Fame in a king implies that for a king who lacks good qualities fame may occur one time, but it will degenerate and pass.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-6C2B Causes of wisdom

1 The importance of hearing as a cause of wisdom

Therefore, it is necessary to generate wisdom, and its cause, listening to the completely pure scriptures in accordance with one’s mental capacity, is [set out] in the Summary of Perfections.
Having heard little, blind, unable to meditate;  
What understanding would someone without that reflect?  
Therefore, make effort in hearing. From that cause there’s thinking,  
While through meditation spacious wisdom arises.  
\[82\]

2 The wisdom that abandons the two obscurations also depends on hearing

Venerable Maitreya also wrote [in his Uttaratantra]:

Conceptualisation of the three spheres  
We posit as knowledge obscurations[obstructions to knowledge]
Conceptualisation like miserliness  
As afflictive obscurations.  
Apart from wisdom there’s no cause  
For abandoning them; therefore  
Wisdom is supreme, so, likewise  
Hearing for its sake is supreme.  
\[83\]

And in the Compendium of Trainings it says:

You should be patient. You should seek hearing.  
Then you should dwell in a forest.  
Make effort at equipoise meditation  
\[84\]

3 The imprints of training in the instructions

The holy beings of the past also said: First you should gather together the Dharma of hearing that exists in your mind. Then again and again you should think about it, appraise it, and investigate it. It does not help to make oneself forget the Dharma and train in simply holding the mind once. However much one meditates, to the same extent one’s knowledge of the Dharma should grow. \[235\] Once this certainty has grown firm through such considerations, you will not listen to the words of negative companions who say: “All virtuous and non-virtuous thoughts are to be abandoned because they are conception.” Rather, you will think: “The Dharma does not teach anything like that and my virtuous spiritual friend also does not assert that”, and you will not listen to him. Lacking that, someone who has a little bit of faith but no wisdom will burst into tears when he sees a crying face and will burst into laughter when he sees someone who is laughing. Considering true whatever people say, like a river he will go wherever he is lead.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1A-6C2C How [wisdom] is made to possess the six perfections

When you train in wisdom, you should do it with the six perfections. Abiding in [the state of] wisdom oneself and establishing others in it is the generosity of wisdom. The remaining ones are as above.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A1B Training in the four means of gathering [disciples] that ripen others’ continua

1 The essence of the four means of gathering [disciples]

Second: Generosity is the same as explained in the context of the perfection [of generosity]. Pleasant speech is to teach the six perfections to one’s trainees.
[To cause] Meaningful conduct is to make the disciples engage in the meanings that were taught or to make them engage in assuming them correctly. To act in accordance with the meaning is to abide in accordance with whatever meaning one has applied others to and train in accordance with it.

In Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras it says:

By that same giving, teaching it, making others
Assume it, and by oneself engaging in it,
There is asserted to be pleasant speech,
Meaningful conduct, and accord with the meaning. [85]

2 The reason for the presentation of four means of gathering

Why have the means of gathering [disciples] defined as four? In order to gather a retinue for the purpose of applying them to virtue, they first need to be joyful. In this regard give them gifts of material things and attend to their bodies. Once they are joyful in that way, in order for them to engage in the path they first need to know how to do that. For that, moreover, explain the Dharma to them by speaking pleasantly, so that they give up unknowing and entertaining doubts, and make them engage in apprehending the meaning unmistakenly. When they understand that, you make them engage in accomplishing virtue through meaningful conduct. [236] Furthermore if you do not accomplish that yourself but explain to others “You should engage like this. You should avoid like that”, they will say “Why do you tell others to accomplish it, if you do not accomplish it yourself? You too still need to be corrected by others” and they will not listen to what is to be accomplished. However, if you accomplish that yourself, they will also think: “Since he himself abides in the virtue in which he guides me, If I accomplish it, there will definitely be benefit and happiness for me” and they will newly engage [in the path]. Also, those who have already engaged [in the path] will not turn away from it and will grow firm. Therefore, you should act in accordance with the meaning.

3 The need to rely on the four means of gathering disciples

Since the buddhas taught that they accomplish all the welfare of all disciples and that they are a good method, those who gather a retinue should rely on them. [Ornament of the Great Vehicle Sutras, XVI, 77] says:

Those who gather a retinue
Should perfectly rely in this way
Accomplishing all the welfare of everyone
They are extolled as a good method. [86]

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3A2 Their summarised meaning

The great Jowo [Atisha] taught how to accomplish them during meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment:

As for bodhisattva conduct
It is the vast six perfections and so forth.
The yogi arising from meditative equipoise
Steadfastly achieves the path of accumulation. [87]

In this way, the beginner bodhisattva, who has taken the vows of the jina’s children and abides on the path of accumulation never passes beyond the six perfections, whether in meditative equipoise or subsequent attainment. Therefore, some of the six perfections are sustained in meditative equipoise and some in subsequent attainment. Some of the essence of concentration, calm abiding, and the essence of the perfection of wisdom, special insight, are cultivated in meditative equipoise. The first three perfections and some parts of concentration and wisdom are sustained in subsequent attainment. Joyous effort comes in both meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment. One class of patience – some minds ascertaining the profound Dharma - also occur during meditative equipoise. The great Jowo [Atisha] said:

Whenever you rise from meditative equipoise
{237} familiarize yourself with the view of all phenomena
As equal to the eight illustrations of illusions.
Subsequently, purify conceptions and give
Priority to the training in method.
At the time of meditative equipoise,
Balance calm abiding with special insight;
Familiarize yourself with this continuously. [88]

If you hear about such wonderful conduct, so hard to do due to the mind being untrained, it produces anguish in the mind. Although even bodhisattvas are unable to practice it right from the start, if you come to understand it and acquaint yourself with it down to it being an object to be aspired for, later on you will come to naturally engage in it without depending on effort. That is why familiarization is important, for, if you see it as impossible to actually engage in them and discard even familiarizing yourself with training in them, you will be extremely far from the completely pure paths. In Praise of [the Buddha’s] Boundless Qualities it says:

What causes harm in worldly beings if they only hear about it,
What even you have never practiced over an extended time,
Those practices will become natural through familiarization over time.
Henceforth it is hard without familiarization to increase good qualities. [89]

Therefore, it is inevitable for those who have taken bodhisattva vows to train in the conduct and also those who have not taken the vow by means of a ritual should put effort into developing the wish to train in it. Then, if they take the vows having increased the strength of their delight in the training, [the vows] will be very stable. Therefore, they should put effort into this.
This concludes the explanation of training in the aspiring mind through the stages of the path of great beings and the stages of the path of training in the conduct of the jina’s children in general.
CHAPTER V
CALM ABIDING AND SPECIAL INSIGHT

Explanation of how to train in the last two perfections in particular

The training in the last two perfections consists in methods for cultivating calm abiding and special insight, as the perfections of concentration and wisdom comprise those two in order.

This has six points: the benefits of developing calm abiding and special insight, demonstration that these two contain all meditative stabilisations, the entities of calm abiding and special insight, the reason why both need to be cultivated, how their order is definite, and how to train in each of them.

The first point from among five regarding the first one: In [the Sutra] Unravelling the Thought it is set out that all the mundane and supramundane positive qualities of the Mahayana and Hinayana are results of calm abiding and special insight.

“Isn’t calm abiding and special insight positive qualities of mind that are gained from meditation? How can all those positive qualities be admissible as results of those two?”

Actual calm abiding and special insight are indeed positive qualities of mind gained from meditation, as explained [below]. Therefore, not all the positive qualities of the Mahayana and Hinayana are results of the two. Nevertheless, [all] the meditative stabilisations starting from the single-pointed [placement of the] mind on a virtuous object are included in the category of calm abiding, and [all] the virtuous wisdom minds individually analyzing the meaning of the mode or multiplicity are included in the category of special insight. It is with that intended meaning that all the positive qualities of the three vehicles are said to be results of calm abiding and special insight. Hence, there is no contradiction.

In [the Sutra] Unravelling the Thought it also says:
Having familiarized themselves  
With calm abiding and special insight  
Beings will gain complete liberation  
From the bondage of bad states\(^ {111}\) and signs.  

This is what is meant: “Bad states” are latencies left in the mind, capable of generating more and more wrong consciousnesses; and “signs” [are that which] reviv[es] the latencies for the adherence to wrong objects that arises time and again. [239] The Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom explain that the former is abandoned through special insight and the latter through calm abiding. Those are the benefits of what is designated as calm abiding and special insight.

However, even if they are not designated as calm abiding and special insight, the meaning is the same. Statements on the benefits of concentration and wisdom should be understood as the benefits of these two.

Demonstration that these two comprise all the meditative stabilisations

Second: In [the Sutra] Unravelling the Thought it says that all the limitless meditative stabilisations proclaimed in the Mahayana and the Hinayana are nevertheless subsumed under calm abiding and special insight. Therefore, since those who strive for meditative stabilisation cannot explore all their limitless manifest divisions, they should thoroughly explore how to sustain calm abiding and special insight, the common bond of all the meditative stabilisations.

Third: With respect to the entity of calm abiding it says in [the Sutra] Unravelling the Thought:

Dwelling alone in solitude, he places [the mind] inwards and attends to the same phenomena, just as he has thoroughly reflected on them.He attends to them by means of the mind that attends [directed] inwards continuously and attentively. The [states] he thus enters and abides in where physical and mental pliancy arise are called calm abiding.

The meaning of this is that if the mind, having attended to it continuously without distraction, stays on the object of meditation by itself so that the bliss of physical and mental pliancy arises, that meditative stabilisation has become calm abiding. This will arise from merely keeping the mind inwards undistracted and it does not depend on internalizing the suchness of things.
1. Stating a source

With respect to the entity of special insight it says in the same sutra:

Having achieved that physical and that mental pliancy, he abides in them, gives up the aspects of the mind and (240) devotes himself to the individual investigation of the images within, the objects of meditative stabilisation, the same phenomena he likewise reflected on. Thus, with regard to the images that are the objects of meditative stabilisation, any thorough differentiation of the meaning of those objects of knowledge, [any] exceedingly thorough discrimination, full investigation, full analysis, tolerance, acceptance, classification, viewing, and conceptualization is called special insight. In that way the bodhisattva is skilled in special insight.”. [3]

2. Elucidating the meaning of the sutra [passage]

Here, “thorough differentiation” is a differentiation of the varieties and “exceedingly thorough differentiation” is a differentiation of the mode. “Investigation” is a coarse investigation and “analysis” is a subtle analysis.

3. How statements from other sutras and commentaries accord with [the Sutra] Unravelling the Thought

The Jewel Cloud [Sutra] says:

Calm abiding is one-pointed mind,
Special insight is investigation[112]. [4]

Venerable Maitreya also says:

Restraint to the concepts of dharmas should also be
Known as path of calm abiding,
Full analysis of their meanings
As the path of special insight. [5]

And:

Depending on a perfect abiding,
What [serves] to place the mind on mind and
What [serves to] differentiate dharmas
Are calm abiding and special insight. [6]

In dependence on thorough meditative stabilisation, placement of the mind is said to be calm abiding and the wisdom differentiating dharmas exceedingly thoroughly [is said to be] special insight. In the Bodhisattva Levels it is set out just like that and in the middle part of Stages of Meditation it also says:

The abidance within the mind itself[113] in which distraction towards external objects has calmed down and [the mind] continuously engages in its internal object with joy and pliancy, is called ‘calm abiding’. That which thoroughly analyses suchness at the time of abiding in that very [state of] calm abiding is special insight. [7]
The *Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom* explain this in the same way.

4 Therefore, calm abiding and special insight are not distinguished by way of the observed object

{241} So, according to the *Bodhisattva Levels* and the *Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom*, each of them, calm abiding and special insight, can have both the mode and the varieties as their objects of observation. Therefore, calm abiding and special insight are not differentiated by way of their objects. There is calm abiding realizing emptiness and there is also special insight that does not realize emptiness. In fact, it is because the rush to external objects has calmed down and the mind is abiding on internal objects that something is called calm abiding, and it is because of a special, that is distinctive, insight that something is called special insight.

5 How it is inappropriate to distinguish calm abiding and special insight based on whether or not the clarity of the consciousness is intense

The assertion by some that the mind abiding nonconceptually without an intense clarity factor is calm abiding whereas with an intense clarity factor it is special insight is inappropriate because it contradicts everything explained earlier and because this distinction is merely a distinction between meditative stabilisation with or without laxity. This is also because, to be sure, every meditative stabilisation of calm abiding also needs to be purified of laxity, and in every meditative stabilisation that is free from laxity the clarity factor of the mind will surely come on.

6 The need to differentiate between the realization of emptiness and blissful, lucid non-conceptuality

For that reason, it is necessary to identify whether or not [a mind] is a meditative stabilisation that observes emptiness, a wisdom [consciousness], on the basis of whether or not that mind realizes either of the two selflessnesses. In fact, there are countless nonconceptual meditative stabilisations of bliss and clarity where the mind is not directed at the suchness of an object. Since direct perception establishes that the mind can thus be held in a nonconceptual state even though the view realizing the mode of being has not been found, there is nothing to contradict even in the slightest the generation of nonconceptual meditative stabilisations that do not understand emptiness. If the mind is held this way for a long time, through the power of the mind being held, a workability of vital energies will arise. {242} Since it is natural for joy and bliss to arise in body and mind when that has arisen, it is not contradictory for bliss to arise. Once that has arisen, through the power of one’s vivid sensation of joy and bliss, the factor of clarity is gained. Therefore, you cannot posit that every blissful, clear, nonconceptual meditative stabilisations realize suchness. Consequently, since bliss, clarity and nonconceptuality are also gained in meditative stabilisations realizing emptiness, and since there are also many meditative stabilisations where the mind is not directed at emptiness and where bliss, clarity and nonconceptuality occur, it is necessary to distinguish between the two.

1 Illustration

Fourth: Why is it not enough to develop either calm abiding or special insight? Why is it necessary to cultivate both?

To illustrate this: when you light a butter lamp at night in order to look at murals, if the butter lamp is both very bright and unmoved by wind, you will see the painted figures very
clearly. However, if the butter lamp is not bright or if – even though bright – it is stirred by
the wind, you will not see the forms clearly.

2 Explaining the meaning

Likewise, with respect to viewing the profound meaning, if you have both the wisdom
unmistakenly ascertaining the meaning of suchness and the imperturbability of a mind that
stays on its object at will, you will see suchness clearly. However, if you do not have the
wisdom realizing the mode of being, despite your non-conceptual meditative stabilisation in
which your mind remains unscattered, you will not be able to realize the mode of being,
however much you familiarize yourself with meditative stabilisation. On the other hand, if
you have the view that understands selflessness but lack the firm meditative stabilisation in
which the mind remains one-pointed, you will not be able to clearly realize the meaning of
the mode of being. Therefore, both calm abiding and special insight are necessary.

3 Relating this to scriptural passages

In the middle part of Stages of Meditation it says:

Due to special insight alone, divorced from calm abiding, a yogi’s mind
is distracted to [other] objects, and (243) like a butter lamp in the wind,
it will not become stable. This being so, the light of wisdom will not
shine forth very bright, which is why you should rely on both alike.

[8]

And:

Through the power of calm abiding, the mind will not be moved by the
winds of conceptualization – like a butter lamp placed [somewhere
where] there is no wind. Through special insight, you abandon the
snares of all inferior views so that others do not affect you [anymore]. It
is like it has been set forth in the Moon Lamp Sutra:
‘Through the power of calm abiding you’ll be immovable,
By means of special insight you become like a mountain.’ [9]

If you investigate with wisdom that is thus conjoined with the meditative equipoise of calm
abiding, without unevenness through laxity and excitement of the mind, you will know the
meaning of reality. With that intention it says in the Complete Summary of Teachings:

When the mind is in meditative equipoise, you will know reality as it is.

[10]

From the first part of Stages of Meditation:

Since the mind is mobile like water, there is no abiding without the
basis of calm abiding. With a mind that is not in meditative equipoise,
reality cannot be known as it is. The Bhagavat also spoke: ‘Reality is
fully known as it is by a mind in meditative equipoise.’ [11]
When you attain calm abiding, not only have you stopped the fault of your wisdom [consciousness] wandering off while correctly investigating selflessness. The fault of distraction to [other] objects is averted for all analytical meditations that you do with the wisdom of individual investigation - on impermanence, actions and their effects, the disadvantages of cyclic existence, love, compassion, training in bodhicitta, and so forth. Then, since you engage in each individual object, whatever it may be, without being distracted to something else, anything virtuous you do is very powerful. As long as you have not obtained calm abiding, through predominant distraction to other objects, any virtuous practice is weak. It is as it says in Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour:

> A person whose mind is being distracted
> Is in the fangs of mental afflictions.  

And:

> The seer taught that recitation,
> Ascetic practices, and so forth -
> Even if engaged in long - are
> Pointless with a distracted mind.  

Thus you first accomplish calm abiding and then cultivate special insight based on it.

With regard to that you may wonder: In Stages of Meditation, part one, “its object of observation is not specified” there is said to be no specification concerning the observed object of calm abiding, and as explained previously, there is calm abiding with either a phenomenon or reality as its object. Therefore, it should indeed be all right to understand the meaning of selflessness and then generate simultaneously both calm abiding, a meditation observing that whereby the mind does not get distracted, and special insight observing emptiness. Why first seek calm abiding and then cultivate special insight?
For an understanding of emptiness and a mere experience of mental transformation to arise, prior calm abiding is not necessary.

Now, this is the manner in which calm abiding precedes special insight: For an understanding of the view realizing selflessness to arise, prior calm abiding is not necessary, because the view is also seen arising in the absence of calm abiding. For an experience of mental transformation concerning that view to arise, prior calm abiding is not necessary either, because even without calm abiding, there is nothing contradictory in an experience of mental transformation arising through familiarization with repeated analysis by means of individual investigation. (245) For, if it were contradictory, it would absurdly follow from the same reason that the experience of mental transformation arising with respect to impermanence, the faults of cyclic existence, and training in the mind of enlightenment also depends on calm abiding.

The manner in which calm abiding needs to precede special insight:

Well then, what is the manner in which it precedes special insight? Here the context for the generation of special insight is that of ordinary beings without a previous realization arisen from meditation who are newly generating it. In this regard, there is a method of meditating on selflessness with a special consciousness realizing emptiness, which will be explained below. [However,] apart from that, in the context of the Paramitayana and the three lower classes of tantra, analytical meditation is necessary because special insight which is a realization born from meditation does not arise unless you have examined the meaning of selflessness by means of individual investigation, and then engaged in analytical meditation sustaining it. If you seek an understanding of selflessness and repeatedly analyse its meaning before accomplishing calm abiding, it will be impossible to accomplish calm abiding in dependence on that, because calm abiding has not been accomplished. If you perform non-analytical placement meditation, even though you accomplish calm abiding in dependence on it, this will only be a method of sustaining calm abiding and you will not have a method of sustaining special insight. That is why you must seek special insight afterwards, and therefore, you do not deviate from the order of seeking calm abiding first and then cultivating special insight in dependence on it.

It would indeed be completely inadmissible not to meditate in accordance with that order. As [mentioned] earlier it says in [the Sutra] Unravelling the Thought that you cultivate special insight in dependence on the attainment of calm abiding. (246) This is because the order of the concentration and wisdom [forming part] of the six perfections - “in dependence on the former the latter arises” - and the order of the higher training in meditative stabilisation in dependence upon which the higher training in wisdom arises are orders in which you first cultivate calm abiding before special insight is cultivated. In the Bodhisattva Levels and the Shravaka Levels it also says that special insight is cultivated in dependence on calm abiding. The Essence of the Middle Way, Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Behaviour and the three [volume] Stages of Meditation as well as Jnanakirti and Shantipa set forth that you seek calm abiding and then
cultivate special insight. Therefore, the assertion of some Indian masters whereby you generate special insight from the beginning out of an analysis with the wisdom of individual investigation - without seeking calm abiding separately - is in contradiction to the texts of the great trailblazers. Therefore, it is inappropriate for the intelligent to rely on them.

The order of calm abiding and special insight is like that when you newly generate them. Later on the sequence is not specified, for having cultivated special insight, you still cultivate calm abiding.

A Setting out and responding to an objection

The objection that there is a contradiction to scripture in this

But then, how can it be that the Compendium of All [Manifest Knowledge] says:

Some have attained special insight, but not calm abiding. They strive for calm abiding in dependence on special insight. [15]

B The response that abandons the fault [pointing out] the need to distinguish between the actual level and the calm abiding included in the preparatory level

Those are not the ones who have not attained the calm abiding included in the preparatory level of the first concentration, but rather the ones who have not attained calm abiding of the actual level of the first concentration and above. Upon direct realization of the Four Truths, calm abiding of the first concentration and above are in fact attained in dependence on that, because in the Actual Basis of the Levels it says:

Otherwise, someone who fully knows suffering [and so on] up to the path as it really is and who has not attained the first concentration and so forth, (247) places the mind and does not perform any thorough differentiation as soon as he attains it. In dependence on just that special wisdom they combine it with the special state of mind.

To simplify the designations, nine [different] minds can be called calm abiding and four types of investigation can be called special insight. However, actual calm abiding and special insight must be posited after pliancy has arisen, as is being explained [here].

How to train in them individually

1 How to train in calm abiding
2 How to train in special insight
3 How to unite the two

The sixth one has three points: how to train in calm abiding, how to train in special insight and how to unite the two.
Explanation of how to train in calm abiding, the entity of concentration

The first one has three points: attending to the prerequisites of calm abiding, how to develop calm abiding in dependence on them, and the measure for the accomplishment of calm abiding through cultivation.

Attending to the prerequisites of calm abiding

The first one has six points.

1 Staying in a favourable place

As regards staying in a favourable place, the five positive qualities of a place are: easy access to food, clothing and so forth, in the sense that they can be obtained without trouble, a good location in the sense that predators and other wild beasts as well as enemies and the like do not live there, good ground in the sense that it does not produce diseases, good company in the sense that one has companions of equal ethical discipline and views, and being well endowed in the sense that during the day there are few people [around] and at night there is little noise. In Ornament of the Sutras it says:

A place for intelligent people’s attainments
[Has] good access, a good location,
Good ground as well as good companions
And conveniences for yoga. [17]

2 Few desires

Few desires: not being excessively attached to good or numerous robes and so forth.

3 Contentment

Contentment: always being content with merely adequate robes and the like.

4 Complete abstention from many activities

Complete abstention from many activities: completely abandoning mean activities such as trading, excessive association with lay or ordained people, as well as one’s medical practice, astrological calculations, and so forth.

5 Pure ethical discipline

Pure ethical discipline: with regard to pratimoksha and bodhisattva vows, not tearing down the basis of the trainings through natural or formulated misdeeds, and even if it is torn due to non-conscientiousness, restoring it quickly through regret in accordance with the teachings.

6 Complete abstention from thoughts of desire

Complete abstention from thoughts of desire and the like: you should abandon all thoughts of desire by meditating on their disadvantages for this life, such as being killed or arrested and for future lives such as going to bad realms. Or you should meditate thinking ‘All the pleasant
and unpleasant things of cyclic existence are impermanent and subject to destruction. If I shall certainly be separated from all of them before long, why do I get overly attached and so on?' In _Lamp on the Path_ it says:

Even if you exert yourself greatly,
Even for a thousand years, if
Calm abiding’s limbs are impaired,
Stabilisation\(^{119}\) will not be accomplished.  

For those with the heartfelt wish to accomplish the meditative stabilisation of calm abiding and special insight, it is therefore essential to put effort into the 13 prerequisites and the like set forth in the _Shravaka Levels._

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B How to cultivate calm abiding based on that

1. The preparation
2. The main part

The second one has two points: the preparation and the main part.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B1 The preparation

First: You should long cultivate the six preparatory practices explained earlier as well as the mind of enlightenment and, as part of that, also train in the core meditation topics shared with lesser and intermediate beings.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2 The main part

A. What body posture to meditate in
B. Explanation of the stages of meditation themselves

The second one has two points: what body posture to meditate in and explanation of the stages of meditation themselves.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2A What body posture to meditate in

First: As it says in _Stages of Meditation_, you should [sit] on a very soft and comfortable seat [and adopt] (249) a body posture with eight characteristics: The legs are fully crossed or half-crossed, which is also correct. That is how you should sit. The eyes are directed over the tip of the nose, neither too open nor too closed. You should sit with your body straightened up and erect rather than too bent or crooked, and with your mindfulness placed inward. Your shoulders should be straight and even. The head is held not [too] high nor [too] low and without tilting to one side; you keep yourself erect from the nose [down] to the navel. The teeth and lips should remain natural, just as they are. The tongue should be placed near the upper teeth. As for the breath, your exhalations and inhalations should not be audible, forceful or uncontrolled. Rather, their coming and going should by all means proceed imperceptibly, leisurely, and effortlessly. That is the way to do it. In accordance with that, you should first of all achieve the body posture [with] the eight and especially even breathing, the way it has been explained.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B Explanation of the stages of meditation themselves

1. Transition
2. The actual [explanation]

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-1 Transition
Second: Most expositions of the stages of the path teach the accomplishment of calm abiding by way of eight [conditional] factors for abandoning five faults, which is taught in [Discrimination of] the Middle and Extremes. The instructions from Geshe Lagsorwa’s lineage explain that on top of that, the six powers, the four attentions, and the nine minds explained in the Shravaka Levels need to be accomplished. In his Ornament of the Sutras and [Discrimination of] the Middle and Extremes, the venerable Maitreya also sets forth the nine means of mental abiding and the eight [compositional] factors for abandoning the faults. Following them, Indian scholars such as Haribhadra, Kamalashila and Shantipa also wrote many compositions on the stages of accomplishing meditative stabilisation. In the Mantrayana you also need to know them. In particular, faults of meditative stabilisation such as the five faults and the way to eliminate them are presented vividly and extensively in scriptures from the collection of sutras.

The actual [explanation]

A How to generate flawless meditative stabilisation
B The stages of mental abiding that arise in dependence on that

This one has two points: (250) how to generate flawless meditative stabilisation and the stages of mental abiding that arise in dependence on that.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2 How to generate flawless meditative stabilisation

1 What to do before focusing the mind on the object
2 What to do while focusing the mind on the object
3 What to do after focusing the mind on the object

The first one has three [points]: what to do before focusing the mind on the object, what to do while focusing the mind on the object and what to do after focusing the mind on the object.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A What to do before focusing the mind on the object

A The need to rely on antidotes to laziness at the outset

First: If you cannot put an end to laziness which does not delight in cultivating meditative stabilisation but rather enjoys its opposite, from the beginning, it will not let you engage in meditative stabilisation, and even if you achieve meditative stabilisation once, it will not possibly be persistent and therefore deteriorate quickly. For that reason it is of major importance to put and end to laziness at the outset.

B Individual explanation of the four antidotes

Now if you achieve pliancy and your body and mind expand with bliss, there will be no [more] weariness, day or night, in applying yourself to virtue and thereby laziness will be stopped. To generate it, you must be able continuously to muster joyous effort with respect to meditative stabilisation, the cause for generating pliancy. To generate that, you need the intense, continuous aspiration of striving for meditative stabilisation. As a cause of that, the firm faith of strong fascination due to seeing the positive qualities of meditative stabilisation is necessary. Therefore, you should repeatedly cultivate the faith of reflecting on the positive qualities of meditative stabilisation.

C The source of this

In [Discrimination of] The Middle and Extremes it says:
Here the basis is aspiration - the basis of endeavour. That which is based on it is endeavour or joyous effort. The cause of aspiration is the faith of conviction concerning the positive qualities. The result of endeavour is pliancy.

The positive qualities of the meditative stabilisation to be cultivated here are as follows. Once meditative stabilisation has been accomplished, mental happiness and physical comfort greatly increase, so that you stay happy in this lifetime. Due to the acquisition of physical and mental pliancy, the mind is fit to make use of any virtuous object at will. Since uncontrolled distraction (251) to wrong objects has subsided, faulty conduct does not occur often while whatever virtue you do has great strength. In dependence on calm abiding, positive qualities such as clairvoyance and miraculous powers can be achieved, and in particular, the realization of special insight that realizes emptiness arises in dependence on it, so that the root of cyclic existence can be cut quickly. If you consider any of these and other positive qualities, the power of your enthusiasm for cultivating meditative stabilisation will increase. You should get to know them and meditate on them. Once this has arisen, it will constantly urge you, from within, to cultivate meditative stabilisation so that you will easily attain it, and, upon its attainment, since you engage in the meditation again and again, it will be very difficult for it to deteriorate.
accomplishment of a purpose - transformation through meditation by way of the previous two meditation methods that observe the meaning of the mode and the variety.

As regards objects for purifying one’s conduct, there are five meditation objects [serving] as antidotes to one’s predominant conduct in previous lives – attachment, hatred, ignorance, pride and discursive thought – the repulsive, love, dependent arising, the divisions of the elements, as well as one’s respiration, respectively.

The objects for the skilful are also five [in number]: objects of skill with regard to the aggregates, elements, sense fields, the twelve links of dependent origination, (252) as well as the established and the unestablished.

The objects for purifying mental afflictions are two: the peaceful and coarse [states] of the higher and lower levels and the 16 [aspects] of the four truths, impermanence and so forth.

2 How [all of] these individually serve a special purpose

In this regard, the objects for purifying one’s conduct are special in that the attachment and the like of those who act with attachment and the like more than usual is easily stopped and meditative stabilisation is easily achieved in dependence on that.

The objects for the skilful are good objects of calm abiding because they negate a self of persons apart from those phenomena and are therefore concordant with the arising of special insight which realizes selflessness.

Meditation objects for purifying mental afflictions are of great significance in that they become antidotes to mental afflictions in general.

There are no pervasive objects apart from the preceding objects.

Therefore, meditative stabilisation should be accomplished in dependence on the meditation objects of calm abiding with their specific purposes. Those who practice meditative stabilisation in dependence on pebbles, pieces of wood and the like clearly do not know the presentation of objects of meditative stabilisation.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A2A-1B Indication of what person should make what his meditation object

1 How what person should make what his meditation object

Second: In accordance with what is set forth in [the Sutra Requested by Revata], it is taught that persons [ranging] from those in whom attachment predominates to those in whom discursive thought predominates should rely on the individual objects specified, [ranging] from the repulsive to one’s respiration, respectively. Those whose conduct is balanced and those whose mental afflictions are small can concentrate on any one object they are happy with and a specific one is not necessary.

2 Differences in the level of predominance and the like of attachment and so forth

In this regard, predominance of [one of] the five [mental afflictions], attachment and so forth, [means that] through habituation to attachment and so forth in previous lives long-term attachment and so forth arise towards small objects of attachment and so forth. (253) Those with balanced conduct have not got habituated to attachment and so forth in previous lives, but they do not see them as disadvantages. Therefore, even though strong, long-term attachment and so forth do not arise towards their [respective] objects, it is not like they do not occur [at all]. Those with small mental afflictions have not got habituated to attachment and so forth in previous lives, and due to the fact that, among other things, they see them as
disadvantages, attachment and so forth [only] arise slowly towards major and numerous objects of attachment and so forth. Towards medium and small objects they do not arise. Moreover, the predominance of attachment or another one of the five results in a lengthy, balanced behaviour in a not too lengthy, and small mental afflictions in a speedy accomplishment of quiescence.

Identification of objects for given situations

A General explanation

Now, in dependence on which object is calm abiding accomplished? In general, the meditation objects for individuals are just as explained above. In particular, the point that those with predominant discursive thought should meditate on the breath is important.

B Numerous texts set forth how to accomplish meditative stabilisation observing the Tathagata’s body

Apart from that, the middle and final parts of Stages of Meditation follow [the Sutras] Meditative stabilisation of the Present Buddha Manifestly Abiding and the King of Meditative stabilisation in teaching the accomplishment of meditative stabilisation with the Tathagata’s body as the object. The commentary on Lamp on the Path also quotes statements by Master Bodhibhadra that meditative stabilisation is achieved focusing on the Tathagata’s body.

C How it is of great purpose to make it the basis of one’s observation accordingly

As for concentration on the Buddha’s body, limitless merit arises through recollection of the Buddha. If that body is clear and stable in its aspect, it makes a great difference with regard to visualizing the field for accumulating merit through prostrations, offerings, prayers, and so forth, as well as the field for purifying obscurations through confession, restraint, and so forth. (254) The positive quality that one’s recollection of the Buddha does not deteriorate at the time of death, the great difference it makes to deity yoga when you cultivate the path of mantra, and so forth show that it is very purposeful.

D How to make what bodily form [one’s object]

In the King of Meditative stabilisation it says:

With his body just like the colour of gold
The Lord of the World is excessively beautiful.
The bodhisattva whose mind is involved in this object
Is said to be in equipoised meditation.  

You should make something like that your basis of observation. Furthermore, there are two types of visualizations: one [in which the object] is newly created by the mind and one [in which the object] is naturally present. The latter [type] makes a great difference for the generation of faith and accords with sections shared among the vehicles. Therefore, you should proceed in the latter way.

E How to research the basis of observation

In researching the basis of observation, the basis for the mind to focus on, you should first find a good painted image, statue, and the like of the Teacher’s body, look at it again and again and, having captured the features, get used to its appearance as an object of the mind. Or else you should reflect on the meaning of a description by some spiritual master that you
have heard, make it appear to the mind and pursue [this as] your basis of observation. However, rather than making the basis of observation [appear] like a painted image, statue or something like that, you should train for it to appear with the aspect of the actual Buddha.

F It is inadmissible to practice meditative stabilisation looking at the meditation support with one’s eyes. It makes perfect sense that Master Yeshe De[y] refutes what some [people] do, namely set up an image in front of them, look at it with the eyes and meditate by staring at it. This is because meditative stabilisation is not accomplished in a sense consciousness but rather in the mental consciousness, so the actual object of meditative stabilisation is a direct object of the mental consciousness, which is why you must focus on that. Also, in accordance with what was explained earlier, it is taught that you must observe the meaning generality of the observed object or the image that appears.

G The need to determine just one object in the beginning

Elsewhere it says that although part of the figure is detailed and part of it is rough, you should first observe the rough [part] and afterwards, when [your meditation has] stabilized on that, observe the details. [255] According to experience, the rough [features] appear very easily so you should [progress] from the rough outline of the figure, making it the basis of observation. In particular, when you practice, as long as a fully qualified meditative stabilisation has not been accomplished, it is inappropriate to move between many different types of objects. This is because, if you practice meditative stabilisation, moving between many dissimilar objects, it will become a great obstacle to the accomplishment of calm abiding. Says Aryasura:

By stabilising on one object
Stabilise the thoughts of the mind.
Through a series of many objects
It is disturbed by mental afflictions.  [21]

And in the Lamp on the Path it says:

On any one object that is suitable –
Let the mind settle on something virtuous.  [22]

[The above point] is being made by means of the numeral “one”.

H The measure for getting the object and, having got it, the need to focus on that very object

That being so, the measure for first getting the basis of observation that the mind focuses on is this: When you visualize the head, two arms, torso and two legs successively a couple of times and attend to the whole body at the end of that, then, if you are able to see merely half the limbs and parts appear to the mind, you should be satisfied with that and focus on it even if there is no radiant clarity. That is because if you do not focus on to it, satisfied with just that, but desire more clarity, and repeatedly visualize, the object will become clearer, however, not only will you fail to acquire stable meditative stabilisation, this will become an obstacle to its acquisition. But if the object is not very clear and you nevertheless focus on just that mere partial object, you will acquire meditative stabilisation quickly. Then, since clarity will be
increased, the clarity aspect will also be accomplished easily. This appears in Master Yeshe De[y]'s instructions and is essential.

Now, (256) you should focus on the whole body to the best of your abilities and if some parts of it appear clearly, you should focus on those. If they get unclear again, you should focus on the whole again.

At that time, if a colour, shape, number or size appears that was not ascertained [earlier] - for example you want to meditate on [something] yellow and [something] red appears, you want to meditate on a sitting figure and a standing one appears, you want to meditate on one and two appear, or you want to meditate on something big and something small appears – it is inappropriate to pursue them, so you should only make that which is the original object the basis of observation.

In the context of practicing the deity yoga of secret mantra, you must achieve a clear appearance of the deity, so until that appears, you should try to generate it by various means. However, here, if you have difficulty and the deity’s aspect does not appear, you may place the mind and focus on any one of the objects presented above that is suitable or on the view ascertaining suchness, and accomplish meditative stabilisation, for the main purpose is to accomplish calm abiding.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A2B How to direct the mind towards it
1 Presentation of the faultless approach
2 Eliminating faulty approaches
3 Indicating the measure of sessions

The second one has three points: presentation of the faultless approach, eliminating faulty approaches, and indicating the measure of sessions.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A2B-1 Presentation of the faultless approach
A Indication that faultless meditative stabilisation has two features
B How it is unreasonable that some [people] add bliss and the like, making it three or four distinctions
C Identification of laxity and excitement and the importance of skill in a method of sustaining meditative stabilisation that puts an end to the two
D How both mindfulness and introspection are necessary as means for the mind not to wander off from its object
E How the mind is directed towards the meditation object through mindfulness
F Identification of mindfulness
G How it is shown through an analogy that mindfulness continuously ties the mind to the object
H How meditative stabilisation will become faulty without a firm mode of apprehension of the ascertaining consciousness
I Even someone wishing to achieve calm abiding by placing the mind without thinking of anything must generate the power of mindfulness

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A2B-1A Indication that faultless meditative stabilisation has two features
First: The meditative stabilisation that is to be accomplished here has two features; it has a factor of intense clarity, the mind being extremely clear, and it has a factor of non-conceptual stability, [the mind] abiding single-pointedly on the object.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A2B-1B How it is unreasonable that some [people] add bliss and the like, making it three or four distinctions
Here some add bliss and make it three [features], others add limpidity and make it four. However, the limpidity has two [aspects]: the limpidity of one’s consciousness feels more limpid than even an immaculate crystal bowl full of immaculate water being hit by sunlight in the absence of clouds. And (257) when the aspects of objects such as pillars appear, a limpidity arises that feels as if one could count even their finest particles. These two nevertheless arise from the intensity of the clarity factor being generated and sustained after
subtle laxity has been cut. Therefore, it is unnecessary to mention them separately in the beginning.

Although joy and bliss in the form of pleasurable sensations arise as a result of the meditative stabilisation to be accomplished here, they do not arise in association with the meditative stabilisation included in the preliminary stage of the first concentration and therefore are not counted here.

The emergence of such intensity in the clarity factor is impeded by laxity, and single-pointed non-conceptuality is impeded by excitement. Precisely that is the reason why these two, laxity and excitement, become the main obstacles to the accomplishment of pure meditative stabilisation.

Therefore, if you do not know how to identify subtle and gross laxity and excitement, and if you do not know a pure method for sustaining meditative stabilisation that stops both of them, even calm abiding - not to mention special insight - cannot arise. Therefore, the intelligent striving for meditative stabilisation should become skilled in this way. That is to say laxity and excitement are adverse conditions to the accomplishment of calm abiding and since the identification of adverse conditions as well as the actual methods for stopping them are taught below, here I shall [only] mention how to generate meditative stabilisation [as] a favourable condition to calm abiding.

Here meditative stabilisation is the factor of the mind single-pointedly abiding on its object, that is to say it must stay on the object continuously. For that there are two requirements: a means of not letting the mind get distracted away from its original object and awareness of exactly what distraction or non-distraction there is. The first of them is mindfulness, the second one is introspection. In Commentary on the Ornament of the Sutras is says:

Mindfulness and introspection make it very well-directed, for one prevents the mind from scattering away from its object, and the second is fully aware of the mind scattering away. [23]

When mindfulness deteriorates and you forget the meditation object, there is distraction and you lose the object immediately. Therefore, mindfulness that does not forget the object is the root.

This is how to fully direct the mind towards its meditation object: You visualize the object of observation as explained above. Then, once at least something appears, you should generate a forceful mode of apprehending that which is being apprehended with your awareness, uplift the mind and place it without newly analysing anything.
In the Compendium of All [Knowledge] mindfulness is said to have three features:

What is mindfulness? Non-forgetfulness of the mind with respect to a thing it is familiar with; its function is utter non-distraction.

A The object feature

The feature of the object: Since mindfulness does not arise with respect to a hitherto unfamiliar object it says: “a thing it is familiar with”. In this context, it is the appearance of the basis of observation having been ascertained before.

B The feature of the mode of apprehension

The feature of the mode of apprehension, “Non-forgetfulness of the mind” is the factor that the mind does not forget that object; in this context it does not forget the basis of observation. As for the manner in which [the mind] does not forget, it is not said to be the mere ability to remember your master teaching “The basis of observation is like this...” when others ask and when you are made to think about it. Rather, the mind tied to the object is immediately mindful of it and does not get distracted even in the slightest. If there is distraction, mindfulness is lost through the mere occurrence of that.

Hence, after you have placed the mind on the basis of observation, you should generate the thought: “That is how it is tied to the object” and then, without renewed conceptual thought, without interrupting the force of this very mind, sustain it continuously. That is the essential point about how mindfulness is applied.

C The feature of function

Not letting the mind get distracted from its object.

That being so, tying the mind to an object so as to tame it is taught through the analogy of taming an elephant. In [this] analogy, a wild elephant is tied to a very firm tree trunk or pillar with numerous solid ropes and if it follows the instructions of the elephant-tamer, [that] is [all the] better, if it does not, it is repeatedly punched into submission with a sharp hook and thus tamed. Likewise, the mind, resembling an untamed elephant, is also tied to a firm pillar - the meditation object explained earlier - with the rope of mindfulness, and if it cannot stay there, it is pierced with the hook of introspection and gradually brought under control. In Essence of the Middle Way it says:

The elephant of the mind going wrong
Is firmly tied with the rope of mindfulness
To the stable pillar of the object
And gradually controlled with the hook of intelligence. [25]
By means of the rope[s] of mindfulness and introspection, the elephant of the mind should be tied to that very tree trunk of the object.

How meditative stabilisation will become faulty without a firm mode of apprehension of the ascertaining consciousness

It is said that meditative stabilisation is accomplished in dependence on mindfulness and that - like a rope - mindfulness continuously ties the mind to the object. Therefore, the principal method for sustaining the accomplishment of meditative stabilisation is that of sustaining mindfulness. Yet mindfulness has a mode of apprehension with an aspect of ascertainment. So when you sustain meditative stabilization and place [the mind] without a firm mode of apprehension [on the part] of the ascertaining consciousness, you gain the clarity factor of mental limpidity, but the clarity factor of stark intensity of the ascertaining consciousness does not emerge. As a result, powerful mindfulness does not arise and since subtle laxity is not stopped either, the meditative stabilisation becomes faulty.

Even someone wishing to achieve calm abiding by placing the mind without thinking of anything must generate the power of mindfulness. Even someone who sustains mere non-conceptuality of mind without placing it on any other basis of observation such as a deity’s body, should remind himself “I will place the mind without thinking of any object whatsoever” and then prevent the mind from scattering and being distracted. Since non-distraction is also identical in meaning with mindfulness that does not forget the object, he does not deviate from the method of sustaining mindfulness. Therefore, someone meditating in this manner also applies the mindfulness that empowers the ascertaining consciousness.

Eliminating faulty approaches

Second: There is this kind of misconception that should be eliminated: “When the mind is roused as explained above, held tight and placed [on the object] non-conceptually, there is no laxity, but excitement predominates. So you see that you do not gain the capacity for a continuous stability factor. However, with your lofty awareness lowered, by loosening your tight grip [on it] a lot, you see the stability factor arising quickly. This is an excellent method.” With this in mind a lot of people also hold and expound: “Best meditation during best relaxation.”

However, this [position] does not differentiate between the occurrence of laxity and the occurrence of meditation. As explained earlier, faultless meditative stabilisation necessarily has two features and the stability factor of the non-conceptual mind by itself is not enough. If you think that “in such a case, when the mind has gone confused and there is darkness, this is laxity whereas, otherwise, it is faultless meditative stabilisation because there is the clarity factor of mental limpidity”, apparently, you do not distinguish between lethargy and laxity. These will be explained below.

Therefore, when your awareness, held overly tight, has been intensified, the clarity factor is present, but excitement predominates so that it is difficult for the stability factor to arise. On
the other hand, when you relax it a lot while sustaining [your meditation], the stability aspect is there, but laxity predominates so that intense clarity is absent. Yet it is difficult to stick to just the right amounts of tightness and relaxation, and therefore it is difficult for meditative stabilisation free from laxity and excitement to arise. Thinking of that, Chandragomin says:

When I make an effort, excitement arises,
Dullness arises, when I abandon it.
If through this it is hard to get even engagement
What shall I do with my confounded mind? [27]

And:

When I engage with effort, excitement arises;
Whenever I relax it, dullness arises.
If through this it is hard to find the middle,
What shall I do with my confounded mind? [-]

He is saying that when you hold [the mind] tight, thus making an effort, there is excitement. On the other hand, when you see that, relax the mind that tries hard to engage [in its object], and abandon the endeavour, the laxity of dullness within the mind arises. Therefore, it is difficult to find the middle [ground] free from the two extremes of laxity and excitement - an even engagement in which the mind abides evenly balanced. If he was thereby presenting relaxation as best, there would be no reason whatsoever for difficulties, and since he is saying that laxity arises from it, it would be inappropriate to practice meditative stabilisation that way.

D How to meditate balancing tightness and relaxation

As for the point where tightness and relaxation are balanced, having investigated this for yourself, you should be more relaxed than that level of awareness where you think “If I heighten it this much, excitement will surely arise”, and you should also place it above that level where you think “If I place it at this [low level], laxity will easily arise”.

E Presentation of sources for this

In the context of the first and second [stages of stabilizing the] mind, Noble Asanga also says:

That is to say when placement and thorough placement is performed,
there is a mental attention that holds [its object] tight as it engages in it. [28]

In Stages of Meditation I it is also explained that:

You should eliminate laxity and hold the object tightly. [29]

F The fault of not knowing how to apply mindfulness

If you sustain [your meditation] without knowing the above method for applying mindfulness, however much you meditate, only lots of faults will come out of it: great forgetfulness, your intelligence discriminating phenomena growing dull, and so forth.
The need to watch with introspection while holding the object with mindfulness

One may wonder: “Well then, is it appropriate to generate conceptual thought that watches whether or not the object is being held well while the mind is tied to the object through mindfulness?” In Stages of Meditation II it says that this is what needs to be done. Specifically, it is not that you first abandon meditative stabilisation and then watch in this way. Rather, from within your state of abidance in meditative stabilisation, you merely watch whether or not the mind is still remaining on the original object it was placed on earlier, and if not, whether it has become excited or lax. Once your [mind] is placed in meditative stabilisation, you should watch it now and then, neither at too short nor at too long intervals. If you do this when the force of the previous awareness is not yet exhausted, this will have the utility that the intensity of awareness that has arisen will last longer and that laxity and excitement are recognized quickly.

The need to sustain this [meditation] again and again with mindfulness, without forgetting the object

Sustaining the [meditation] like that, occasionally recalling the first object, is also necessary as a cause of powerful mindfulness operating continuously. That is why this method for sustaining mindfulness is set forth in the Shravaka Levels and why it says in Explanations on the Discrimination of the Middle and the Extremes:

As for the statement ‘Mindfulness consists in not forgetting the object’ - the instruction on making the mind abide is expressed by means of the mind.” [30]

The application of mindfulness is for the purpose of stopping [the mind] being distracted away from the object and forgetting it. Therefore, not forgetting the object consists in mentally expressing the object, attending to it again and again. It is like when, for instance, you are afraid that you might forget something you know. If you recall it again and again, you will hardly forget it.

The length of sessions

How it is taught in Stages of Meditation

Third: Now then, is there a specified measure for meditation sessions, [something saying] that the mind is tied to the object and placed for just this long? The major texts such as Shravaka Levels do not seem to uphold a clear length. However, [263] in Stages of Meditation III it says:

Like that, gradually, you should sit for 24 minutes135, one and a half hours136, 3 hours137 or as long as you can. [31]

Apparently, this was set forth in the context of the measure of sessions for special insight meditation when calm abiding has already been accomplished, but in the context of practicing calm abiding in the beginning it is evidently the same.

How it is difficult for beginners to cut through laxity and excitement if the sessions are long

In fact, if you recall the object every so often and watch every so often, the method for sustaining mindfulness and introspection as explained earlier is indeed faultless even for long
sessions. However, in most beginners forgetfulness arises if the sessions are long. They get distracted and wander off, and although laxity and excitement occur in the meantime, they do not identify them quickly but only recognize them after a long time. Alternatively, even if they do not forget their mindfulness, they easily fall under the power of laxity and excitement and do not identify them quickly. The former of those two [problems] impedes the arising of strong mindfulness whereas the latter impedes the arising of strong introspection, so that it is difficult to cut through laxity and excitement. Specifically, it is a lot worse to forget the meditation object, get distracted, and then fail to identify the occurrence of laxity and excitement than not to identify the occurrence of laxity and excitement quickly while still remembering the meditation object. Therefore, as the antidote that counteracts a deterioration of mindfulness upon distraction, the way of sustaining mindfulness explained above is very important.

C The need to proceed in accordance with one’s mental abilities and so forth

If the forgetfulness of getting distracted and wandering off is great and if the introspection that quickly identifies laxity and excitement is weak, short sessions are needed. On the other hand, if forgetfulness hardly arises and it seems that laxity and excitement can be recognised quickly, there is nothing wrong with slightly longer sessions either. With this intention it is said that the duration - 24 minutes and so on - is not specified. In brief, since it needs to be in accord with one’s mental abilities it says “as long as you can”.

Apart from that, {264} rest in meditative equipoise unless you suffer some temporary physical or mental harm. If you do, you should not persist in your meditation but rather eliminate the constitutional obstacles and then meditate. That is the thought of experts, so you should understand acting like that to be another factor for the length of sessions.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A3 What to do once the mind has been directed towards the object

A What to do when excitement or laxity occur
B What to do while free from laxity and excitement

The third one has two points: what to do when excitement or laxity occur, and what to do while free from laxity and excitement.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A3A What to do when excitement or laxity occur

1 Applying the antidote to non-identification of laxity and excitement
2 Applying the antidote to not endeavouring to abandon them even though they have been identified

The first one has two points: applying the antidote to non-identification of laxity and excitement, and applying the antidote to not endeavouring to abandon them even though they have been identified.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A3A-1 Applying the antidote to non-identification of laxity and excitement

A Settling the characteristics of laxity and excitement
B The means of generating introspection that realizes them at the time of meditation

The first one has two points: settling the characteristics of laxity and excitement and the means of generating introspection that realizes them at the time of meditation.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A3A-1A Settling the characteristics of laxity and excitement
1 Settling the characteristics of excitement
2 Settling the characteristics of laxity

A Presenting a source

First: Excitement is just as stated in the *Compendium of Abhidharma*:

> What is excitement? It is a very unpeaceful mind that pursues pleasant features and belongs to attachment. It has the function of disrupting calm abiding. \[32\]

B Its three features, object, aspect and function

It has three features. Its object is something attractive and pleasant. Its aspect is the mind being unpeaceful and scattering outward. Since it is part of attachment, it engages in its objects through the aspect of craving. Its function is to disrupt the mind abiding on its object.

C The manner in which excitement disrupts the mind abiding on its object

While the mind is tied to an object within, through the excitement of attachment to forms such as sounds the mind is drawn without control towards those objects and becomes distracted. It is just as stated in the *Praise of Confession*:

> Regardless of how you are focused on calm abiding, Your mind directed at something again and again, Is drawn away by the noose of the mental afflictions Without control, with the rope of attachment to objects. \[33\]

A Some people lump together laxity and dullness, which goes against the scriptures

(265) In many translations laxity is also rendered as discouragement. Some people consider a lethargy where the mind lacks lucid limpidity and abides without scattering to other objects to be laxity, which is incorrect, for it says in the *Middle Stages of Meditation* and in [the Sutra] *Unravelling the Thought* that laxity arises from lethargy. In the *Compendium of Abhidharma* laxity is indeed explained in the context of the secondary affliction distraction. However, as for the distraction explained there, virtue also arises [from it], so it is not necessarily afflictive. \[34\]

B How the identification of these two differs and a source for that

Consequently, in the *Compendium of Abhidharma* and in the commentary on the *Treasury*, lethargy refers to a heaviness, an unserviceability of body and mind that is part of delusion. With laxity, the mode of apprehension of the mind holding its object is slack and the object is not held clearly or tightly. Therefore, even though there is the factor of limpidity, when the mode of apprehending the object lacks clarity there is laxity. From the *Middle Stages of Meditation*:

> You should understand that at times when the mind does not see the meditation object clearly - like someone blind or someone entering darkness or someone closing his eyes - at those times there is laxity. \[34\]
In the other great texts I have not seen a clear take on the characteristics of laxity.

Moreover, the two are not the same, because in laxity there is also virtue in either virtue or neutrality whereas lethargy is only non-virtuous or neutral with respect to the obscurations, and part of delusion.

The need for two factors, the factors of mental clarity and tightness to eliminate laxity

In the great texts it says that in order to eliminate laxity you should uplift the mind, meditating on a joyful object such as a Buddha image and light. Thereby you prevent the object’s lack of clarity, which is like darkness having fallen within the mind, and stop the decline in the mind’s mode of apprehension. Then you need the two factors of clarity of the object and tightness of the mode of apprehension.

The need to ascertain laxity in accordance with the Stages of Meditation

Excitement is easy to recognize, but laxity is not clearly identified in the great texts which is why it is difficult to understand. Yet it is essential, because this is a major ground for mistaking meditative stabilisation to be faultless. Therefore, you should investigate and identify it well with mental subtlety based on your experience and in accordance with the statements in Stages of Meditation.

The method for generating introspection that realizes these during of meditation

1. The need to generate introspection that realizes whether or not laxity or excitement have arisen

Second: It is not enough to have a mere understanding of laxity and excitement. Rather, you need the ability to generate introspection that knows exactly whether or not laxity or excitement have arisen during meditation. In fact, not only do you need the ability to generate introspection that identifies laxity and excitement as soon as they arise and which is due to the gradual generation of powerful introspection. You also need the introspection that recognizes them when they have not actually arisen, when they are just about to arise, for in the latter two parts of Stages of Meditation it says:

If you notice laxity of the mind or a suspicion that it is lax... [35]

And:

If you notice excitement of the mind or a suspicion that it is excited...

As long as this kind of introspection has not arisen, although you decide that from this point till that point there was flawless meditation without laxity or excitement, this is not based upon anything, for even though laxity or excitement arise, you cannot ascertain them, given that powerful introspection has not arisen. In accordance with that, it also says in [Discrimination of] the Middle and the Extremes:

To realize laxity and excitement... [36]

- in order to realize laxity and excitement you need introspection.
Therefore, if the introspection that cannot fail to recognize laxity and excitement has not arisen, you may meditate for long and even while away years with subtle laxity and excitement but not sensing them as they occur.

3 The method for sustaining mindfulness is essential as a cause of introspection

Well then, how do you generate introspection? Its most essential cause is the method for sustaining mindfulness presented earlier. If you can generate continuous mindfulness in that manner, you will be able to stop forgetting the object and wandering off. Thereby you will counteract long-term insensitivity to the occurrence of laxity and excitement. Hence, you will recognize laxity and excitement easily. This is very clear when you look at it from the perspective of your own experience of the long time [it takes] to recognize laxity and excitement when mindfulness has deteriorated and the short time it takes when it has not. With this understanding Entering [Bodhisattva] Behaviour says:

Once mindfulness is there to stay at the
Gate of the mind in order to guard it,
At that point introspection will come...

The Explanatory Commentary on [Discrimination of] the Middle and the Extremes also presents mindfulness as the cause of introspection.

4 Watching continuously whether or not the mind scatters is the essential point of sustaining introspection

This one cause consists in observing the aspect of the deity’s body and so forth, that which is being apprehended, or on the aspect of the apprehender, such as the experience, mere awareness, or mere clarity and then, while applying mindfulness as explained earlier, hold the mind, watching continuously whether or not there is scattering. This should be held to be the essential point of sustaining introspection. In accordance with that, Engaging in [Bodhisattva] Behaviour also says:

Investigating again and again
The state of body and mind, in brief,
Just that alone is the characteristic
Of the guarding of introspection.

5 The need to differentiate well between the methods for sustaining mindfulness and introspection

By doing this, you therefore generate introspection that recognizes any laxity and excitement as soon as they are about to arise, and by means of applying mindfulness, the forgetfulness of [your mind] being distracted and wandering off is stopped so that you observe well. You need to distinguish them.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A3A-2 Applying the antidote to not endeavouring to abandon laxity and excitement although one has identified them

A The need to intend the application of the antidote
B How to actually apply it

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A3A-2A The need to intend the application of the antidote

Second: Through doing well on the method for sustaining mindfulness and introspection as explained earlier, strong mindfulness will arise so that even subtle laxity and introspection can
be recognized by means of introspection. Hence, there will be no fault of not identifying laxity and excitement. However, lack of endeavour for taking up [the task] by applying effort to stop the two as soon as they arise - non-application - is a great fault of meditative stabilisation. That is why you should cultivate the intention referred to as application with respect to the antidote or endeavour.

The actual manner of application

1. Identifying intention and how to stop laxity and excitement
2. Identifying the causes in dependence on which laxity and excitement arise

This [one] has two points: identifying intention and how to stop laxity and excitement, and identifying the causes in dependence on which laxity and excitement arise.

Identifying intention and how to stop laxity and excitement

A. Identifying intention

First: In the *Compendium of Abhidharma* it says:

> What is intention? It is the mind creating compositional factors, action of the mind that has the function of causing the mind to engage in virtuous, non-virtuous or neutral things.

That means the mental factor moving the mind and impelling it to something virtuous, non-virtuous or neutral, any of those three - like iron moving under the power of a magnet without control - is intention. Here you should therefore understand it as the intention that motivates the mind to abandon either laxity or excitement when they occur.

How to stop laxity and excitement

1. How to stop laxity
2. How to stop excitement

A. Counteracting it by attending to something joyful or the features of light and the like

Now, how do you stop laxity and excitement? A mind that is lax has withdrawn inward too much and lost its mode of apprehending the object. For that reason, it says in the first part of *Stages of Meditation* that you should attend to a cause for the mind to move outwards again, something joyful. In fact it should be something like the Buddha’s body rather than something joyful giving rise to mental afflictions. Alternatively, if you attend to the characteristics of light such as sunshine and clear away the laxity, this will immediately tighten your mode of apprehending the object and sustain it. At this point, do not meditate on a disenchanting object, because disillusionment is a cause for the mind to withdraw inward. When you examine any object you wish to examine with the wisdom of individual investigation and feel delighted, this also counteracts laxity. From the *Summary of Perfections*:

Becoming depressed uplift the mind through the Power of effort at special insight.
B How to counteract [laxity] by heightening the mind’s mode of apprehension

Now, as for [this] laxity or depression, (269) it is lax because the mode of apprehending the object has gone down, and it is depressed because it has withdrawn inwards too much. Therefore, it is counteracted by heightening the mode of apprehension and expanding the meditation object followed by delight. In Essence of the Middle Way it says:

> When depressed, expand [the mind] through Meditation on spacious objects.

And:

> When depressed, uplift it also

By seeing the value\(^{142}\) of joyous effort.  \[41\]

The most important antidote for stopping laxity is this: When you consider the positive qualities of the three jewels and bodhicitta as well as the positive qualities of the leisure you have gained and the like, it should be as effective for refreshing the awareness as cold water when it is splashed into the face of someone asleep. This depends on the experience you have gained through your analytical meditation of individual investigation on beneficial topics.

C The discrimination of light, purifying meditation objects, and the like specifically against the object being unclear as if darkness had fallen upon the mind

When you apply the antidote, meditation on light, to the causes that reinforce the development of laxity - lethargy, sleepiness and mental states with an aspect of darkness that induce those two - laxity which depends on them does not arise either and that which has already arisen is counteracted.

The Shravaka Levels also talk about having a break from this activity, taking to mind the characteristics of light and familiarizing oneself with them again and again, uplifting the mind with any of six [topics] - the three jewels, ethical discipline, giving, and the recollection of deities - or other purifying meditation objects, as well as reciting teachings that point out the disadvantages of lethargy and sleepiness, looking to the sides or at the moon and the stars, washing one’s face with water, and so forth.

D How to apply special corrective measures against subtle and gross laxity separately

Furthermore, if the mental laxity is very slight and does not occur more than once [in a while] you should tighten the mode of apprehension of the mind as you meditate. However, when intense laxity recurs again and again, (270) stop meditating, apply the antidotes as appropriate and [continue to] meditate as soon as laxity has been cleared away. If the object the mind is holding becomes unclear and an aspect, slight or intense, of something like darkness falling upon the mind emerges, as an antidote to that, take up the characteristics of lights such as a butter lamp, fire and sunshine. If you familiarize yourself with them again and again, a great limpidity of mind will arise.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A3A-2B1B-2 How to stop excitement

A The need generally to attend to something depressing as an antidote to excitement

When it comes to excitement, the mind runs after forms, sounds, and so forth due to attachment, so for that you should attend to something depressing, a cause for the mind to withdraw inward. However, as soon as the excitement has subsided because of that, you rest in equipoise. In Essence of the Middle Way it says:
Pacify excitement by
Attending, for instance, to impermanence

And:

You should withdraw the distracted mind
By seeing the faults of the signs of distraction.  

B How to apply special corrective measures against subtle and gross laxity separately

When intense or long lasting excitement occurs, it is effective to loosen the meditation for a while and meditate on something disillusionsing, whereas drawing in and placing the mind is not, because of its tendency to scatter. Once the excitement is not as significant [anymore], you should draw in the distracted [mind] and tie it to the object. In the Summary of Perfections it says:

Whenever your mind has got excited
Avert this by means of calm abiding.   

With an excited mind, you should not attend to inspiring or joyful objects, because they are causes of it being distracted outwards.

Second: The common causes of the two, laxity and excitement, are not guarding one’s sense doors, not eating the right amount, not putting effort into one’s practice without sleeping during the first and last parts of the night, and remaining without introspection.

B Causes of laxity

The causes of laxity are great sleepiness, excessive looseness in the mind’s holding its object, not balancing calm abiding and special insight but relying on calm abiding too much, the mind remaining as though in darkness, and not enjoying directing the mind towards the object.

C Causes of excitement

The causes of excitement are said to be little disillusionsment, the mind being excessively tight with respect to its object, not being used to making an effort, and the mind being distracted by thoughts of close ones and the like.

D If you do not put effort into abandoning even subtle laxity and excitement, you do not know how to accomplish pure meditative stabilisation

Therefore, you need to recognize, through introspection, even subtle aspects of laxity and excitement and stop them all entirely. If you give up, thinking “Although in the beginning, I cut through subtle excitement, distraction and the like, they were never cut off, so I shall not cut through them [any longer]” or if you think “Unless they are intense and come in excessively long chains, there is no need to cut through them, because they are brief and weak, so that no karma will be accumulated”, you do not know how to accomplish pure meditative stabilisation. That is because you depart from the conclusions by venerable Maitreya and others on how to accomplish meditative stabilisation.
When you merely have the factors of stability and limpidity, with that of clarity lacking intensity, there is no hope for meditative stabilisation. Therefore, summon your mind from distraction and excitement so that it is tied to the object within, and seek the stability factor. Whenever the stability factor has arisen, beware of laxity and bring forth intense clarity. You should accomplish faultless meditative stabilisation by alternating between those two. Do not trust mere limpidity lacking the factor of clarity endowed with the intensity of the mode of apprehension.

What to do at times without laxity or excitement

Since it is a mistake to apply antidotes although laxity and excitement have been cut off, you need to apply the antidote of that, the equanimity of natural composure.

Second: when even subtle laxity and excitement have been cut off as explained earlier and the mind enters into equanimity without the imbalance of either becoming lax or excited through the meditation, at that time it would be a mistake if you applied [antidotes] or endeavoured, so you should cultivate equanimity as the antidote to that. (272) This is how your meditation becomes faulty through application and endeavour: by bringing the mind back inward and uplifting it whenever it is lax, you grow confident that laxity and excitement do not arise in every session. At that stage, it would be a mistake greatly to beware of laxity or excitement. If you did, your mind would become distracted, so you need to know how to loosen up. That is to say loosen the endeavour rather than let go off[?] the intensity of your mode of apprehension.

That is [what you do] from [the time] you are past the peak of laxity and excitement.

Therefore, this cultivation of equanimity is not performed whenever laxity or excitement do not occur, but from the time you are past the peak of laxity and excitement, because as long as you have not passed the peak for laxity and excitement, there is no equanimity.

How to identify that very equanimity

Well then, what is this equanimity? Among the three types of equanimity - equanimity towards natural feelings, immeasurable equanimity and equanimity of application - it is the last one. Its entity is just as explained in the Shravaka Levels: it is the mind in equipoise upon its object from the class of calm abiding or special insight, settling into its natural state, operating spontaneously by itself, and achieving serviceability. When you have achieved such equanimity, you should fully actualize it while cultivating meditative stabilisation, without strong endeavour as long as laxity and excitement do not arise.

Presenting a source for these explanations on how to generate faultless meditative stabilisation

This is in accordance with what is set forth in [Discriminating between] the Middle and the Extremes:

On that basis, the serviceability
[Of one’s mind] attains all goals.
It springs from the causes relied upon:
The eight applications removing five faults -
Laziness, forgetfulness
Of the instructions, excitement and laxity
Non-application and application,
These are asserted to be the five faults.
The base and what is based on it,
The cause and the effect of it\[143\],
Not forgetting the object observed,
Realizing excitement and laxity
Application to remove them,
{273} Resting naturally when they are calmed.  \[44\]

5 Explaining the meaning of the scriptural passage in detail

Here “on that basis” is on the basis of mustering up joyous effort in order to eliminate unfavourable conditions. From that the meditative stabilisation of mental servicibility arises. Furthermore, since it is the footing or basis of miraculous powers that bring about all goals such as clairvoyance, it achieves those goals. Such meditative stabilisation arises from the cause of giving up the five faults and relying on the eight applications. The five faults are as follows. At the time of preparation, laziness is a fault, because you will not apply yourself to meditative stabilisation. When you put effort into meditative stabilisation, forgetting the instructions is a fault, for, if you forget the object, there will be no meditative equipoise of the mind on the object. When it is in meditative equipoise, laxity and excitement are faults, because they cause mental servicibility to be lacking. When laxity or excitement occurs, it is a fault not to endeavour, for by that these two will not be pacified. When there is no more laxity and excitement, the intention to apply remedies is a fault. In Stages of Meditation it says that if you count laxity and excitement as one, they are five, whereas if you divide them up, they are six.

Among the applications for abandoning them, their eight antidotes, laziness has four. They are faith, aspiration, endeavour, and pliancy. Then, the antidotes to forgetfulness, laxity and excitement, non-application, and application are mindfulness, introspection, the intention to apply antidotes and the equanimity of resting naturally, respectively. They have already been explained above.

6 How this manner of sustaining [meditative stabilisation] is common to all sutra and mantra instructions

This is common to all the instructions on how to sustain the mind in single-pointed meditative stabilisation freed from laxity and excitement by means of mindfulness and introspection. Therefore, you should not hold it to be a specific detail of the Lakshanayana\[145\] which, however, is unncessary in mantra, \{274\}because it is also taught in many highest yoga tantras.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2B The stages of mental abiding that arise in dependence on it
1 The actual stages of mental abiding that arise
2 The method for accomplishing them by means of the six powers
3 How they involve the four types of attention

The second one has three points: The actual stages of mental abiding that arise, the method for accomplishing them by means of the six powers, and how they involve four types of attention.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2B1 The actual stages of mental abiding that arise
The first one has nine [points]:

[A] Placing the mind on such and such consists in gathering the mind from all external objects and directing it towards the object within. In Ornament of the Sutras it says:

Having directed the mind towards the object,\textsuperscript{146} \[45]\n
[B] Continuous placement: The directed mind is continuously placed on the object over a period of time without it being distracted to anything else.

Continuously don’t let it get distracted.

[C] Patchy placement: If you get distracted due to forgetfulness so that you are distracted outwards, you realize it and tie [your mind] to its object again.

Realizing distraction quickly,
You should patch it up again.

[D] Close placement is explained as follows in the Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom: The mind, while extensive by nature, is gathered again and again and thus refined, so that placement gets better and better. This accords with the statement:

Intelligent people should more and more\textsuperscript{146}/The sensible should get better and better
Gather inwardly their minds [/at gathering the mind within].

[E] Taming: Having reflected on the positive qualities of meditative stabilisation, you rejoice in it.

Then, since you see the positive qualities,
The mind is tamed in stabilisation\textsuperscript{147}.

[F] Pacification: You view distraction as a fault and pacify dislike for meditative stabilisation.

Seeing distraction as a fault
Pacify dislike for it.

[G] Complete pacification: completely pacifying occurrences of attachment, unhappiness, lethargy, sleepiness and so forth.
Attachment, unhappiness, and the like
Should be pacified as they arise.


Then, by means of restraint and effort,
{275} Along with actual application,
You get it to come about naturally.

[I] Even placement: in the Stages of Meditation this is said to be the equanimity when the mind has become even. In the Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom it is said to be spontaneous, natural engagement and the attainment of control due to the habit of unifying the mental continuum. In accordance with that it also says [in Ornament of the Sutras]:

Since it's habitual, there's non-application. [46]

The names of these nine mental states are as quoted in the first part of the Stages of Meditation and elsewhere:

This path of calm abiding is explained in scriptures such as the Perfection of Wisdom.

Second: The six powers are those of hearing, thinking, mindfulness, introspection, joyous effort and thorough acquaintance.

Through the power of hearing, the mental state of placement is accomplished, for, it merely consists in first tying [the mind] to the object, following instructions you have heard from someone on how to place the mind on an object. It is not something that has become familiar through your own repeated reflections.

Through the power of thinking, the mental state of continuous placement is accomplished, for, you keep thinking about the continuation of that first tie to the object and sustain it. From that you will initially achieve the capacity for a somewhat connected continuity.

Through the power of mindfulness, the two mental states of patchy placement and close placement are accomplished, for, when the mind gets distracted from the object, you are
mindful of the earlier object and gather the mind inwards. Generating the power of your mindfulness from the start, you do not allow any distraction.

4 The power of introspection

Through the power of introspection, the two mental states of a taming and a pacification are accomplished, for, through recognizing, with introspection, the disadvantages of scattering in discursive thought and among the signs of secondary afflictions, and through viewing them as faults, you do not allow the mind to scatter in those two [sources of distraction].

5 Joyous effort

Through the power of joyous effort, you accomplish the two mental states of complete pacification and making single-pointed, for you abandon even subtle occurrences of discursive thought and secondary afflictions with endeavour, thereby not responding to them. Because you do so, laxity, excitement, and so forth cannot obstruct your meditative stabilisation and meditative stabilisation that arises continuously is accomplished.

6 The power of thorough acquaintance

Through the power of thorough acquaintance, you accomplish the mental state of even placement, for through the power of intense familiarization with the previous ones, meditative stabilisation that operates naturally and effortlessly arises.

These points accord with the intended meaning of the Shravaka Levels, so you should not rely on any other explanations.

Now, when you have attained the ninth mental state, it is like in the following analogy. If you are very used to reciting a text or something like that, then whenever the motivation to recite it first arises and you recite it, even though your mind is distracted by something else in the meantime, the recitation itself continues effortlessly and without interruption. Likewise, when you have placed your mind in equipoise once through mindfulness of having initially directed it towards the object, even though mindfulness and introspection are not applied continuously, you become capable of entering meditative stabilisation continuously over a long period without being interrupted by scattering. When mindfulness and introspection are continuous, there is no need for the endeavour of application, and that is said to be without application or endeavour.

For that to arise, long-lasting meditative stabilisation that cannot be obstructed by unfavourable conditions such as laxity and excitement has to arise first through mindfulness and introspection applied with endeavour one at a time. That is the eighth mental state. That and the ninth [state] are the same in that conditions unfavourable to meditative stabilisation such as laxity and excitement cannot disrupt them. Yet, since it is necessary here to apply mindfulness and introspection uninterruptedly, it is said to be connected with application or endeavour.
For that to arise, it is necessary to stop even subtle laxity, excitement, and so forth as soon as they arise without responding to them. Therefore, the seventh mental state is necessary. For that to arise there is a need for powerful introspection watching that there is no scattering towards conceptual thought and secondary afflictions, distraction by them having been understood to be a disadvantage. Therefore, you need the fifth and sixth mental states, because those two are accomplished by introspection that has become powerful. For something like that to arise, however, there is a need for mindfulness that immediately remembers the meditation object even if the mind has been distracted from it, and [there is a need for] mindfulness that does not allow any distraction from the object in the first place. Therefore, the third and fourth mental state are necessary, because those two are accomplished by the two [types of] mindfulness. For those to arise, however, it is necessary, first of all, to tie the mind to the object and not to be distracted while it is tied to it. Therefore, the first and second mental states arise first.

The summarized meaning of those [points]

Thus, to summarize, you should first follow the instructions you have heard and correctly act upon the method for placing the mind in equipoise. Then repeatedly think about that manner of placement and sustain its continuity by way of the ability to piece short periods together. Then, if mindfulness deteriorates and you get distracted, you should gather the mind quickly and quickly be mindful of having forgotten the object. Then, you should generate even stronger mindfulness and generate a power of mindfulness where you do not get distracted from the meditation object in the first place. By accomplishing powerful mindfulness and by seeing the fault of laxity, excitement and so forth where your mind gets distracted from the object to something else, you should generate intense introspection to watch [over it]. Then you should generate strong endeavour so that, when there is even distraction through subtle forgetfulness, it is recognized immediately and cut short, and once it has been cut short the periods without obstruction by unfavourable conditions are lengthened. (278) Once that has arisen, with effort, having perfected the habit through familiarization, you accomplish the ninth state of the mind going into meditative stabilisation without any exertion. In fact, before, when the ninth mental state has not yet been achieved, the yogi needs endeavour to place the mind in meditative stabilisation. But when the ninth mental state has been attained, even though you do not endeavour to place the mind in meditative equipoise deliberately, it naturally goes into meditative stabilisation.

If despite your achievement of the ninth mental state, which is like that, you have not achieved pliancy, you cannot assert to have achieved calm abiding, either, let alone special insight. This is explained below.

How they involve the four types of attention

A The actual [types]

The Shravaka Levels explain that the nine mental abidings involve four types of attention. Explained in accordance with that, there is tight engagement at the time of the first and second mental states, because [the mind] needs to be tightened with effort. Then, during five mental states laxity and excitement interrupt you and you cannot sustain long meditation sessions, so at that time there is interrupted attention. Then, in the eighth mental state laxity and excitement cannot cause interruptions so that you can sustain meditation sessions for long. Therefore, at that time, there is uninterrupted engagement. Then, in the ninth mental
state there is no interruption and it is not necessary to rely on constant endeavour, so you settle into the attention of effortless engagement.

B Setting out a doubt about that

Well, there is interrupted engagement at the time of the first and second mental state, and there is also a need to tighten [the mind] at the time of the five intermediate mental states. Why is it that the first and second are not said have interrupted attention and that the five in between are not said to have tight engagement?

C The response to that

In the first and second mental state, the mind both goes and does not go into meditative stabilisation, however, the latter for much longer. With the five intermediate ones, abiding in meditative stabilisation is far longer. Therefore, the term interruption of meditative stabilisation has been applied to them and not to the former. {279} That is why although the two [sets] are indeed the same in having tight engagement, the presence and absence of interruptions and engagement in the course of it is not the same. Therefore, the five intermediate minds are not posited as attentions that have tight engagement.

D The need continuously to rely on joyous effort along those lines

In the Summary of Perfections it says:

Through uninterrupted yoga strive\(^1\)
To bring about\(^2\) stable concentration.
If you rest again and again,
You will not get fire through friction.
The method of yoga is like that:
Don’t give up till you gain the distinction. \([47]\)

You should accomplish it in accordance with that statement.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C The measure of having achieved calm abiding

  1 Indication of the dividing line between having accomplished it or not
  2 General indication of how to tread the path in reliance on calm abiding
  3 Indication of how to tread a worldly path in particular

The third one has three points: indication of the dividing line between having accomplished it or not, general indication of how to tread the path in reliance on calm abiding and indication of how to tread a worldly path in particular.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C1 Indication of the dividing line between having accomplished it or not

  A Presenting the actual point
  B The signs of having [gained] attention along with a clarification of doubts

The first one has two points: presenting of the actual point and the signs of having [gained] attention along with a clarification of doubts.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C1A Presenting the actual point
The first one has two points: indicating whether or not calm abiding has been achieved from the point of view of whether or not pliancy has been completely achieved and indicating the method by which calm abiding is accomplished once pliancy has been achieved.

First: When you can sustain the ninth mental state free from subtle laxity and excitement throughout long meditation sessions as has been explained earlier, and when you attain meditative stabilisation that operates spontaneously independent of the exertion of applying mindfulness and introspection continuously, has calm abiding been achieved or not?

B The response to that

When meditative stabilisation has been attained, there is a twofold [division] - pliancy having been attained or not. If pliancy has not been attained, it is something concordant with calm abiding rather than actual calm abiding.

C The source

In [the Sutra] Unravelling the Intent it says:

'Bhagavat, when the Bodhisattva directs his mental attention inwards, with his mind observing his mind, as long as physical and mental pliancy have not been attained, what is that mental attention called?’ – {280} ‘Maitreya, it is not calm abiding, but should be referred to as aspiration that is concordant with calm abiding and concomitant with it’. [48]

In Ornament of the Sutras, it also says:

Out of habit there’s non-application.  
Then his body and mind attain,  
Extreme, overwhelming pliancy and  
He is said to have mental attention. [49]

In this context “mental attention” is calm abiding.

In the middle Stages of Meditation it also clearly says:

When body and mind of the one who has thus made a habit of calm abiding become extremely pliable and [when] his mind becomes fully controlled with regard to objects observed at will – he should know that calm abiding has then been accomplished. [50]

And from the Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom:
Here, the Bodhisattva dwelling alone in seclusion should mentally attend to his intended object. Having abandoned the mind’s discourse, he should attend many times to the mind itself as it appears. As long as physical and mental pliancy have not arisen, it is a mental attention concordant with calm abiding, whereas once they have arisen, it is calm abiding.  

**D**  Although the meditative stabilisation before the attainment of pliancy belongs to the desire [realm] level, it is not a level of meditative equipoise in the desire [realm]  

Now, what level does meditative stabilisation belong to? It belongs to the desire [realm] level. Although it has such single-pointedness of mind, it is a level of non-equipoise and it is not posited as a so-called level of equipoise. The Actual Basis of the Levels explains this to be for the reason that it is not accomplished through non-regret, supreme bliss and pliancy.  

**E**  That meditative stabilisation is the meditative stabilisation of a single-pointed mind of [the] desire [realm]  

Thus, when pliancy has not been attained, the superficial meditative stabilisation that does not rely on constant mindfulness, where the mind goes into non-conceptuality of its own accord, and which [281] can apparently also be combined with any physical activity: moving, walking, lying and sitting, is still called single-pointed mind of the desire realm. It is not actual calm abiding.  

**2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C1A-2**  Indication of how calm abiding is achieved once pliancy has been fully accomplished  

**A**  Explanation of how pliancy is identified and generated  

**B**  Actual indication of how - once it has been fully accomplished - calm abiding is achieved  

**2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C1A-2A**  Explanation of how pliancy is identified and generated  

**1**  Identification  

Well then, what is the method for attaining pliancy? Once it has been attained, what is the method for proceeding to calm abiding? This is what the Compendium of Abhidharma says with respect to pliancy:  

What is pliancy? It is that serviceability of body and mind due to cutting through the continuity of taking on bad physical and mental states. Its function is to eliminate all obscurations.  

**[52]**  

**2**  The meaning of the scriptural passage from Compendium of Abhidharma  

That bad physical and mental states are taken on [implies] that body and mind are unfit to be employed for any virtuous activity at will. Its antidote, physical and mental pliancy, [implies] an extreme serviceability with respect to body and mind being employed for virtuous activities. It is due to freedom from taking on bad states, both physical and mental. Specifically, if you endeavour to give up mental afflictions and bad physical states that are within the class of mental afflictions and obstruct the joy of abandoning mental afflictions, you will get rid of such unserviceability as heaviness of the body and then, its lightness is the serviceability of the body.  

Likewise, if you endeavour to abandon mental afflictions and bad mental states that are within the class of mental afflictions and obstruct the joy of abandoning mental
afflictions, you will pass beyond the unfitness of the mind for being directed towards the object and engaging [in it] with delight. Then the mind engaging in its object unobstructedly is a serviceable mind.

3 Sources for that

In accordance with that Acharya Sthiramati says:

In this regard, serviceability of the body is that from which whatever lightness arises for the activities of the body itself. Serviceability of the mind is another phenomenon arisen from mind that is the cause of the mind becoming fresh and happy after entering into pure attention. When you are endowed with it, you engage in objects unobstructedly, which is why it is called serviceability of the mind.

In brief, although you want to endeavour to abandon the mental afflictions, the unserviceability of body and mind, through diffidence, [make this] as difficult to do as if you were engaging in some awful job you have. Once pliancy has been achieved, this stops and body and mind become extremely easy to use. In the Shravaka Levels it says that such perfectly complete serviceability of body and mind arises in small portions right from the beginning when you obtain meditative stabilisation. So, as it increases, it eventually turns into pliant, single-pointed calm abiding. In fact, at first it is subtle and therefore hard to recognize, but later on it becomes easy to recognize.

4 How, among the two types of pliancy, mental pliancy is the first one to arise

An early sign of such pliancy about to arise complete with all its characteristics and easy to appreciate, is a feeling of heaviness at the top of the head, experienced by the person striving to cultivate meditative stabilisation. It is not an uncomfortable heaviness. As soon as it arises, you are free from bad mental states that obstruct the joy of abandoning mental afflictions, and its antidote, pliancy, arises first. In the Shravaka Levels it says:

As an early sign that gross single-pointedness of mind which is easy to appreciate as well as pliancy of mind and body will arise before long, the top of his head will seem heavy. In fact, this symptom is not harmful. As soon as it arises, any bad mental states within the class of the mental afflictions that obstruct the joy of abandonment are abandoned and their antidotes, serviceability of mind and mental pliancy, also arise.

5 How physical pliancy arises from that

Then, in dependence on the force of that pliancy of mental serviceability having arisen, the energies that cause physical pliancy to arise circulate within the body. When those energies pass through your body parts and pervade them, you are freed from bad physical states, and the antidote to taking on bad states, physical pliancy, arises. Furthermore, after they have spread throughout the body, [the latter] seems as though filled with the power of serviceable energy. In the Shravaka Levels it says:
Through that having arisen, the energies of the great elements conducive to the arising of physical pliancy circulate through the body. While they circulate, one is freed from any bad physical states within the class of the mental afflictions that obstruct the joy of abandonment. Their antidote, physical pliancy, spreads throughout the body so that [the latter] seems as though full [of it].

In this regard, physical pliancy is an extremely pleasant sensation within the body, it is not a mental factor. Master Sthiramati says:

If a distinctive physical sensation is conjoined with joy, you should recognize it as physical pliancy, for in the sutras it says that when the mind is joyful, the body becomes pliant.

Thus, when physical pliancy first arises, through the force of the energies, a great experience of bliss arises within the body in dependence on which a very exquisite experience of joyful bliss is also produced within the mind.

Then, the force of that pliancy having arisen for the first time gradually diminishes. In fact, it is not that pliancy has been exhausted and goes away. However, that gross [pliancy] has moved the mind excessively, so when it neutralizes, unshakable pliancy that is delicate like a shadow and in accord with meditative stabilisation arises. When the joy has dissapeared, the mind remains firmly on its object, and calm abiding free from the restlessness of agitation caused by great joy is attained.

In the Shravaka Levels it says:

When that first arises, you are endowed with joy, mental ease, and supreme happiness, and even the object appears manifestly endowed with joy. Then, little by little, all the force of pliancy that first arises turns extremely subtle and the body becomes endowed with shadow-like pliancy. The mind abandons all the joy again, and through calm abiding, engages in the object completely firm and utterly peaceful in aspect.

When that happens, through the attainment of the attention and the calm abiding included in the preparatory stage of the first concentration, the lesser attention of meditative equipoise is attained. This is explained in the Shravaka Levels.
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Calm Abiding

The second one has two points: explaining the actual signs of being endowed with attention and how to clear up doubts [about this].

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C1B-1 The actual signs of being endowed with attention

A How this is set forth in the Shravaka Levels

First: The signs by which to recognize that oneself or others have attained attention are set forth in the Shravaka Levels. Through attaining that, a set of four is attained in small measure: a mind belonging to the form realm, physical [pliancy], mental pliancy, and single-pointedness. Also, one is enabled to purify mental afflictions by means of calm and coarse paths or paths associated with aspects of the [four noble] truths, physical and mental pliancy arise very quickly when the mind is equipoised inwardly, for the most part, the five hindrances, desire for sensual pleasure, sleepiness and so forth do not occur, and when one rises from equipoise one is [still] imbued with some physical and mental pliancy.

B Once this attention has been attained, it is easy for calm abiding to becomes pure

Once attention with these signs is attained, [285] it is easy for the path of calm abiding to become pure[157]. After establishing meditative equipoise of the mind in single-pointed calm abiding, physical and mental pliancy can quickly be induced so that pliancy increases. The Shravaka Levels explain that the more pliancy increases the more calm abiding also increases, whereby they mutually increase each other. In brief, when the mind is serviceable the energies become serviceable. At that time extraordinary physical pliancy occurs and upon its occurrence special meditative stabilisation arises. Through that, again, an extraordinary serviceability of energies is accomplished whereby physical and mental pliancy is induced.

C Statements from the Shravaka Levels on how other positive qualities also arise

Furthermore, in the Shravaka Levels it is explained that at the time the mind is first placed single-pointedly, it is placed without mindfulness of or attention to anything else whatsoever:

In order not to turn toward all the signs and prevent distraction, you prevent mindfulness and attention [to them] from the beginning by means of firm placement. [58]

When you have familiarized yourself with that, the Shravaka Levels go on to say:

Be sure to focus on single-pointedness itself and direct your mind like this by the stages of focusing on calm abiding within, which are: the mental continuum and the entire continuity of mind becoming free from signs, free from discursive thought, and absolutely calm. When you have attained the mental state of calm abiding in that manner, if signs arise due to the faults of forgetfulness and unfamiliarity, or if appearances arise due to secondary mental afflictions, if holes start showing, if you conceptualize, you should not be mindful of such occurrences nor attend to them as a result of seeing their disadvantages earlier. Through your not minding them and not attending to them in this manner those objects completely disintergrate, and [286] when they
have been completely cleared away, the mind is placed on the very absence of appearances. “Sir, this object is subtle and hard to comprehend, therefore aspire and strive in order to comprehend it.

That is how meditative stabilisation is said to arise.

D  Explaining the meaning of that

Up to “in that manner”\textsuperscript{158} it is being shown how the three, absence of signs and so forth, arise gradually from sustaining [meditation] as before.

Then, up to “you should not [be mindful of such occurrences]” it is being explained that whenever signs and so forth [do] appear in the mind even though calm abiding has been accomplished - because there is no great familiarity with it and so forth - you should remember the disadvantages of the mind coming under the influence of those, not pursue them and place [the mind] without thinking of anything.

Then, the section up to “absence of appearance”\textsuperscript{159} explains that through familiarizing oneself in that way, whichever of the three, marks and so forth, arises, through the force of familiarity with not thinking of anything at all, it will subside by itself independently of deliberately directing the mind. Then you abide in the non-appearance of the three and you are not carried away by them as is being explained. The remainder [of the passage] points out that this calm abiding is subtle and that it is difficult to comprehend the explanation of it.

E  How the mind is not directed at signs

In this regard, the signs are explained as 10 signs: of the five [sense] objects, forms and so forth, of the three poisons, and of male and female. As for the manner in which they disappear, first a multiplicity of signs of forms and so forth appear and as soon as they appear, they subside by themselves and are purified. Finally, when you settle in meditative equipoise, the signs of forms, sounds and so forth do not appear, only the aspects of mind - knowing, clarity and vibrant happiness do.

F  How all conceptual thoughts also subside by themselves

Then, this is how conceptual thoughts disappear: Since you have settled as before without being mindful of them and without attending to them, conceptual thoughts that have arisen, like bubbles emerging from water, cannot proliferate greatly or conjoin, (287) and subside by themselves. Then, through your sustaining [the meditation] as [explained] before, awareness of the experience and the appearance of bliss, without being stopped deliberately, unable to bear the spell, subside again by themselves, like peeling bark, and get purified by themselves as soon as they arise. Bliss and awareness of the experience become more subtle.

G  Differences between that and the time after meditative equipoise

At that time, when equipoise has been established, there are no appearances such as that of one’s own body, and there is a sense as if the mind has become indivisible with from space. As one arises [from meditation], it feels as if one’s body had suddenly appeared. Afterwards, even afflictive conceptual thoughts of anger and the like that arise are also different from before or originally: weak and incapable of conjoining over long periods of time.
H Experiences of great mental clarity and the like also occur.

These periods are periods of what is called “complete pacification”. The experience of clarity is great and you feel you can count the minute particles of pillars and walls of a house. Due to the intense stability factor, sleep like at the time before achieving meditative stabilisation does not even come during the hours of sleep; it feels as if mixed with meditative stabilisation and you have many pure dream appearances and the like.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C1B-2 Eliminating a doubt

A A doubt

When the kind of meditative stabilisation explained above is achieved, which of the five paths is the context to place it in?

B Its elimination

If it is the meditative stabilisation explained above that is cultivated after the view of selflessness has been unmistakenly ascertained and [the mind] has been placed within [that] view, it can be put in the context of the path of liberation of ordinary beings. However, if it is a meditation cultivated otherwise, the Shravaka Levels says that even worldly paths dependent on the view with the coarse and subtle aspects that accomplish the actual level of the first meditative stabilisation are accomplished in dependence on this meditative stabilisation. Therefore, non-Buddhist sages (288) who free themselves from attachment by means of worldly paths up to that of nothingness and those below also need to progress to higher paths in dependence on it. So it is a meditative stabilisation common to both non-Buddhists and Buddhists.

C If it is also conjoined with any of the three principal aspects of the path, it becomes a path of liberation and so on

Furthermore, if it is conjoined with detachment from cyclic existence due to the view correctly realizing selflessness and a realization of the faults of existence, and [if it is conjoined] with the thought of renunciation that strives for liberation, it becomes a path of liberation. If it is conjoined with bodhicitta, it even becomes a Mahayana path. Likewise, for example, if the generosity of giving a pinch of food to an animal and the observance of any one ethical discipline is conjoined with those intentions, they will become accumulations of the paths of liberation and omniscience, respectively.

However, here, what is being analyzed is not whether or not it becomes a path of liberation and omniscience by way of conjunction with other paths. Rather, what is being analyzed is what the path becomes through the own entity of this meditative stabilisation.

D Therefore, the need to differentiate with regard to happiness, clarity and non-conceptuality whether or not [a given meditation] is an emptiness meditation

That is why, in meditations without mindfulness and mental activity, the blissful, clear non-conceptuality termed “unfabricated by the mind” and “without grasping” is of two [types]: that which is and that which is not an emptiness meditation with equipoise established on the meaning of suchness. Therefore, it is extremely important to differentiate them well, for there is much ground for mistaking that which is not a realization of suchness as [its] realization. If you do not differentiate them as explained earlier, you will even take the meditative stabilisation which is common to this Dharma and that of others to be the main point of completion stage highest yoga tantra, so you should investigate this in detail.
General indication of how to progress along the path in dependence on calm abiding

A How it is of great importance to cultivate special insight in dependence on it

Second: Should someone who has thus achieved attention, the non-conceptual meditative stabilisation explained above, sustain just that non-conceptuality characterized by clarity, non-conceptuality, and so forth?

Such meditative stabilisation having been generated in the mental continuum is for the sake of generating special insight that destroys the [mental] afflictions. Therefore, if special insight does not arise in dependence on it, however much you familiarise yourself meditative stabilisation, you will not even be able to abandon the mental afflictions of the desire realm, not to mention the mental afflictions as a whole. For that reason it is necessary to cultivate special insight.

B How there are two special insights to be cultivated

In this regard there are two, the special insights that progresses along mundane paths abandoning manifest afflictions, and the special insight that progresses along supramundane paths abandoning the seeds of afflictions from the root. The former is a meditation with the coarse and peaceful aspects of viewing lower levels as coarser and higher ones as more peaceful, and the latter is a view meditation with the sixteen aspects, impermanence and so forth, regarding the four truths. They are set out in the Shravaka Levels, the principal one being the view that realizes the selflessness of persons.

C How calm abiding constitutes the basis for the progress of all non-Buddhist and Buddhist yogis on the path

That being so, anyone, non-Buddhists who abandon manifest afflictions by cultivating the path with coarse and peaceful aspects, and Buddhists who abandon afflictions from their root by meditating on the meaning of selflessness, require the calm abiding explained above as the basis for abandoning afflictions of both non-Buddhist and Buddhist yogis. Not only that - any Mahayana or Hinayana yogi also needs to accomplish that meditative stabilisation, and as for Mahayana practitioners, again, all Mantrayana and Paramitayana yogis need to accomplish that calm abiding. Therefore, this calm abiding is crucial as the basis of progress on the paths of all yogis.

D How it is unacceptable for us Buddhists not to have special insight realizing selflessness

For Buddhists it is not unacceptable to lack the former of those two special insights, but the latter special insight that realizes selflessness is a factor whose lack is unacceptable. In fact, if you attain the calm abiding explained above which is included in the level of preparation for the first concentration, you can attain the liberation that is freedom from all bondage of cyclic existence by cultivating special insight in dependence on it - even without attaining the calm abiding of higher concentrations or formlessness. On the other hand, if you do not realize the very essence of selflessness and fail to meditate on it, you will not free yourself from cyclic existence even if you abandon all manifest afflictions up to “complete nothingness” and thus attain the “peak of existence” by means of the calm abiding explained above and the mundane special insight dependent on it.

E A source for that

From Praise of the Praiseworthy:
Beings who fail to turn to your teachings,  
Who are blinded by delusions,  
Having gone to the peak of existence  
Attain existence and suffer again.  
Those who follow your teachings, without  
Attaining the basis of concentration  
Still avert existences,  
While being looked over by Mara.  

F Yogis of highest yoga tantra also need to progress along the path based on calm abiding

For that reason, yogis of highest yoga tantra also need to develop one kind of calm abiding even though they do not generate the special insight that observes the multiplicity of peaceful and coarse aspects and the calm abiding accomplished by means of it. In fact the point where it first arises is during the generation stage.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C3 Indication of how to progress on mundane paths in particular

A How features of two [kinds of] beginners are explained in the Shravaka Levels

Here the Shravaka Levels explains that from the ninth mental stage, you are a beginner with regard to attention as long as you have not achieved attention\(^{163}\), whereas one who has achieved attention and, out of a desire to purify mental afflictions, cultivates the attention that individually recognises the characteristics\(^{164}\) is a beginner with regard to purifying afflictions.

B The need to differentiate those two properly

\{291\} If this [point] explained in the Shravaka Levels is not ascertained properly, the false impression will arise that the lowest of the paths of concentration and formlessness is the preparatory stage of the first concentration, and that the first mind arising included in that preparatory stage is the individual recognition of characteristics\(^{165}\) is a beginner with regard to purifying afflictions.

C Establishing the validity of this [distinction]

It is inadmissible to hold this, because there is no way for the preparatory stage of the first concentration to arise like that without calm abiding having been attained, and if that preparatory stage has not been attained, calm abiding is not attained\(^{166}\). Also, since the individual recognition of characteristics is an analytical meditation, calm abiding that has not been attained before cannot be freshly accomplished by means of that meditation.

D The need for beginners to attain calm abiding out of the attention [included in] the preparatory stage of the first [concentration] before the attention individually recognising characteristics [included in] preparatory stage of the first concentration

Therefore, the first of six attentions of the preparatory stage is the beginning of cultivating the special insight included in the preparatory stage. However, it is not at the beginning of the mere first preparatory stage, for the calm abiding included in the preparatory stage must precede it. All the meditative stabilisations prior to the attainment of the meditative stabilisation included in the first preparatory stage are single-pointed minds of the desire realm\(^{167}\), which is also why, according to the great texts, those who attain calm abiding seem to be very few.
The way to free oneself from attachment to the desire realm by means of the six preparatory stage attentions is not written down here for fear of wordiness.
Explanation of how to train in special insight, the essence of wisdom

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2 How to train in special insight
   A Attending to the prerequisites of special insight
   B The subdivisions of special insight
   C How to cultivate special insight
   D The measure of having achieved special insight through cultivation

Second: How to train in special insight has four points: attending to the prerequisites of special insight, the subdivisions of special insight, how to cultivate special insight, and the measure of having achieved special insight through cultivation.

   2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A Attending to the prerequisites of special insight
      1 General presentation of how to attend to the prerequisites of special insight
      2 In particular how to settle the view

The first one has two points: general presentation of how to attend to the prerequisites of special insight and [292] in particular how to settle the view.

   2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A1 General presentation of how to attend to the prerequisites of special insight
      A Relying on holy beings
      B Seeking to hear the Dharma from them
      C Reflecting on it properly

First: The middle Stages of Meditation set out three prerequisites of special insight: relying on holy beings, seeking to hear the Dharma from them, and reflecting on it properly.

   2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A1A Relying on holy beings
      1 The need to hear and reflect on the scriptures
      2 The need to follow any of the great trail-blazers as appropriate
      3 [On the history of Madhyamaka]

   2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A1A-1 The need to hear and reflect on the scriptures

It is an indispensable causal prerequisite of special insight to develop the view realizing suchness by means of the wisdoms of hearing and reflecting, having heard the stainless texts in dependence on experts who unmistakenly know the essential points of the scriptures. This is because if you lack the view that has come to a decisive conclusion about the meaning of the mode of being, it will be impossible for the realization of special insight that realizes [things] as they are to arise.

   2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A1A-2 The need to follow any of the great trail-blazers as appropriate

For such a view [to arise], again, it is necessary to seek relying not on the interpretable meaning but relying on the definitive meaning. Therefore, you need to know the difference between interpretable and definitive meaning and internalize the definitive meaning of the scriptures. Again, with this, if you do not rely on a treatise by one of the great, valid, trail-blazing founders which elucidates the [Buddha’s] intentions, you will be like a blind person without a guide, going off into a dreadful direction. Therefore, you should rely on non-mistaken commentaries.

   2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A1A-3 [On the history of Madhyamaka]
      A The need to seek the view relying on Nagarjuna’s system
      B How the[various] ways of explaining Nagarjuna’s intended meaning emerged

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On whom should you rely? On Arya Nagarjuna, widely renowned on the three levels, whom the Bhagavan himself prophesied very clearly in numerous sutras and tantras as elucidating the essence of his teachings, the profound meaning free from all extremes of existence and non-existence. You should seek the view realizing emptiness relying on his texts.

How the [various] ways of explaining Nagarjuna’s intention emerged

1. Identification of the original Madhyamika
2. Examination of the designations used by earlier generations
3. The validity of explanations in accordance with that of Yeshe De on the authors of Madhyamika treatises and the stages by which the Madhyamika systems of Sautranta and Yogacara emerged
4. These terms are not suited to Master Chandrakirti
5. The validity of the terms Sva-tantra and Prasangika associated with scholars of the later propagation
6. Which of the masters we follow

Identification of the original Madhyamika

Since the great Madhyamikas such as the masters Buddhapalita, Bhavaviveka, Chandrakirti, Shantaraksita consider Aryadeva to be as valid as his master, both the father and his [spiritual] son are sources for the other Madhyamikas. Therefore, earlier generations called those two “Madhyamikas of the original texts” and the others “partisan Madhyamikas.”

Analysis of the terms applied by earlier generations

1. Terms applied from the point of view of how conventionalities are established
   - Some spiritual teachers of earlier generations said that there were two [kinds of] Madhyamikas termed from the point of view of how they posit conventionalities: those who assert that external objects conventionally exist, Sautranta-Madhyamikas, and those who assert that, conventionally, external objects do not exist, Yogacara-Madhyamikas.

2. Terms applied from the point of view of how the ultimate is asserted
   - From the point of view of how the ultimate is asserted two terms were applied as well: proponents of illusions established by a reasoning consciousness [are] those who assert that the collection of an object such as a sprout and its appearances lacking true existence is an ultimate truth, and proponents of thorough non-abiding [are] those who assert that the affirmative affirmative eliminative phenomenon which is an elimination of the elaborations with respect to appearances. The first of these were asserted to be masters such as Shantaraksita and Kamalashila. Some Indians also asserted the designations illusion-like and thoroughly non-dwelling.

3. How that designation to do with the way of asserting the ultimate is obscured
   - The great Translator [Lodan Sherab] says “Positing them as two [groups] from the point of view of how the ultimate is asserted is an obscured presentation generating amazement.”

The great Translator [Lodan Sherab] says “In the Madhyamika treatises by the noble father,[ Nagarjuna,] and [his spiritual] son,[ Aryadeva,] it is not made clear whether external objects exist or not. After them, the master Bhavaviveka refuted the system of mere knowledge, and established a system in which external objects conventionally exist. Then the master Shantaraksita made a different Madhyamika system based on Yogacara treatises teaching that external objects do not conventionally exist and that ultimately the mind is without inherent existence. [294] Thereby two kinds of Madhyamikas emerged. The former
were called Sautrantika-Madhyamikas, the latter Yogachara-Madhyamikas.” The great treatises expose history of clarification in accordance with that.

However, although Master Chandrakirti asserts that external objects conventionally exist, it is unsuitable to call him a Sautrantika, because he does not conform to other proponents of the tenet system. To assert that he accords with the Vaibhashika is also inadmissible.

The scholars of the later propagation of teachings in the land of snowy mountains created two designations for Madhyamikas, Svatantrika and Prasangika. That accords with Chandrakirti’s Clear Words.

Therefore, [Madhyamikas] are definite as two [groups], those who conventionally assert external objects and those who do not. When terms are applied from the point of view of how the view ascertaining emptiness is generated within the mental continuum, they are also definite as two [groups], Prasangika and Svatantrika.

Which of the masters to follow

A Indication that the earlier Kadampas’ quest for the view following Chandra[kirti] was in Jowo [Atisha]’s intention

Yet, following which of those masters do you seek the intentions of the Noble Father and his [spiritual] son? Following the great Jowo [Atisha] who made Master Chandrakirti’s system the main [Madhyamika] system, the earlier great lamas of these instructions also held to this system as the main one.

B How Je [Tsongkhapa] himself asserts the two systems, Buddhapalita’s and Chandra[kirti]’s, as the main ones and then Bhavaviveka’s as important

From the commentaries on Treatise on the Middle (Mulamadhyamakakarika), Master Chandra[kirti] saw that Buddhapalita had elucidated the noble one’s intentions completely. He based himself on that system, took a lot of good explanations also from Master Bhavaviveka, refuted those that seemed slightly incorrect, and elucidated the intention of the noble one.

C How these two masters are important with respect to explaining the profound meaning

Since the commentaries of these two [masters] are seen to be very outstanding with respect to explaining the texts of the noble father and son, the intentions of the noble father and son will be settled here following in the footsteps of the masters Buddhapalita and Chandra[kirti].

In particular how the view is settled

A Identification of afflicted ignorance
B Demonstration that it is the root of revolving in cyclic existence
C Seeking the view of selflessness with the desire to abandon the apprehension of a self

The second one has three points: identification of afflicted ignorance, demonstration that it is the root of revolving in cyclic existence, and seeking the view of selflessness with the desire to abandon the apprehension of a self.
1 Although attachment and the like are factors opposed to insight, they are not the main ones
2 Although in general, the mere factors opposed to insight are posited as ignorance, here it is the factors opposed to an insight into lack of true existence
3 Explanation of the two subtle conceptions of self as mental afflictions
4 What self nature that ignorance misconceives [and] how so
5 Detailed explanation of the conceptions of self

First: The antidotes to the other mental afflictions such as attachment taught by the Jina are partial antidotes, whereas the antidote to ignorance he taught becomes an antidote to all [of them]. Therefore, ignorance is the basis of all errors and faults. In Clear Words it says:

In the nine divisions of the buddhas’ teachings based on the two truths, 
Such as the sets of sutras proclaimed for the extensive conduct of worldly beings, 
The ones that were taught for the sake of removing attachment will not cause hatred to be exhausted, 
And those that were taught for the sake of removing hatred will not cause attachment to be exhausted, 
What was taught for the sake of exhausting pride will not overcome the other defilements. 
Therefore they are not so pervasive; all those speeches are not of [such] great meaning. 
Those that were taught for the sake of exhausting ignorance overtake all the mental afflictions 
That all the mental afflictions are thoroughly based on ignorance is what the jinas taught.”

That being so you must meditate on suchness as the antidote to ignorance. Moreover, unless you have identified ignorance, you will not know how to cultivate its antidote. Therefore it is extremely important to identify ignorance.

Ignorance (296) is the reverse side of knowledge, but knowledge, again, should not be taken as any [knowledge]. Rather, it is the wisdom knowing suchness which is selflessness. Its opposite is not suitable to be the mere absence of that wisdom or just something else. Therefore, it is its antagonist.

It is the superimposition of self and, more specifically, the two superimpositions of a self of phenomena and of persons. So both the apprehension of a self of phenomena and the apprehension of a self of persons are ignorance.

The manner of superimposition is by apprehending that phenomena exist by way of their own entity, by way of their own characteristics, or inherently. In this regard, it says in [the Sutra] Requested by Upali that phenomena are posited by the power of conception:
The various flowers that gladden the mind,  
The golden, resplendent, attractive mansions,  
Both completely lack a creator -  
Are posited by the power of conception.  
The world is imputed by the power of conception.  

And in the Sixty [Stanzas of] Reasoning [it] also [says]:

Since the perfect Buddha said  
The world had ignorance as a cause,  
Why would it be invalid to say  
That this world is [due to] conception.

The commentary on the meaning of this statement explains that the worlds are not established by way of their own entity, but are merely imputed by conception. Again, in the Four Hundred Verses it says:

If, in the absence of conceptions,  
Desire and so forth do not exist  
Who with intelligence would uphold  
Intrinsic realities and conceptions?

And in the commentary on this:

[Things] that exist only through the existence of conception and do not exist without conception, are without doubt definite as unestablished by way of their own entity, like a snake imputed on a rope.

This statement (297) explains that from the point of view of being imputated while not being established by way of their own entities, attachment and so forth resemble a snake imputed on a rope. [Yet] the latter is not the same as attachment and so forth in terms of whether they conventionally exist or not.

For those reasons, the manner of apprehending [things] as truly existent, the object of negation, is to apprehend them not as posited by the power of beginningless conceptions, but as established on objects[themselves] by way of their own entity. Its referent object is called “self” or “inherent nature“. The non-existence of this with a person as substratum is taught to be the selflessness of a person, and the non-existence of it with phenomena such as an eye and a nose as substratum is taught to be the selflessness of phenomena. Therefore, the
apprehension of that inherent nature existing in persons and phenomena is implicitly understood as the apprehension of the two selves.

2 The reason for differentiating the two apprehensions of a self in that manner

In the commentary on the Four Hundred Stanzas it says:

In this regard, the ‘self’ is an entity of things that does not depend on anything else, an inherent nature. Its non-existence is selflessness. Owing to the division of phenomena and persons, it is understood as twofold, namely “selflessness of phenomena” and “selflessness of persons”. [6]

It is like that.

With respect to the observed object of apprehending a self of persons the Entrance [to the Middle Way by Chandrakirti] explains that some Sammityas assert part of the five aggregates, and some assert only the mind to be the basis or object of the view of a self. As for the mind, again, Cittamatrinis and certain Madhyamikas who assert a mind-basis-of-all assert that the mind-basis-of-all is the observed object, and some Madhyamikas such as Bhavaviveka who do not assert it, as well as many exponents of Shravaka schools assert that it is the mental consciousness. However, with these systems, you need to know the meaning invested in the designation “person”, the one cultivating the paths, the one revolving in cyclic existence, and so forth, [298] the two modes of positing the mere I and positing a mind-basis-of-all and so forth, as the basis that I’s characteristics.

With respect to the innate view of the transitory collection which is an apprehension of a self, the Entrance [to the Middle Way] refutes that the aggregates are its observed object, and in the Commentary it is said to have the dependently imputed self as its observed object. It is said that even the mere collection of aggregates is not the conventional self, so neither the collection of aggregates at one time nor the collection which is the continuum of the aggregates from an earlier to a later moment are its observed object. Rather, the mere I which is the observed object of the mere thought “I” arising, or the mere person should be taken as its observed object. Neither the individual aggregates nor their collection is posited as the basis of that I’s characteristics. However, this [point], an unsurpassed distinguishing feature of this system, has been explained in great detail elsewhere.

2 The difference in observed objects between the two apprehensions of true existence

The mind thinking “I” that arises towards the observed object of the innate view of the transitory collection must arise naturally. Therefore, although the innate apprehension of the self of a person that apprehends a person associated with another continuum to be established by way of his own characteristics is innate, it is not the innate view of the transitory collection of that person.
The observed object of the innate view of the transitory collection apprehending a mine is mine itself, the observed object of the innate mind thinking “mine”. It should not be held that one’s own eyes and so forth are the observed object. Its aspect is to focus on that observed object and apprehend the mine to be established by way of its own characteristics.

The objects of the innate apprehension of a self of phenomena are the form aggregate and so forth, eyes, ears and so forth associated with one’s own or someone else’s continua, as well as the environments and so forth which are not included in a continuum. Its aspect is as explained before. In the Commentary on the Entrance [to the Middle Way] it says:

Delusion is the ignorance superimposing a non-existent own entity of things. It has the nature of obstructing the view of their nature, conceals [them].

And:

Thus [299] through the power of afflicted ignorance included in the links of cyclic existence and involves mental afflictions...

The statement asserts that the apprehension of objects as truly existent is ignorance, and that it is an afflicted ignorance. Therefore, there is accordance here with the former of two manners of positing the apprehension of a self of phenomena, as a mental affliction and as an obscuration to knowledge.

This was also taught by the noble father and son. In the Seventy [Stanzas] on Emptiness it says:

That which conceives things produced from causes
And conditions to be real
Was said by the Teacher to be ignorance.
From that the twelve links arise.
With good understanding that things are empty
Through seeing reality there is no ignorance.
That is the cessation of ignorance.
Therefore, it ceases the twelve links.

To “conceive things ... to be real” is to apprehend them as established in reality or truly. This is similar in meaning to a statement from the Precious Garland:

As long as the aggregates are apprehended
An I will be apprehended in them.

which says that as long as the apprehension of aggregates has not stopped, you will not stop the view of the transitory collection.

Again, in the Four Hundred Verses it says:

Like the body sense throughout the body
Delusion abides in all of them.
Therefore, by conquering delusion,
All the mental afflictions are conquered.
Delusion will not arise in case
Dependent origination is seen.
Therefore, with all my effort, here,
I will only talk about that. [10]

As regards the delusion set forth in this manner, the context is an identification of the delusion which is one of the three poisons. It is therefore afflicted ignorance. In order to top this ignorance, it is said to be necessary to realize the profound meaning of interdependence, the meaning of emptiness appearing as the meaning of dependent origination. In accordance with the explanation in the commentary to this text, afflicted delusion should therefore be taken as a superimposition\textsuperscript{182} of true existence on things. This manner [of understanding]\textsuperscript{(300)} was set out clearly by the venerable Chandrakirti following the example of Buddhapalita’s commentary on the noble one’s intention.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2B Demonstration that [afflicted ignorance] is the root of cyclic existence
1 Whereas the innate apprehension of a self must be posited as the root of cyclic existence, the artificial one is not suitable to be posited so

Second: That being so, the ignorance of apprehending the two selves explained above is also not the apprehension of artificial selves of persons and phenomena that are applied by the uncommon assertions of non-Buddhist and Buddhist tenet systems, (1) a permanent, unitary, independent person, (2) external objects of apprehension, particles that do not have parts such as an eastern side and gross composites of them, (3) internal apprehending consciousnesses that are moments of awareness without time parts such as earlier and later and a continuum of awareness joining [such partless moments] together, and (4) self-consciousness that is non-dualistic, empty of such objects and subjects. Rather, it is the two innate, beginningless apprehensions of a self that all those whose minds are or are not affected by tenets have in common and that have operated beginninglessly without depending on the mind’s being affected by tenets. Just that is held to be the root of cyclic existence here. In the \textit{Entrance [to the Middle Way]} it says:

\begin{quote}
In those who spend numerous eons unconscious as beast,
And do not perceive this unborn permanent [something]
The apprehension of self is still seen to operate. \hfill [11]
\end{quote}

Through this reasoning [it can be understood] that what binds all sentient beings in cyclic existence is the innate ignorance, and since artificial ignorance is only present in the proponents of tenets, it is inadmissible as the root of cyclic existence.

2 Since the innate mode of apprehension does not involve artificial manners of apprehension, it does not help to stop those manners of apprehension

It is extremely important to gain discriminating certainty about this. If you do not understand that, then, at the time of settling [emptiness] by means of the view, \textsuperscript{(301)} you will not know [how] to hold as the main thing the ascertainment of the absence of real existence as

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apprehended by innate ignorance and [how] to refute the objects of artificial apprehensions as a branch of that. If you negate the two selves neglecting the refutation of the mode of apprehension of innate ignorance, you will ascertain just the selflessness that negates imputations by only the proponents of tenets mentioned earlier. Therefore, at the time of meditation, you will also necessarily meditate on just that, because the ascertainment through the view is for the sake of meditation.

3 The absurdity of opposing innate mental afflictions by merely refuting the referent objects of artificial concepts. The absurd consequences [that would follow] if you were to counteract innate mental afflictions by...

Therefore, as you meditate [on that selflessness] and it becomes manifest, even if you brought that familiarization to its completion, there would be nothing more to it than just that. Thus, it is very absurd to assert that through seeing the non-existence of the two selves merely as imputed by artificial apprehensions, the innate mental afflictions are stopped. In the Entry [to the Middle Way] it says:

When you realize selflessness, you abandon,
The permanent self, but that’s not asserted as basis
Of apprehending a self. Hence it’s quite strange
To say that knowing [such] selflessness casts out the self-view

The commentary also sets forth:

An explanation for the sake of clarifying this point, the mutual unrelatedness, by way of an analogy:
“While seeing a snake in a hole in a wall of one’s house,
To make oneself abandon the fear of the snake
By clearing up doubts saying “There is no elephant here!”
Alas would only be laughable to others.”

Although this is said with regard to the selflessness of persons, it is also the same with regard to the selflessness of phenomena:

When you realize selflessness, you abandon,
The artificial self, but that’s not asserted as basis
Of ignorance. Hence it is extremely strange
To say that knowing [such] selflessness casts out the self-view

4 Although both the view of the transitory collection and ignorance are the root of cyclic existence, there are no two roots of cyclic existence

Objection: In the Precious Garland it says:

As long as one apprehends aggregates,
So long one will apprehend a self.
(302) From apprehending a self there is karma,
And from karma there is rebirth.
The apprehension of a self of phenomena that apprehends the aggregates as truly existent is explained as the root of cyclic existence. In the Entrance to the Middle Way it says:

Seeing with his mind that all the faults of afflictions
Arise from the view of the transitory collection. [14]

The view of the transitory collection is explained as the root of cyclic existence. The two explanations are contradictory, because two discordant roots of cyclic existence are inadmissible. Answer: There is no fault. The present system distinguishes the two apprehensions of a self by means of their observed objects, but they do not have differing aspects in their mode of apprehension, because both have the aspect of apprehending their object to be established by way of its own characteristics. A contradiction involving two roots of cyclic existence would be to posit two modes of apprehension that do not accord in their way of engaging in the object as the root of cyclic existence. Therefore, when the apprehension a self of phenomena is taught as the cause of the view of the transitory collection, the two internal divisions of ignorance are being pointed out as cause and effect. When the two are taught as the root of the mental afflictions, they are being pointed out as the root of all the mental afflictions whose mode of apprehension is discordant with them. As that approach also exists for the two of them, there is no contradiction, just as there is no contradiction in both earlier and later [moments] of the same kind of ignorance being the root of cyclic existence.

Although it does not appear that the venerable Chandrakirti specifically and clearly explains the view of the transitory collection as ignorance, he generally says that the apprehension of things as truly existent is afflicted ignorance, without distinguishing between persons and phenomena, and he also assert that the apprehension of a self of persons is the apprehension of persons as established by way of their own characteristics. He also frequently explains the innate view of the transitory collection as the root of cyclic existence. If he asserted it to be different in meaning from the ignorance which is the apprehension of true existence, he would posit two roots of cyclic existence with discordant modes of apprehension, which would [indeed] be contradictory. Therefore, both of them should be understood as ignorance.

5 Demonstration that the way the apprehension of true existence becomes the root of cyclic existence is asserted by the noble father and son

All the other innate and artificial mental afflictions, as they operate, apprehend individual features of that very object superimposed by the innate ignorance explained earlier. Therefore, just as the other four sense powers, eyes and so forth, abide in dependence on the body sense power rather than abiding in their own independent place elsewhere, all the other mental afflictions also operate in dependence on innate ignorance which is why delusion is said to be chief.

Delusion abides in all of them like the Body sense power throughout the body. [10]

The commentary on the [Four]Hundred says:
Desire and so forth also operate by superimposing features such as attractiveness and repulsiveness on the mere inherent nature of things imputed by delusion. Therefore, they operate in a manner that in not different from delusion and even depend on it, for delusion is chief.

After that, once delusion has apprehended the objects as established by way of their own characteristics, if the object is in accord with one’s own mind, attachment arises as it is observed, and if it appears discordant with one’s own mind, anger arises towards it. If the object does not appear either in accord or discordant with one’s mind and remains as an ordinary thing in between, neither of the other two will arise when the object is observed, but still further delusion of the same kind will arise. In the Sixty [Verses of] Reasons it says:

Why would the strong poison of the mental afflictions
Not arise in those with a mind with its basis.
Even while in ordinary states
It’s seized by the snake of the mental afflictions.  

In the commentary these lines are explained as above.

That the view of the transitory collection is born from apprehending the aggregates as truly existent appears to be the intended meaning of the Precious Garland as well.

The way the remaining mental afflictions arise should be inferred and understood from the explanations in the context of intermediate beings.

6 How to understand the stages of how the mental afflictions arise from the Commentary on Valid Cognition as well.

{304} Also, in the Commentary [on Valid Cognition] it says:

He who sees a self will always
Have adherence to “I” inside him.
Through that adherence there’s craving for happiness,
Through [that] craving faults are obscured.
Good qualities are seen whereby there’s strong craving.
What’s “mine” is grasped - that which achieves it.
As long as there is attachment to self
One will thus revolve in cyclic existence.  

You should come to understand it that way.

Although this system and the way the two apprehensions of self are posited according to the above explanations are not the same, you should come to understand the stages of how the mental afflictions arise in dependence on it. Initially, once the observed object of the thought “I” is apprehended as established by way of its own characteristics, attachment to the self arises. That generates craving for the self’s happiness. However, since there is no independent happiness of the self that does not depend on mine, there is craving for mine. That obscures its faults and causes one to see good qualities in it. Consequently, mine is grasped as something accomplishing the self’s happiness. Due to the mental afflictions arisen
in this manner, there is compositional action and through that action, again, one is reborn in cyclic existence. In the Seventy [Verses] on Emptiness it says:

Actions have mental afflictions as cause
Volition’s nature: from mental afflictions
The body has actions as its cause
Those three are empty of entityness. [18]

You should train in this manner to really seek certainty regarding the stages of revolving in cyclic existence.

One wishing to abandon that apprehension should seek the view of selflessness
1 The reason why you need to seek the view realizing selflessness if you wish to abandon that ignorance
2 How to generate the view realizing selflessness

The third one has two [points]: the reason why you need to seek the view realizing selflessness if you wish to abandon that ignorance and how to generate the view realizing selflessness.

The reason why you need to seek the view realizing selflessness if you wish to abandon that ignorance
A It is stupid not to make an effort so that the pure view arises in one’s mental continuum, despite the wish to abandon ignorance
B Pointing out the need to give up conceiving a self
C Indication that scriptural and logical investigation is essential for abandoning the concept of self
D In order to abandon the concept of self it is necessary to refute its referent object, and the reason for that

It is stupid not to make and effort so that the pure view arises in one’s mental continuum, despite the wish to abandon ignorance

First: It is necessary to want the extinction where the ignorance explained above, the two apprehensions of self have been abandoned, that necessity is also asserted {305} and even seems to be wanted. That being so, someone who wants to, but does not put effort into understanding how apprehending a self becomes the root of cyclic existence, has very low faculties. So does someone who, despite partial insight into this, does not put effort into generating the pure view of selflessness in his continuum, having thoroughly refuted the object apprehended by the apprehension of self with scriptures of definitive meaning and reasonings. That is because they have lost the vital essence of the path leading to liberation and omniscience, yet they remain indifferent about it.

How it is taught by the glorious Dharmakirti said:

Without these objects being refuted,
They cannot possibly be abandoned.
Abandoning desire, hatred, and so forth
Connected with good qualities and faults,
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Special Insight

Is done by not seeing those in objects,
Not through some external approach. [19]

When removing an external object of abandonment such as a thorn that has pierced your skin, you can completely remove it by means of something like a needle, without depending on a refutation of the object that it apprehends. You do not do it like this when getting rid of an internal, mental object of abandonment. Rather, you must abandon it seeing the lack of real existence of the object as apprehended by something like the apprehension of self.

B How it is taught by the glorious Chandra[kirti]
The glorious Chandra[kirti] also taught that once all the afflictions like attachment as well as birth, aging and so forth are seen to arise from the apprehension of self, the desire to refute and abandon it will arise. At that point the yogi refutes with reasoning the object superimposed by the apprehension of self, the self of a person.

In the Entrance [to the Middle Way] it clearly says:

Once his mind has seen: all afflictions and faults
Arise from the view of the transitory collection,
The yogi knows the self to be its object
And performs the refutation of self. [20]

In fact that is what someone meditating on suchness must do. Therefore it says “yogi”.

C This is also the meaning intended by the protector Nagarjuna

This approach is also the most superior intention of the protector Nagarjuna. In the Sixty [Verses of] Reasons it says:

That is the cause of all the views,
Without it afflictions do not arise.
Therefore, if you thoroughly know this,
Views and afflictions are thoroughly cleansed.
If you wonder how this is known -
By seeing dependent origination -
That things born dependently are unborn.
That was taught by supreme omniscience. [21]

[The statement] points out that the apprehension of true existence called asserting as things, which is the cause of all afflicted views and all other mental afflictions, is abandoned through realizing the suchness of things, that they are not inherently born, by means of the reason of dependent origination. The insight that there is no inherent nature does not arise without a refutation of the object of the apprehension that things are inherently established.

D How it is taught by Aryadeva

A statement by Aryadeva that accords with this was already quoted earlier. In the Four hundred [Verses] he also says:
If selflessness is seen in objects,
The seed of existence will be ceased. [22]

That is through seeing that the object of observation apprehended by the apprehension of self lacks a self, the root of existence, ignorance, is cut.

The venerable Shantideva also taught in accordance with that

The venerable Shantideva also [taught]: Thus, the emptiness of persons is thoroughly established. Therefore, since their root has been cut, all the mental afflictions do not at all.

How it is taught in the sutras

It is as the Noble Sutra of the Tathagata’s Secrets says:

Shantimati, it is like this. For example, when a tree is cut at the root, all the branches, leaves and twigs will dry up. Likewise, Shantimati, when the view of the transitory collection is fully pacified, all the mental afflictions and secondary mental afflictions will be fully pacified.

{307} It is saying that through cultivating the realization of the person as emptiness, empty of being inherently established, the view of the transitory collection is stopped and once it has stopped all the other mental afflictions will also be stopped. On the other hand, without the object of the apprehension of a self of persons having been refuted, the realization of selflessness is impossible.

The sutra passage points out that the view of the transitory collection is the root of all the other mental afflictions. If that were different in meaning from ignorance, there would be two discordant roots of cyclic existence, so it should also be understood as ignorance.

In brief, when the many supreme scholars who commented on the meaning of the scriptures on the profound settled the meaning of suchness, they did a thorough analysis by means of numerous scriptures and reasonings. They did that having perceived that it is impossible to realize selflessness and emptiness without seeing that the self as apprehended by the mistaken apprehension does not exist and that it is empty of that self. It is essential to gain certainty with regard to this.

If you do not meditate like this on the meaning of having refuted the mistaken object which is the root of being bound in cyclic existence, even though you meditate on something else you consider profound, it will not harm the apprehension of self at all. That is, because unless the mind enters the suchness of selflessness and emptiness, the apprehension of self cannot possibly be stopped, and because without the object of the apprehension of self having been
refuted, although you perform the mere withdrawal of the mind goes away to its object, that
cannot be posited as entering selflessness.

The reason for that is that when the mind engages in an object, there is one out of three: an
apprehension of that observed object as truly existent, an apprehension of it as not truly
existent, and an apprehension that does not qualify it with either of those two. Therefore,
although you do not apprehend something as not truly existent, you do not necessarily
apprehend it as truly existent, and likewise, although you are not engaged in the two selves,
{308} you are not necessarily engaged in the two selflessnesses. For, there are infinite minds
abiding in the third category.

The two apprehensions of self mainly operate observing a [concrete] thing, which is a person
or a phenomenon. Therefore, you need to settle that the very bases with respect to which they
are mistaken do not exist the way they are apprehended. Otherwise it will be like searching
for a thief in a meadow after he has gone to the forest. So, since you make the mistake
terminate by thus meditating on the meaning that has been settled, such emptiness is the
supreme meaning of suchness. With the meaning of suchness settled as something else that
discards this, only something imputed by one’s wishes will terminate. Therefore, remember
that this would deviate from meaning of the scriptures.

That being so the ignorance that apprehends the elaborations of persons such as men and
women and of phenomena such as form and feeling to be truly existent is stopped by gaining
the view that realizes their emptiness, selflessness, and meditating on it. Once it has stopped,
you stop projections, the improper mental attention that superimposes signs such as
attractiveness and repulsiveness when the object of the apprehension of true existence is
observed. Once they have stopped, the other mental afflictions such as attachment that have
the view of the transitory collection as their root are stopped. Once they have stopped, actions
motivated by them are stopped. Once they have stopped, birth in cyclic existence projected by
karma without any control is stopped whereby liberation is achieved. With this in mind you
should generate strong certainty and then seek to come to a decisive conclusion about the
view of suchness. In the Root [Text on] Wisdom it says:

Through karma and kleshas spent there is freedom.
Karma and kleshas arise from conceptions,
Elaborations from elaborating those.
They are stopped by emptiness. \[24\]

{309} You need to know those stages of entering into and turning away from cyclic existence
and greatly cherish the realization of the meaning of suchness. However, through a vague
involvement which fails to distinguish the objects well it will not come.

How to generate the view realizing selflessness

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Middle Length Lam-Rim
Special Insight

The second one has three points: the stages of generating the two views of selflessness, the actual generation, by stages, of the two views of selflessness, and presentation of conventional and ultimate truths.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2A The stages of generating the two views of selflessness
   1 The stages themselves
   2 The reason for that

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2A1 The stages themselves

First: As for the stages in which the two apprehensions of self arise, the apprehension of a self of phenomena generates the apprehension of a self of persons. Still, when you engage in the suchness of selflessness, you first need to generate the view of the selflessness of phenomena and then, after that, generate the view realizing the selflessness of phenomena. In fact in the Precious Garland it says:

Persons aren’t earth nor water,
Aren’t fire, wind nor space,
Aren’t consciousness. If they are none of these,
What could persons be other than that?
Since beings are composites of the six elements,
They are not real and just like that
Each element is a composite too
And therefore is not real either. [25]

It is as stated: first the person and then the basis it is imputed on, the elements such as earth, are said to lack inherent existence. The Clear Words and Buddhapalita also explain that when entering into suchness, one first enters from the selflessness of persons. Shantideva says is it in this way.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2A2 The reason for that
   A A proof through reasoning

The reason why it must be done like this is that although there is no difference in subtlety with regard to the selflessness to be ascertained on the basis of persons and phenomena, due to essentials of the substratum it is easier to ascertain it in persons and more difficult to ascertain it in phenomena. Likewise it is more difficult, for example, to ascertain that selflessness of phenomena in eyes, ears and so forth, and easier to ascertain it in reflections and the like, which is why these are taken as illustrations for settling selflessness in the former.

B A proof through scripture

{310} This meaning is intended in the King of Concentration where it says:

Just as you know the notion of self
Apply it to everything mentally.
The entitiness of all phenomena

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Is completely pure like space.
All of them are known through one and
All of them are seen through one. [26]

It says that once you know well the mode of subsistence of the I with regard to which the discrimination of self thinking “I” operates, you should apply its reasoning to all internal phenomena such as eyes and ears and external phenomena like pots. By knowing them to be equivalent to it, you will be able to know and see the inherent nature of all other phenomena through knowing and seeing the natural disposition of one phenomenon.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B The actual generation, by stages, of the two views of selflessness

1  Settling the selflessness of persons
2  Settling the selflessness of phenomena

The second one has two points: settling the selflessness of persons and settling the selflessness of phenomena.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1 Settling the selflessness of persons

A Identification of persons
B Settling them as not inherently existent

The first one has two points: identification of persons and settling them as not inherently existent.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1A Identification of persons

1  The actual identification of persons

First: “Persons” are persons of the six classes157, gods and so forth, and persons who are ordinary beings, aryas and so forth. Furthermore, they are the accumulators of white and black actions, the experiencers of the results of those, revolvers in cyclic existence, cultivators of paths for the sake of liberation, attainers of liberation, and so forth.

2  Commenting on the meaning of sutras that teach the self to be merely imputed upon the aggregates

A sutra quoted in the commentary on Entrance [to the Middle Way] says:

The so-called “self” is a fiendish mind and
You have come to hold this view.
The compositional aggregates are empty.
There is no sentient being here.
Just as based on collections of parts
People speak of chariots
Likewise, based on the aggregates,
Conventionally, they say “sentient beings”. [27]

{311} The first verse indicates the selflessness of persons, that ultimately persons do not exist. The first line says that the apprehension of a self of persons is a fiendish mind, the second one says that those who apprehend in this manner are under the power of bad views, and the third and fourth say that the aggregates are empty of a personal self. The second verse points out that persons exists conventionally. More specifically, the first and second lines present an
analogy and the last two, connect it to the meaning, indicating that persons as merely imputed upon the aggregates.

3 How to posit that person, the imputed phenomenon, as the object of observation of the innate apprehension of I

The sutra passage is saying that the collection of aggregates is the basis of imputation of the person, and the basis of imputation is not admissible as the imputed phenomenon. The collection of aggregates must be understood as both the collection of aggregates at a given moment and the collection of aggregates at earlier and later ones. Therefore, it is inadmissible to posit the continuum of the collection of aggregates as the person. When the collection is posited as the basis of imputation, that which is collected is also posited as the basis of imputation and therefore it is unreasonable for both to be the person. In the Entrance [to the Middle Way] it says:

The sutras say that since it depends on the aggregates,
The mere collection of aggregates isn’t the self. [28]

And:
The teacher said: “The aggregates are the self.”
If that’s why you posit the aggregates as the self -
It [only] refutes the self is other than aggregates,
For other sutras say things like form isn’t self.

Therefore, even the statement “The view of I and mine by whatever Buddhist ascetics or Brahmins is only a view of these five aggregates” refutes, by means of the word “only”, that a self which is a different entity from the aggregates exists as the observed object of one’s innate apprehension of an I. That having been refuted, however, the aggregates are not shown to be the observed object of the innate apprehension of an I. I they were, that would contradict the statements in other sutras refuting that the five aggregates are the self. The reason for this is that, out of the two, the observed object and the aspect of the apprehension of an I, if they were the observed object, they would have to be posited as the self. Therefore, the meaning of the sutra statement about viewing the aggregates must be explained as observing the self that is imputed on the aggregates.

4 Hence, the need to differentiate between the self that exists and the self that does not exist

That is why you should differentiate between statements that the mere I, referred to as self, conventionally exists and statements that an inherently established person, referred to as self, does not exist even conventionally. Still, you should not say this system asserts that the self of persons conventionally exists. Its identification of persons, which is like that, is a distinguishing feature of this unsurpassed system. Ascertaining this well is an excellent means of realizing the uncommon selflessness of persons.
The second one has three points: settling that the I does not inherently exist, settling that mine does not inherently exist, and showing how, in dependence on that, persons appear like illusions.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1B-1  Settling that the I does not inherently exist
   A How the view realizing selflessness is born from the four essential points being complete
   B Extensive explanation of the third and fourth essential points in particular

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1B-1A How the view realizing selflessness is born from the four essential points being complete
   1 The essential point of ascertaining the object of negation
   2 The essential point of ascertaining the pervasion
   3 [The third essential point: to see the faults in claiming that the person and the aggregates are of one essence, established through their own nature]
   4 [The fourth essential point: to clearly see the points invalidating [the position] that the person and the aggregates are established as essentially distinct]

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1B-1A1 The essential point of ascertaining the object of negation

First: The first of four essential points that exist with regard to this is to examine one’s own mind so as to identify the manner of apprehending a self of persons. That was explained earlier.\(^{193}\)

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1B-1A2 The essential point of ascertaining the pervasion
   A If a person is inherently established, it is either one or different and nothing beyond that
   B Through their direct opposition, accompanied and unaccompanied, in general, a third alternative to one and many is excluded

Generally speaking, it is established through experience that, when you determine something to be “accompanied” thinking something like “pot and pillar”, you eliminate that it is unaccompanied, and when you determine something to be “unaccompanied” thinking something like “pot”, you eliminate that it is accompanied. A third alternative, something that is neither one nor several, does therefore not exist. \(^{313}\) Consequently, you are made to ascertain that to be neither one entity nor different is also impossible.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1B-1A3 [The essential point of seeing the faults in claiming that the person and the aggregates are one inherently established entity]

The third one is to see the damage to [the position] that the two, the person and the aggregates, are one inherently established entity.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1B-1A4 [The fourth crucial point: to clearly see the points invalidating [the position] that the person and the aggregates are established as essentially distinct]

The fourth one is to see well what does damage to [the position] that the two are established as inherently different. When the four are complete in that manner, the pure view realizing the suchness that is the selflessness of persons will be born from that.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1B-1B Extensive explanation of the third and fourth essential points in particular
In this regard, if the self and the aggregates were one inherently established entity, there would be three faults doing damage to this position.

A First refutation

First it would be pointless to assert a self. If the sameness of entity of the two were inherently established, they would be a permanently indivisible one. This is because if their sameness of entity were ultimately established, then whatever mind those two appeared to, they would necessarily not appear to be different. The reason for this is that although with falsities, conventions, it is not contradictory for the mode of appearance and the mode of subsistence to be discordant, with something established as true those two are necessarily contradictory, because something truly established that appears to a mind must appear just the way it is.

The assertion of a self established through its own entity is for the sake of establishing an agent discarding and adopting aggregates, because if he were one with the aggregates, this would be impossible. This is also set out in the Root [Text on] Wisdom:

Once you have understood that apart from the appropriated aggregates there is no self, the appropriated aggregates themselves are the self.
That self of yours does not exist. [29]

B Second refutation

Second: the self would be many. There would be the fault that if the self were established as one with the aggregates, one person would have many selves in conformity with having many aggregates, and in conformity with having no more than one self he would have only one aggregate. In the Entrance [to the Middle Way] it says:

If the aggregates were the self, they are many,
Therefore there would also be many selves. [30]

C Third refutation

Third: The self would have production and a destruction. In the Root [Verses on] Wisdom it says:

If the aggregates were the self, it
Would have production and destruction. [31]

In conformity with the aggregates that are produced and destroyed, the self would also be produced and destroyed, because the two are one.

D It would amount to asserting that the self is produced and destroyed not merely conventionally but inherently

You may think “It is asserted that the self or person is produced and destroyed in each moment.” There is no fault in merely asserting this conventionally. However, an opponent asserting that the person is established by way of its own characteristics thereby necessarily asserts that that person is produced and destroyed inherently.
E. The consequence that memory of [former] lives would be inadmissible

In this regard, the commentary on the Entrance [to the Middle Way] sets forth three faults. The first one is set forth in the Entrance [to the Middle Way]:

Things distinct by their characteristics, included
In a single continuum do not make sense. [32]

With respect to something earlier and something later established as distinct by way of their own entities, a relationship of dependence between what is later and what is earlier is inadmissible, because since they are established as capable of setting themselves up, with their own power, they cannot depend on anything else. If a single continuum is therefore inadmissible, the memory of [former] lives “In that life, at that time, I was such and such” does not make sense. It is like with Devadatta when he remembers his [former] lives. He does not remember “I was Yajnadatta” whose continuum is distinct [from his].

F. The validity [of memory] in our system

In our system a single continuum of the earlier and the later is not contradictory even though it disintegrates in each moment196, so the memory of [former] lives is valid.

G. When certain people assert that buddhas and ordinary beings are one, it is an extreme view

In [people] who have not realized the meaning of this, the frequent statement in sutras: “In the past I was this [person]” (315) generates the first wrong view out of four bad views that were taught and that are based on an extreme associated with the past. “The two, the person at the time of buddhahood and the person at an earlier time are one. Moreover, if they products they would disintegrate moment by moment and therefore could not be one. Therefore the two are permanent”. In order not to fall to that [view] you need to understand well the particular manner of remembering in which you remember the “I” in general, without making a distinction, at the time of remembering, in terms of the specific country, time, and nature of a [former] life.

H. The consequence that actions done would be wasted

Second: The fault that actions done would be wasted is that both the agent of an action and the experiencer of its result could not be grouped together on the one basis of the mere I.

I. The consequence of meeting with actions one has not done

The fault of meeting with actions one has not done is the absurd consequence that all the results of actions accumulated by other different continua would be experienced by other continua.

J. If the earlier and the later were established by way of their entities a single continuum would be impossible

These two faults are associated with the essential point explained in the Entrance [to the Middle Way] and above. Accordingly, if the person were established by way of its entity, its earlier and later moments could not be the same continuum. In the Root [Verses on] Wisdom it also says:

If a god and a human were other,
Their continuum would not be valid. [33]
The fourth essential point: Refuting that the self and the aggregates are inherently different

A Indication of a source

But what fault is there if you you assert the two, the self and the aggregates, to be inherently different? The fault is set forth in the Root [Text on] Wisdom:

If it were different from the aggregates,
It would not have their characteristics. [34]

B The consequence that if the two were different by way of their entity, the self would not have the characteristics of the aggregates

In this regard, if the self existed as inherently different from the aggregates, it would not have the characteristics that characterise the aggregates as products: production, destruction and abidance. It would be like a horse, for example, that does not have the characteristics of an ox because it is established as an object different from an ox.

C The other approved syllogism establishing that by the sign of being uncompounded it is unsuitable to be apprehended as the basis of designation and as the self

You may think: “It is like that, but...” Well then, it [316] would be inadmissible as the observed object that is the basis of designating the verbal convention “self” by one’s innate apprehension, because it is a non-product, like, for instance, a flower in the sky or nirvana197.

D Explaining that it is not apprehended in that manner with the consequence that something other than the characteristics of the aggregates would be apprehended as self

Furthermore, if it existed inherently different from the characteristics of the aggregates, suitability as form and so forth, it would have to be observed as such, just as, for instance form and mind are observed to be different. Since there is not such apprehension, though, the self does not exist as factually other. In the Root [Text on] Wisdom it says:

It is inadmissible for the self to be
Other than the appropriated.
If it were other, you could apprehend it
In their absence, which you cannot. [35]

And in the Entrance [to the Middle Way]:

Therefore, besides the aggregates there is no self
For, those apart, apprehending it is not established. [36]

E The importance of gaining certainty concerning such reasoning

You should train in order to really gain the firm certainty which sees that such reasonings damage a self existing inherently different from the aggregates, because if you have not induced the pure, damaging certainty concerning the two sides of sameness and difference, the conclusion that persons do not inherently exist will merely be a thesis, so that you do not gain the pure view.
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Special Insight

A. That reasoning refuting the inherent establishment of the self also refutes an inherently established mine; sources for this

When you have thus sought, with reasonings, whether the self does or does not have inherent establishment, you refute the inherent existence of the self by means of your failure to find it as either one or many. At that point, through the reasoning analyzing suchness, you will not find an inherently established mine, just like, for example, when you do not observe a barren woman’s son, you will not observe his mine, such as his eyes. In the Root [Verses on] Wisdom it says:

If the I does not exist,  
How possibly could mine exist?  

[37]

{317] And in the Entrance [to the Middle Way] it says:

Since without an agent no actions exist,  
Therefore, there’s no mine without a self.  
Therefore, by seeing the I and mine as empty  
The yogi is completely liberated.  

[38]

B. The need to know how, through these reasonings, all other persons and their mine are also established as without inherent existence

Thus, those reasonings settle that the I of one’s own continuum, apprehended thinking “I” or the self or the person does not exist by way of its own entity. Through them, you should also realize the entire meaning of the suchness which is the selflessness of persons: that all persons from hell-beings through buddhas and all their mine are not inherently established as one entity with or a different entity from their bases of designation, their contaminated or uncontaminated aggregates. Through them, also, you should know how all their mine is likewise established as without inherent existence.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1B-3 Showing how, in dependence on that, persons appear like an illusion

A. Indicating the meaning of saying like an illusion  
B. How they appear like an illusion, based on what method

The third one has two [points]: indicating the meaning of saying like an illusion and how they appear like an illusion, based on what method.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1B-3A Indicating the meaning of saying like an illusion  
1. The unmistaken manner of appearing like an illusion  
2. The superficial manner of appearing like an illusion

The first one has two [points]: indicating the unmistaken manner of appearing like an illusion and the superficial manner of appearing like an illusion.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B1B-3A1 The unmistaken manner of appearing like an illusion  
A. How all phenomena are ultimately illusion-like without signs

First: In the King of Concentration [Sutra] it says:

Like a mirage, a gandharva city198,  
Like an illusion, just as a dream  
Meditate on signs as empty of entity,
Know all phenomena as like that.

In the [Sutra of the] Mother of the Jinas\textsuperscript{199} it is also taught that all phenomena from form through exalted knowers of all aspects are like illusions or dreams.

B From among the two that are like an illusion, here it is the appearance that is illusion-like

There are two meanings of that which is thus said to be like an illusion: something like an ultimate truth that is said to be illusion-like – although it is established as merely existent, \{318\} its true existence is understood to be refuted - and something like the illusion-like appearance of that which appears while being empty. From among these two, here it is the latter.

C The need for the collection of two, the conventional mind to which appearances appear rather than being utterly non-existent and the reasoning consciousness to which [the object] occurs as empty of true existence in accordance with appearances

For this, the two, appearance as that and emptiness of true existence in accordance with appearances, are necessary. However, if [an object] is utterly non-existent even as a mere appearance, just like the horn of a rabbit or the son of a barren woman, and if despite an appearance it does not occur to you that [an object] is empty of true existence in conformity with appearances, then the meaning of it being an illusion-like appearance will also not occur to your mind.

D [The way in which phenomena resemble illusions]

Hence this is how you understand other phenomena to be resembling the example of an illusion. For example, although the illusions conjured up by a magician are from the start empty of being horses and elephants, their appearances as horses and elephants undeniably arise. Understand that likewise, although phenomena such as persons are from the start empty of inherent existence, of being established by way of their own entities on top of the objects, it is undeniable that they appear as if established that way.

E Such an emptiness is nothing like a nihilistic emptiness or a mentally fabricated emptiness or a limited emptiness

That being so, the appearances as god, human, and forth are posited as persons and the objects that appear as form, sound, and so forth are posited as phenomena. Therefore, although persons and phenomena do not have even a mere particle of inherent existence established by way of their own characteristics, accumulators of karma and so forth, the activities of seeing and hearing and so forth, all the interdependent actions and agents are valid. All actions and agents are valid, therefore the emptiness is not nihilistic. Since phenomena have primordially always been empty like that and are merely being understood as empty, it is not a mentally fabricated emptiness either, and since all objects of knowledge are asserted in this manner, it is not a limited emptiness either. That is why, through being meditated on, it becomes the antidote to any adherence apprehending of true existence. This profound meaning is not unsuitable to become the object of any awareness whatsoever. Rather, it \{319\} can be settled by means of the pure view and it can be made the object [of mind] by meditating on the pure meaning. Therefore, it is also not an emptiness that could not be practiced on the path or [one] with nothing to see or realize.
Well then, if the ascertainment of reflections and so forth as empty of what they appear to be were the realization that they are without inherent existence, their absence of inherent existence would be realized by the direct perceiver of normal beings, so those would be aryas. Otherwise, how could they be suitable analogies for the absence of inherent existence?

Even if you realize that a reflection is empty of a face, this is not a realization of its suchness since you have an apprehension of the true existence of the reflection. In the *Four Hundred Verses* it says:

> It is explained that a seer of one thing  
> Is a seer of everything.  
> That which is the emptiness of one  
> Is the emptiness of all.  

[What is being] explained is that the seer or realizer of the emptiness of one thing can realize the emptiness of other things. The realization that the reflection of a face is empty of being a face does not in any way damage the object of one’s apprehension of true existence, that apprehends the reflection to be established by way of its own entity. Without the refutation of its object, the emptiness of inherent establishment of the reflection cannot be realized. Therefore, that mind does not realize the suchness of the reflection. Even though you realize that illusions are empty of being horses and elephants and that the appearances in dreams are empty of what they appear to be, you have not found the Madhyamika view realizing that [objects are] like illusions and dreams.

However, the reason for taking them as analogies is the fact that it is easier to realize their emptiness of inherent existence compared to other phenomena like forms and sounds. That they are empty of inherent existence established by way of their own entities is proven by showing the contradiction in their mode of abidance and the way they appear to the mind, because if an object is established as true, those two cannot be different in aspect. You need to first enter into realizing that these analogies, well known in the world as false, lack inherent existence, and then generate the realization that other phenomena, not well known in the world as false, lack inherent nature. The meaning intended by [stating] the need for a sequence in which one of those two is earlier and the other later is not that by realizing the emptiness of one phenomenon the emptinesses of all other phenomena are explicitly realized. Rather, the meaning is that when the mind turns to whether other phenomena do or do not truly exist, it is able to realize it.

That being so, there is a difference in meaning between being in a dream, knowing it, and realizing the appearances of men, women, and so forth to be empty of those, and what is said in *Ornament of Clear Realization*:
Even in dreams, to view that all Phenomena are like dreams and so forth

... that in a dream all phenomena should be viewed as dreamlike. Likewise, the realization, in visions of meditative experience [during] meditative stabilisation, that appearances like pots and woollen cloth are empty of what they appear to be is different in meaning from the realization that they are like illusions and dreams that are not inherently established. Therefore, you should investigate well the uncommon manner of appearing like illusions which is set forth in scriptures and treatises of definitive meaning saying that it should be known to be like illusions and dreams.

Having said this, a child still unfamiliar with words, apprehending a reflection in the mirror as a face, a spectator without knowledge of illusions, apprehending illusory appearances as horses, elephants, and so forth, and someone in a dream who does not know it and therefore apprehends the appearances of mountains, houses and so forth as real resemble each other. One the other hand, an older person familiar with words, a magician, and a person who, in a dream knows it to be a dream also resemble each other in terms of knowing their particular appearances to be untrue. Both have not found the view of suchness.

Presentation of the superficial manner of appearing like an illusion

A. Without [the discrimination] “it is this and not that” due to a mistake concerning the measure of the object of negation and the consequent non-existence of the object to be analyzed and analyzer, an appearance is vague and nihilistic, but does not carry the meaning of an illusion

If the measure of the object of negation explained earlier has not been grasped well and the object is analyzed by means of reasoning and broken up, the thought “That object does not exist” will first come up. Then, the analyser is also seen to be alike and since the ascertainment of his non-existence is also non-existent, any ascertainment [in terms of] “it is this and not that” becomes impossible. Then, the vague appearances that arise do so in dependence on the failure to differentiate between inherent existence and non-existence and mere existence and non-existence. Therefore, such an emptiness is an emptiness that also destroys interdependence. Hence, even though the vague appearance arises induced by that realization, it is not at all the meaning of being like an illusion.

B. Although such vague appearances arising at the time of analyzing the view are frequent, they are not Madhyamika illusions

That is why it is not difficult, upon reasoned analysis, to think “Persons and so forth do not have any mode of subsistence established on top of the objects by way of their own entities” and it is not difficult for appearances to simply arise as vague in dependence on that. Something like that occurs to everyone with an interest in Madhyamika tenets who has heard a little bit of Dharma being taught about how there is no inherent existence.

C. The difficult point with pure illusion-like appearances is that they are a collection of the two, the absence of inherent existence and the existence of mere nominal meaning

However, the difficult point is to achieve certainty, from the depths, about refuting all inherent existence established by way of an own entity and positing those inherently non-existent persons and so forth as accumulators of karma, experiencers of results and so forth.
Since that collection of two that enables one to posit them is next to impossible, it is extremely difficult to acquire the Madhyamika view.

D If you refute everything due to a mistake concerning the measure of the object of negation, the illusion cannot be anything beyond a rabbit’s horns

Therefore, as you analyze suchness with analytical reasoning, you do not find production and thereby refute inherent production, but you do not refute every kind of production, cessation and so forth. If you did, they would become empty of serving any purpose, like the horns of a rabbit or the son of a barren woman. However, with respect to what little illusion-like appearance remains, the fault that all interdependent actions and agents do not have validity is set forth. In the *Four Hundred Verses* it says:

If that is so how would existence
Not resemble an illusion? [41]

And in the commentary:

Once that which is dependently originated is seen as what it is, it becomes like an illusory creation, but not like the son of a barren woman. If one were to assert that through this analysis production is refuted in every way and that therefore the non-existence of products is demonstrated, then they would be not like illusions, but rather something to be examined in terms of the son of a barren woman and the like. For fear of the conclusion that the dependently originated does not exist, we do not compare [phenomena] with those, but rather with illusions and the like which do not contradict the dependently originated. [42]

E Although it is a fault if a subject exists in the face of a reasoning consciousness, it is not a fault for an illusion-like appearance aspect to remain as a trace of refutation by it

And:

Therefore, upon thorough analysis in this manner, since the inherent existence of things is not established, that illusion-like quality will be left as a remnant with respect to things individually.

F Hence, although it is wrong to apprehend illusion-like appearances as truly existent in their own entityness, it is not wrong to apprehend them as mere illusions

Therefore, the apprehension of appearances as something illusion-like, interdependent, merely existent is not a faulty apprehension of illusions, but if illusion-like appearances are apprehended as established by way of their entity and truly existent, it is a fault.

G The reason for those points

In the *King of Concentration* it also says:

Going through cyclic existence is like a dream.
No one is born there nor does anyone die.
No sentient beings or humans nor life can be found.
These phenomena are like foam, hollow trees,
Like illusions, lightning in the sky,
Like the moon in water, like a mirage.
Even after one dies here in this world,
One does not move on to another world, still,
Actions done aren’t lost, their white and black fruit
Ripen in cyclic existence - there’s no contradiction.  [43]

When sought with the reasonings analysing suchness, the likes of persons that are born, die, and transmigrate, and that withstand analysis are not found, not one particle. Nevertheless, positive and negative effects occur relative to illusion-like phenomena. You need to arrive at an understanding of such statements.

Furthermore, even if [phenomena] appear empty of gross obstructiveness, this is not an illusion-like appearance

Furthermore, some do not place and sustain the mind within the view that has come to a decisive conclusion, in meditative equipoise, about the mode of being, but gain a firm mere single-pointedness in which the mind does not apprehend anything at all. Through its power, when they arise from it, appearances such as that of a mountain, rather than appearing as they did before as hard and obstructive, appear insubstantial like a rainbow or thin smoke. This is also not the illusion-like appearance explained in the scriptures, because it is an appearance [of objects] as empty of gross obstructiveness, rather than an appearance that the apparent objects are empty of being inherently established, and because the meaning of emptiness, which is the absence of inherent existence, cannot possibly be the non-existence of obstructive hardness. Otherwise there would be the fallacies that when apprehending rainbows and the like as substrata, it would be impossible for the apprehension of the true existence to arise, and when apprehending obstructive objects as substrata, it would be impossible to generate the consciousness realizing the absence of true existence.

Second: [324] Well then, what has to be done for illusory objects to appear correctly?

For example, in dependence on seeing illusory horses and elephants with one’s eye consciousness, and ascertaining, with one’s mental consciousness, that no horses or elephants in accordance with the appearance exist, the ascertainment arises that this appearance of horses and elephants is an illusory or false appearance.

Likewise, in dependence on both the undeniable appearance of persons and so forth to one’s conventional mind and one’s ascertainment by means of a reasoning consciousness that they are empty of an inherent existence established by way of an own entity, the ascertainment arises that those persons are illusory or false appearances.
Due to that, if the meditative equipoise on space-like emptiness, in which the object aims for apprehending attributes do not even exist one bit, hits home, an illusion-like emptiness will appear when you look at object appearances in the subsequent attainment period after you have risen from that [equipoise].

Thus, you analyse phenomena a lot with the reasoning analysing whether or not they are established by way of their own entities, and you generate a very strong certainty with respect to their lack of inherent existence. Subsequently, when you look at the appearances arising, they will appear like illusions. There is no separate way of settling the illusion-like emptiness, though.

Therefore, even when engaging in the side of conduct such as prostrations and circumambulations, you engage in them affected by the ascertainment of your analysis as [explained] earlier. Thereby, you should train in illusion-like appearance, and do them from within that. Once you have trained in it, they will appear like illusions even through the mere recollection of the view.

Put [simply and] easy to understand, the method for seeking this ascertainment is as follows. As has been explained earlier, you should cause the generality of the object of negation by reasoning to appear well, consider well the way ignorance in one’s continuum superimposes inherent existence, and identify it. Then, you consider how if there is such inherent existence, it will not be beyond oneness and difference, and how, thinking about it, there is damage done to assertions of it as either. You induce the ascertainment of seeing the damage done and finally stabilise the ascertainment thinking “A person lacks even the least inherent establishment”. Like that you should train a in the factor of emptiness a lot.

Then, you should let the undeniable appearance of the designation of person arise as the object of your mind, attend to the interdependent factors of positing it as accumulator of karma and experiencer of results, and gain certainty concerning the ways in which interdependence is valid in the absence of inherent existence.

At a time when these two appear to contradict each other, you should take the analogy of a mirror image and the like and consider how they are non-contradictory. Although the reflection of a face is empty of the eyes, ears, and so forth, whichever way it appears, it nevertheless arises in dependence upon a face and a mirror and disintegrates when some of the conditions are withdrawn. The two are undeniably contained in the common base. You should train in the thought that likewise, although persons also lack even one bit of inherent establishment, this does not contradict their accumulating karma, their experiencing results and their being born in dependence on previous karma, afflictions, and so forth. This you should know in all such circumstances.
2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B2 Settling the selflessness of phenomena

A How there is no difference in subtlety among objects of negation, but rather a distinction between two selflessnesses on account of their subjects
B How it is established

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B2A How there is no difference in subtlety among objects of negation, but rather a distinction between two selflessnesses on account of their subjects

Second: The basis of designation of a person, the five aggregates, the six elements such as the earth element, the six sense fields such as the eye, are phenomena and their emptiness of an inherent existence established by way of their own entities is the selflessness of those phenomena.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B2B How it is settled

1 Refutation transferring the reasoning explained earlier
2 Refutation by means of another reasoning not explained earlier

There are two ways of settling it, a refutation transferring the reasoning explained earlier and a refutation by means of another reasoning not explained earlier.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B2B-1 Refutation transferring of the reasoning explained earlier

First: Among the things that are aggregates, elements and sense bases, there are two types. With physical phenomena, you examine both their parts in the various cardinal directions such as East and that which possesses the parts, and with consciousnesses, you examine their temporal parts such as earlier and later ones and that which possesses the parts. Having examined whether they are established, by way of their entities, as one or different, you refute them in the above fashion. That is the meaning of a sutra statement quoted earlier: Just as you know the notion of self
Apply it to everything mentally.    

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B2B-2 Refutation by means of another reasoning not explained earlier

A Presenting the argument of dependent origination
B How even non-products are established as not truly existent through that and the former reasoning

The second one has two points: Presenting the argument of dependent origination and how even non-products are established as not truly existent through that and the former reasoning.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B2B-2A Presenting the argument of dependent origination

1 Mentioning the sources
2 Explanation of what the sutra [quotation] means
3 Praise to the argument of dependent origination as that which cuts all inferior views
4 Identification of where the view goes wrong - the extremes of exaggeration and denigration
5 How the two extremes are overcome at the same time through the reasoning of dependent origination
6 Presentation[s] of dependent origination
7 How truly established sameness and difference are also refuted by these [two arguments]
8 Corresponding statements in Nagarjuna’s writings
9 The way it is praised as a view in which appearances and emptiness are seen to be complementary
to the extremes of exaggeration and denigration
10 Instruction that it is necessary to differentiate between inherent existence and non-existence and, generally, between the four types of existence and non-existence

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B2B-2A1 A citation of sources

With regard to the argument of interdependence, it says in [the Sutra] Requested by Sagaramati:

That which originates interdependently
Does not exist by way of its entity.    

[44]
Inherent establishment is clearly refuted with the sign\textsuperscript{204} of dependent origination. In [the Sutra] Requested by Anavatapta it also clearly says:

\begin{quote}
Whatever is born from conditions is not born,
It is not born by way of its entity.
Whatever depends on conditions is said to be empty.
Whoever has realized emptiness is conscientious. \[45\]
\end{quote}

This is [said] very frequent in the precious scriptures.

\textsuperscript{2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B2B-2A2} Explanation of what the sutra means

The meaning of what the first line refers to as “not born” is explained by the second line saying: “not born by way of its entity”. Therefore, a qualification of the object of negation is applied to the refutation of birth. In [the] Descent to Lanka [Sutra] quoted in [Chandrakirti’s] Clear Words it also says:

\begin{quote}
Thinking of their not being born inherently I said: ‘All phenomena are unborn’. \[46\]
\end{quote}

\{327\} For fear that without a qualification having been made, statements that birth does not exist could be held [to indicate] that all birth whatsoever is non-existent, the Teacher himself took up the thought of the sutras and explained the meaning to be the non-existence of inherent birth.

Then, the third line says that dependence and reliance on conditions is the meaning of being empty of establishment by way of one’s own entity. This indicates that the emptiness of inherent establishment is the meaning of dependent origination whereas an emptiness of performing functions that would negate mere birth is not.

In the Root [Text on Wisdom] it also says:

\begin{quote}
That which arises in dependence
Is pacified of an entity. \[47\]
\end{quote}

By reason of arising dependently, it is pacified or empty of establishment by way of its entity. You should know that whatever obscure fabrications have been propounded - that because of dependent arising itself, the Madhyamika system must propound non-arising and so forth - are thereby cleared away.

\textsuperscript{2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B2B-2A3} Praise to the argument of dependent origination as that which cuts all inferior views

The argument of dependent origination which is like that is praised very much. In [the Sutra] Requested by Anavatapta it says:

\begin{quote}
The wise who realize phenomena arise in dependence
Do not at all depend on extreme views. \[48\]
\end{quote}
Through realizing dependent origination as it is, one does not depend on views holding to extremes. The meaning of this is set forth in the Entrance [to the Middle Way]:

Since things originate totally in dependence,
These conceptions cannot be imputed.
This reasoning of dependent origination
Therefore cuts the net of all bad views. [49]

This is the unexcelled distinguishing feature of Mahatma Nagarjuna, the father, and his spiritual son. That is why, from among [various] reasonings, I will describe that of dependent origination here.

Here, there are mainly two places of obstruction where the pure view goes wrong: One is the view of permanence and superimposition that has the object aim of the apprehension of true existence apprehending phenomena to be truly existent. With the second one, the view of annihilation and deprecation, the measure of the object of negation has not been grasped and is excessive whereby it becomes impossible to induce the ascertain ment of dependently originating causes and effects in one’s own system so that there is no way of identifying that something is this and not that.

When inherent establishment is refuted in dependence on arguments inducing the ascertain ment that from these causes and conditions these effects arise, those two are abandoned without remainder. This is because through ascertain ment of the argument, the view of annihilation is radically refuted, and through ascertaining the meaning of the thesis, the view of permanence is.205

Therefore, external things such as sprouts and internal things such as compositional factors arise gradually in dependence on seeds and so forth and ignorance and so forth, respectively.

If that is so, their establishment through own characteristics is inadmissible because if they were established through their own entities, they would necessarily be established through their own inherent nature capable of setting them up under their own power, for themselves, so their dependence on causes and conditions would be contradictory. In the Four Hundred Verses it says:

That which exists arisen dependently
Does not have autonomy.
All these lack autonomy,
Hence, the self does not exist. [50]
Through this you should understand that since persons and pots and the like are also imputed in dependence on their own collections [of parts], they lack inherent establishment. Those are the two presentations of the argument of dependent origination.

If [something] arises dependently and is labelled dependently, it does not exist established by way of its own entity as one with whatever it is dependent on. If it did exist as one, all actions and agents would be one. The two (329) also do not exist established by way of their entities as other because if they did, one could refute their connection, so their dependence would be contradicted.

Statements of this in Nagarjuna’s texts

In [the] Root [Text on] Wisdom it says:

Whatever arises dependent on something
Is not that thing for a while.
Nor is it other than it. Hence,
It’s not annihilated, nor permanent. [51]

And in the Praise of the Supramundane:

Sophists assert that suffering is
Created by itself or other,
Or by both itself and other,
Or that it is without cause.
You said that it arises dependently.
That which arises in interdependence
Is asserted by you as empty.
‘Things don’t exist autonomously!’ -
That’s your matchless lion’s roar. [52]

That is through the argument of dependent origination the apprehensions of oneness and difference, of the extremes of permanence and annihilation, and of the four extremes of origination are refuted.

Having thus induced certainty through the emptiness empty of all object aims for apprehending characteristics, one does not give up one’s ascertainment of the relation between actions and their effects. Reliance on discarding [non-virtues] and assuming [virtues] through that is highly praised. In the Essay on Bodhicitta it says:

Relying on actions and their results
While knowing this emptiness of phenomena -
This is more wonderful still than the wonderful,
This is more marvellous still than the marvellous. [53]
Advice that it is necessary to differentiate between the four, inherent existence and non-existence as well as existence and non-existence in general

A The actual [advice]

For that to happen it is necessary to differentiate between inherent existence, mere existence, non-existence by way of own characteristics and non-existence. It is as stated in the Commentary on [the] Entrance [to the Middle Way]:

What wise person, while knowing the presentation of causes and effects, reflections without inherent existence, would observe as merely existent forms, feelings, and so forth that do not exist other than as causes and conditions, and by doing so ascertain that they possess inherent existence? Therefore, although observed as existent, they have no inherent production.

B How you fall to the two extremes if you do not differentiate between them along with a source

If you do not differentiate between those [four], things will exist by way their own entity as soon as they exist, and they will be non-existent as long as they do not exist by way of their own entity. You will not move beyond the two extremes of supermposition and deprecation.

In the Commentary on the [Four] Hundred [Verses] it says:

According to those who propose that real substantial things exist, as long as a thing is existing, so long will an own entity be existing in accordance with it, whereas when it is rid of its own entity, then the thing will no longer exist in any way and will therefore resembles a donkey’s horn. Therefore, since they do not pass beyond propounding those two, all their assertions are only match with difficulty.

C The manner in which those two extremes are eliminated

This being so, you are freed from all extremes of existence through the absence of existence by way of an own entity, and from all extremes of non-existence through the ability to posit, in that [absence], causes and effects without inherent existence.

D The mere extremes of existence and non-existence and the two extremes associated with the places where the view goes wrong do not have the same meaning

With regard to extremes it says in Reasoning for Detailed Explanations:

‘mtha’ is used for finish, for end, Nearness, direction, and the lower

Such extremes are indeed asserted in our system as well, however, concerning the extremes that are places where the view called ‘free from extremes’ goes wrong, it says in Illumination of the Middle:

If in the Middle Way system there were any ultimate thing at all, [an object] of the mind with its own entity by nature, then how could the strong adherence [thinking] ‘it is permanent’ or ‘it is impermanent’ be
an extreme, since it would exist for that system? It is unreasonable to say that proper mental attention going after the suchness of things as they are is a position one falls to.

{331} As is being said, mental attention in accordance with how an object [actually] is, is not a position one would fall to, so it does not constitute holding to an extreme. In the world, an abyss is called “mtha’”207 and falling into it is called “mtha’ la lhung”. Likewise the apprehension of phenomena as truly existent and the apprehension that nothing at all is established or exists constitute the “mtha’ lhung” of permanence and annihilation which are the opposites of correct fact. The apprehensions that phenomena do not ultimately exist and that causes and effects and so forth conventionally exist and so forth do not constitute holding to extremes, because the objects abide in the way that they are apprehended.

E  Sources for that

This is why: In Refuting Objections it says:

The lack of inherent existence, inverted,
Is establishment as inherent.  58

That is if something is not ultimately non-existent, it ultimately exists.
Also:

The non-assertion of conventionalities -
That is not what we explain.

In Seventy Verses on Emptiness it says:

'Depending on this thing that arises' -
This worldly mode has not been refuted.  59

F  The distinction that through [the phrase] ‘neither existent nor non-existent’ and the like there is no falling to extremes, is a fixation on mere words

Therefore, the difference being made between both “is not existent208” and “exists” [on the one hand] and “does not exist” and “is not non-existent” [on the other hand], is nothing more than a difference in the way of expressing it. In the manner the two appear to the mind, there is still no difference whatsoever, however much you investigate. Therefore, it is nothing more than a fixation on mere words to propound that one falls or does not fall to extremes through that manner [of expression].

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2B2B-2B  How non-products are also established as not truly existent through this and earlier reasonings

1  Pointing out the intended meaning from the Root [Verses on] Wisdom that once products have been established through reasoning as not truly existent, non-products are easily established as not truly existent

Once products, persons and phenomena, have thus been established as not truly existent by way of the reasonings explained earlier, it is established with little difficulty that non-products
such as space, analytical cessations\textsuperscript{209}, non-analytical cessations and suchness do not truly exist. With that intention it says in \textit{Root [Verses on Emptiness]}:

Since products are thoroughly not established,

\{332\} How could non-products be established? \[60\]

\textbf{2 The reason for that}

As for the manner of easy establishment: when inherently established products have been refuted as above, even though they are not inherently established, it is established that with regard to them, agents and actions such as bondage and liberation, causes and effects, objects of comprehension and those who comprehend them may be posited. When that is established, even though non-products like reality and analytical cessations are not established as truly existent, the presentation of objects of attainment on the path, objects of comprehension, the jewel of Dharma as refuge for disciples, and so forth may be posited well. If they are not asserted to be truly existent, one cannot at all say that these presentations of the need to posit them are inadmissible. Therefore, it would be pointless to assert them as truly existent.

\textbf{3 How to refute the assertion that products such as reality and cessations are inherently truly existent by means of the reasoning of interdependence as well}

Those who assert them as truly existent must and do indeed also assert presentations of their definitions and definienda, \{their\} causes of separation and results of separation, \{their\} comprehension by such and such a valid cognitions and so forth. At that point, if they do not relate them to their respective objects of attainment, characteristics, comprehenders, and so forth, they will not be able to refute all unrelated things becoming definitions and definienda \{of each other\} and the like. If they asserted links, they would not be able to posit the links, since something truly existent, inherently established, cannot depend on something else.

\textbf{4 Another refutation by way of \{their\} not being one nor many}

Similarly, you should also perform the refutation, investigating \{whether a non-product is\} one \{with\} or different\textsuperscript{210} \{from its basis of designation\}. If by this reasoned analysis, you cannot refute the assertion that they are truly established, you cannot refute true existence even in the slightest, because it is the same in all respects for products.

\textbf{5 The assertions that with products the emptiness of inherently existing in their own right is a nihilistic emptiness and that suchness is established as truly existent are misguided with regard to emptiness}

\{333\} You may think that if the meaning of “products are empty of inherently established own entities” is that those phenomena do not have such entities, it is thereby a nihilistic emptiness. However, suchness truly exists, because it has its own entity. That is the furthest you can go wrong settling products as empty of inherent establishment, a view deprecating the interdependence of products. The latter is a terrible view of permanence that superimposes true existence if something has its own entity. Therefore, they engage in the correct meaning of emptiness\textsuperscript{211} wrongly.

\textbf{6 If emptiness of an own essence thus meant that he himself were empty of \{being\} himself, it would also be inadmissible for someone such as the holder of the thesis that certain phenomena truly exist, to posit certain phenomena as truly existent, having been considered inherently empty himself}

If the emptiness of an inherently established own entity were the absence of him in himself, the absence in himself would mean that nothing at all could possibly exist, so the holder of
the thesis that certain phenomena truly exist, the scriptures and reasonings establishing this, and so forth would also be empty of an inherently established own entity. Therefore, the basis would not be established and therefore, positing the tenet that some phenomena are truly established is a random statement without investigation.

With good insight into the way this reasoning progresses, all our own [Buddhist] schools of the country of aryas\textsuperscript{212} that propound that phenomena truly exist are called proponents of things, since they definitely propound that things are established as truly existent. Propounding that things lack true existence and no more asserting any phenomena whatsoever to be established as truly existent would seem to be a sign of distinct superiority over the nonsensical expositions of this faction.

With the above explanations you should also come to a good understanding of those who advocate two discordant [positions] with regard to suchness and of how they pursue their modes of debate on whether or not ultimate reality is ultimately established, having agreed on the above kind of emptiness of an inherently established own entity with regard to conventional phenomena.

\begin{quote}
(334) This is because the two, not asserting true existence with regard to any things or phenomena having refuted true existence with regard to phenomena by reasoning, and propounding that all phenomena lack true existence in dependence on a nihilistic emptiness, a mistaken manner of understanding emptiness, are dissimilar in every respect.
\end{quote}

If the meaning of “Since products are thoroughly not established, / How could non-products be established?”\textsuperscript{213} were as [explained] earlier, would this not be in contradiction with other statements [by Nagarjuna]? - In the Sixty [Stanzas of] Reasoning it says:

\begin{quote}
When the Jinas taught nirvana
As the one and only truth,
Who, what wise person would think
That the rest are not the opposite?\textsuperscript{[61]}
\end{quote}

Only nirvana is said to be true while everything else is said to be untrue. In Praise of the Dharmadatu it also says:

\begin{quote}
All the sutras teaching emptiness
That were set forth by the Jina,
Counteract the mental afflictions -
They don’t prejudice this realm.\textsuperscript{[62]}
\end{quote}

That is the sutras teaching emptiness, the absence of inherent existence, are for the sake of abandoning mental afflictions, but they do not teach that the realm of natural purity does not exist.
The reply to this: although nirvana is non-deceptive to a mind looking at it with direct perception, it is not a truth that would bear analysis, so there is no contradiction with the above scriptural passage.

Those [who think that way] approach the meaning of the statements wrongly. The meaning of the above statement [60] is that of the following statement by the Buddha:

Monks, this ultimate truth is singular, it is this: nirvana, that which has the quality of non-deceptiveness. All compositional factors have the quality of being false, deceptive. [63]

This sutra also says that nirvana is true and that all compositional factors are false. The earlier [part of the] sutra passage very clearly explains that truth means non-deceptiveness and the latter one [very clearly explains] that false means deceptive. [335] Furthermore, the Commentary on the Sixty [Stanzas of Reasoning explains nirvana\textsuperscript{214} to be an ultimate truth which it is: Therefore, to a mind looking at it with direct cognition, it does not have any deceptiveness of appearing [inherently established] while not being inherently established. To a mind to which the remaining [phenomena], compositional factors, directly appear they have the deceptiveness of appearing [inherently established] while not being inherently established. That is why [you find that] they are not established as truths that bear analysis, when you examine them with the reasoning that analyzes whether or not they are truly established, [you find that] they. Therefore, what is the point of being attached to mere labels without thinking about the meaning deeply.

Establishing the validity of that

In the Sixty [Verses of Reasons] it also says:

Conditioned existence and nirvana -
Neither of these two exists.
Thorough knowledge of existence
That is what is expressed by ‘nirvana’. [64]

What is being explained is that both existence and peace do not inherently exist and that nirvana is posited as the very object of the knowledge that an inherently established existence does not exist. So how could this be a position that asserts emptiness, the non-true existence of existence, as a nihilistic emptiness?

Although emptiness exists, it need not be truly established; that eliminates the [alleged] contradiction with the scriptural passage from Praise of the Dharmadhatu.

This is what the scriptural passage [62] from the Praise [of the Dharmadhatu] means, though:

In order to avert the apprehension of things as truly existent, the root of all the other mental afflictions, the sutras teaching emptiness, the absence of inherent establishment, teach that the referent object of that [apprehension] does not exist. They do not teach that emptiness does not exist - the naturally pure realm which refutes the object of that apprehension of true existence, the two types of self. [65]
Although that emptiness exists, it is not truly established. That is why this scriptural passage serves as a source for refuting the propositions “the emptiness that refutes the object of negation, true existence, does not exist either” and “in order to exhaustively abandon the mental afflictions, it is not necessary to realize emptiness, the ultimate suchness.”

12 You cannot avert the apprehension of true existence by making a truly established reality your object of meditation

That being so, it says in that very Praise:

{336} The three called ‘impermanence’, ‘emptiness’, ‘suffering’
Are what purifies the mind.
The teaching that purifies it best is the
Absence of inherent existence. [66]

And:
Phenomena’s lack of inherent existence
Should be meditated on as dharmadhatu. [67]

The fact that these phenomena lack inherently established inherent existence is said to be the dharmadhatu that is the object of meditation, and just meditation on that is said to be the supreme purifier of the mind. Therefore, how could it be suitable to interpret this as the position that the emptiness which is the absence of inherent establishment of phenomena appearing [inherently established] is a nihilistic emptiness and that therefore, a truly established emptiness separate from it [should] be posited as the emptiness that is the object of meditation. That is like propounding that for eliminating the suffering of fear [arising] from apprehending a snake in the east even though there is none, showing that there is no snake in the east will not serve as an antidote, but rather one needs to show that there is a tree in the west. This is because one would propound that for eliminating the suffering of sentient beings as they adhere to true existence with regard to what appears [truly existent], the realization that the basis with regard to which there is the apprehension of true existence lacks true existence will not serve as an antidote, but rather one needs to show some other useless basis to be truly existent.

The third one has three [points]: the basis from which the two truths are divided, the number of divisions, the meaning of dividing them in that way, and explaining the meaning of the individual divisions.

First: Earlier scholars had many ways of asserting the basis of division of the two truths. However, here, objects of knowledge are the basis of division, because in the Compendium of Instructions it says:

Objects of knowledge\(^{215}\) are also exhausted as these conventional\(^{216}\) and ultimate truths. [68]
Second: According to the Mulamadhyamakakarika which says:

[They are] worldly conventional truths and ultimate truths.

objects of knowledge] are divided into the two, conventional and ultimate truths.

Third: \([337]\) Two [things] that are divided into two need to be different, so in what way are they different?

In this regard, many earlier [scholars] propounded three [types of] difference: different entities such as a pot and a woollen cloth, one entity and different isolates such as a product and impermanence - with these two [types], the constituting causes of the difference are both [functioning] things - and the difference where whichever one is not a [functioning] thing\(^{217}\), a difference where their being one is negated. So they propounded that the two truths were different in that their being one was negated. One the other hand, some asserted the two to be one entity and different isolates.

B Proving the validity in our own system

The relation of essential identity\(^{218}\) is fine according to Illumination of the Middle Way which says that it is not contradictory even for non-[functional] things. Therefore, the oneness of entity and difference of isolates is not contradictory even if both constituting causes of difference are non-things or if whichever one of them is not. In the Commentary on Engaging [in Bodhisattva Behaviour] it says:

Two aspects [of] the entity of all things are taught: they are the conventional and the ultimate.\(^{[69]}\)

Thus, with regard to the entity of each and every object, there is both a conventional and an ultimate entity. If the two truths were not one entity, since it would also be very unreasonable for them to be different entities, they would be without entity and therefore non-existent\(^{219}\), because whatever exists necessarily exists as either one entity or many.

Again in Elucidation of Bodhicitta it says:

Conventions are explained as emptiness.

Emptiness is nothing but a convention\(^{220}\),

For, certainly, [neither] occurs without [the other],

Just like a product and impermanence.\(^{[70]}\)

If a sprout, for instance, were a different entity from its own ultimate [entity], it would also be a different entity from its emptiness of true existence, so the sprout would be truly established. Therefore, since it is not a different entity, it is one entity. Although a sprout is empty of its own true existence, it is not its own ultimate truth.
A few texts (338) set forth that the two truths are neither one nor different. Some of them are referring to inherently established oneness and difference whereas others are referring to their not being either different entities or one isolate.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4  Explaining the meaning of the individual divisions

A  Conventional truths
B  Ultimate truths
C  Pointing out that the number of the two truths is definite

The fourth one has three points: conventional truths, ultimate truths, and pointing out that the number of the two truths is definite.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4A  Conventional truths

1  Explaining the meaning of the words “conventional” and “truth”
2  The characteristics of conventional truths
3  Divisions of conventionalities

The first one has three points: explaining the meaning of the words “conventional” and “truth”, the characteristics of conventional truths, and divisions of conventionalities.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4A-1  Explaining the meaning of the words “conventional” and “truth”

A  Explaining the meaning of the word “conventional”
B  Explaining the meaning of the word “truth”
2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4A-1A  Explaining the meaning of the word “conventional”

1  The actual [meaning]

First: In Clear Words three [meanings] for “the conventional” are explained: “concealers of suchness”, “mutually dependent objects”, and “worldly designations”. The latter are said to have the characteristics of objects to be expressed and means of expression, knowers and objects of knowledge and so forth, so they are not just subjective designations, that is consciousneses and expressions. Also, objects of knowledge and objects to be expressed should not all be held to be conventional truths.

In this regard, the convention which is the concealing consciousness from whose perspective form and the like is posited as truly existent, is the first of the three. In fact, it is the ignorance superimposing on phenomena that they have their own inherently established entity which does not exist. This is because true establishment is in fact impossible, so that the positing [of objects] as truly existent is necessarily from the mental perspective. From a mental perspective that does not apprehend true existence, there is no positing [objects] as truly existent. That being so, it says in the Entrance [to the Middle Way]:

Delusion is a concealer, for it obscures nature.
Its fabrications made to seem truly existent
Were called ‘conventional truths’ by the Capable One
And fabricated things he called conventions.  [71]

2  Abandoning mistakes about this

In the Commentary on Entrance [to the Middle Way] it says:

In this way, conventional truths are posited provisionally under the power of afflictive ignorance which is included in the limbs of existence. For hearers, (339) solitary realizers, and bodhisattvas who
have abandoned afflictive ignorance and who see compositional factors as resembling the existence of mirror images and the like, they are fabricated natures rather than truths, because they do not exaggerate them as truly existent. For children they are deceptive, but for others they are mere conventionalities due to their dependent origination in accordance with illusions and the like.  

This statement does not indicate that whenever conventional truths are posited as existent, they are posited as existent due to ignorance nor [does it indicate] that from the perspective of the minds of hearers, solitary realizers and bodhisattvas who have abandoned afflictive ignorance, conventional truths are not established.

The reason for the first [point] is that, as explained earlier, afflicted ignorance is the apprehension of true existence, so the object it apprehends does not even exist conventionally. Whatever is a conventional truth necessarily exists conventionally. Therefore, if [something] is conventional [in the sense] of bases for positing phenomena as conventionally existent, it is necessarily not [something] held to be conventional with regard to afflicted ignorance.

The reason for the second point is that from the perspective of those who have abandoned the conventionality of afflicted ignorance, the conventionalities of adherence to true existence that posits things as true do no exist. That is the reason why compositional factors are established as untrue from their perspective, but it does not establish that they are not conventional truths. Consequently, the statement that, from their perspective, compositional factors are mere conventions means that for them, from among the two [components], conventional and truth, truth cannot be posited. So the word “mere” eliminates truth, but not conventional truth. The meaning of setting forth the two, mere conventions and conventional truths, should be understood like that.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4A-1B Explaining the meaning of the word “truth”

1 The actual [meaning]

In Clear Words it says:

{340} That which is a truth for the world in a concealing manner is a worldly concealer truth.  

This is explained in the Commentary on the Entrance [to the Middle Way]:

That which appears truly existent and inherently separate due to a concealer while not existing inherently is true for a worldly, mistaken concealer. Therefore they are worldly concealer truths.

In accordance with this clear statement, [wordly concealer truths] should be understood as truths for the concealer which is the ignorance explained earlier. They should not be understood as truly established conventionally because otherwise, it would contradict a system in which establishment by way of own characteristics is impossible even conventionally. Also, the refutation of true existence and the establishment of the lack of true existence are done
conventionally. The explanation by Master Jnanagarbha of abidance as conventionally true should also be understood in this manner.

2 Clearing up doubts about that

Now, one might think: from the point of view of a concealer apprehending true existence, reality and the two selves are truths. Therefore, they are truths for a concealer.

If that which is merely true from the point of view of a concealer apprehending true existence were posited as a truth for a concealer, it would indeed be like that. However, that has not been advocated. It was only explained for what concealer the truth of “conventional truth” is a true convention, and how it is true from that perspective.

The definition of conventional truth

A How all phenomena have two natures, along with a source

Second: Each and every external and internal phenomenon has both a conventional and an ultimate nature. More specifically, if this is illustrated for something like a sprout, they are the sprout’s nature found by the reasoning consciousness\(^2\) perceiving the meaning of suchness, a true object of knowledge, and the sprout’s essence found by the conventional consciousness comprehending a deceptive object, a false object of knowledge. The former is the nature of the sprout’s ultimate truth and the latter is the nature of the sprout’s conventional truth. In accordance with that, it says in the Entrance \(\text{[to the Middle Way]}\):

\[
\{341\} \text{Two natures}^{223} \text{ of all things are apprehended,} \\
\text{By seeing what is real and what’s deceptive.} \\
\text{The objects of seeing the real are taught to be suchness,} \\
\text{Deceptive [objects] seen are conventional truths.} \quad \text{[75]}
\]

B Indication that they are found by dissimilar valid cognitions

This indicates that with respect to the sprout’s nature, there are two natures, the two truths. Of those the ultimate one is found by the former consciousness [“seeing the real”] and the conventional one is found by the latter [“Deceptive objects seen”]. It does not indicate one single nature of the sprout as two truths in dependence on the former and latter consciousness. In the Commentary on Entrance \(\text{[to the Middle Way]}\) it says:

\[
\text{Two aspects of the nature of all things have been taught. They are} \\
\text{conventional and ultimate.} \quad \text{[76]}
\]

It is saying that the natures of each and every thing having been divided into the two, the ultimate ones are found by consciousnesses perceiving the real meaning and the conventional ones are found by consciousnesses seeing what is false.

C How it is necessary to acquire the Madhyamika view in order to ascertain the basis as a conventional truth

Conventional truths are not really true but merely true from the point of view of the apprehension of true existence. Therefore, in order to ascertain their meaning isolates, it is necessary to understand them as deceptive. In order to understand a basis of characteristics, for instance a pot, as a false object, a deceptive object of knowledge, it is necessary to acquire a view with regard to that basis, which refutes the referent object apprehended as true by means
of a reasoning consciousness. For, a falsity is not established by valid cognition without its truth having been refuted by reasoning.

D Although the meaning of conventional truth is not established from the point of view of a mind, that does not contradict its ascertainment of a basis of characteristics such as a pot. Although a pot, woollen cloth, and so forth are conventional truths, when they are being established by a mind, the mind does not need to establish the meaning of conventional truth. Likewise, although pots, woollen cloths, and so forth are not inherently existent and accordingly illusion-like in their appearance, the minds that establish them need not establish their meaning of being illusion-like.

E How it is inadmissible to posit pots and the like as conventional from the point of view of a worldly consciousness and as ultimate in relation to aryas

That is why (342) it is inadmissible to propound that, in this system, pots, woolen cloths, and so forth are posited as conventional truths in relation to the consciousness of ordinary beings without the Madhyamika view, and that they are posited as ultimate truths in relation to aryas. That would be the opposite of what is set forth in the Commentary on the Entrance [to the Middle Way]:

That is to say, whatever ultimate there is for ordinary beings, the same is a mere conventionality for aryas with the sphere of activity involving appearances. Whatever emptiness of inherent existence there is, is ultimate for them. [77]

Ordinary beings apprehend pots and the like as truly existent and precisely that is the conception of ultimate existence. In relation to their consciousness, pots and the like are therefore ultimately established rather than being conventional objects. The bases that are ultimately established for them, pots and the like, are conventionalities in relation to the vision of exalted wisdom in the continuum of aryas which comprehends illusion-like appearances. Since they cannot be posited as true in relation to that consciousness they are said to be “mere conventionalities”.

F The need to differentiate between pots and the like and their inherent nature

Since their inherent nature is thus set forth as an ultimate truth, you should discriminate and say that pots and the like are conventionalities and their inherent nature is ultimate for aryas. You should not propound that pots and the like are ultimates for aryas. This is because the reasoning consciousness seeing the meaning of reality does not find pots and the like, and because that which the reasoning consciousness seeing the meaning of reality finds is set forth as the meaning of an ultimate truth.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4A-3 Explaining divisions of conventionalities

A The ways in which Prasangika and Svatrantrika posit the object of negation do not agree, therefore they are also not the same in their distinction of real and wrong conventionalities

The Svatrantrika-Madhyamikas ascertain that consciousness which appears to be established by way of its own characteristics exists just as it appears. Therefore, they do not distinguish between real and wrong subjects [but instead] distinguish whether the appearances of objects do or do not exist by way of their own characteristics in accordance with how they appear. They assert [this] in accordance with the [following] statement in [Nanagarbha’s] Two Truths:
They seem the same, but since some can
{343} And some cannot fulfil a function
A distinction is made between real
And unreal conventionalities. [78]

The present system asserts that whatever appears to the ignorant as established by way of its own characteristics is an appearance of that consciousness polluted by ignorance. Therefore, conventional objects are not distinguished as the two, real and wrong.

B Although the reflection of a face is not a conventional truth in relation to a worldly person familiar with terminology, it is a conventional truth generally speaking

Now, it says in the Commentary on Entrance [to the Middle Way]:

Whatever is false even conventionally is not a conventional truth. [79]

For the worldly conventional [consciousness] of someone familiar with terminology something like the reflection of a face is not true as a face. Hence, it is not conventionally true in relation to it. While this is so it is still the object found by [a consciousness] seeing a deceptive object, a false object of knowledge, so it is a conventional truth. The consciousness to which the reflection appears is mistaken about its appearing object, and likewise the ignorant to whom something blue and the like appears to be established by way of its own characteristics are mistaken about that appearing object.

C That mistaken consciousness helps posit a false object of comprehension even though it does not posit a true object of comprehension

When a true object of comprehension is posited, it would be contradictory for a consciousness mistaken in that way to posit it. However, precisely that is helpful for positing false objects of comprehension. Otherwise something could not be posited as a conventional truth if it had not been established conventionally, so when illusion-like falsities are posited conventionally, they could not be posited [as] conventional truths.

D How real and wrong conventionalities are posited in relation to the world, along with a source

The Prasangika system posits six consciousnesses unaffected by temporary causes of deception, six consciousnesses that are the opposite of those, six objects apprehended by the former six consciousnesses, and {344} six objects apprehended by the latter six. The wrong objects and subjects are posited as wrong conventionalities, whereas the objects and subjects that are not wrong are posited as real conventionalities. Furthermore, it posits them as real and wrong conventions in relation to worldly or conventional valid cognition rather than in relation to a reasoning consciousness that accords with an arya’s vision. In our Madhyamika system the two, the appearances of reflections and the like and [the appearances] of blue and the like to someone ignorant therefore do not differ with regard to whether or not they are mistaken in relation to their appearing objects. That is why real and wrong conventionalities are not distinguished 226. In Entrance [to the Middle Way] it says:

That which the worldly realize, apprehended

293
With the six non-defective senses
Is true from only the worldly perspective. The rest
Is posited as wrong from that perspective. [80]

Conventional valid cognition does not establish the opposite of, for instance, the mode of apprehension arising from the mind’s being temporarily polluted by one’s own bad tenets, the two that exist with respect to the apprehension of persons and phenomena established through their own characteristics. This is an exception.227

Moreover, although dualistic appearances occur for the wisdom cognizing varieties free from all causes of pollution through predispositions of ignorance, it is not mistaken with regard to its appearing objects. The reason has been explained elsewhere.228

The second one has three points: explaining the meaning of “ultimate” and “truth”, the characteristics of ultimate truths, and divisions of ultimate truths.

First: In Clear Words it says:

It is an object229 and it is ultimate, therefore it is the ultimate object. It is true, therefore it is the ultimate object truth. [81]

This asserts [that] both (345) “ultimate” and “object” [apply] with regard to the “ultimate object truth”.

The way in which an ultimate truth is true is its non-deceptiveness. Specifically, it does not deceive the world, abiding in one way and appearing in a different way. In the Commentary on Sixty [Verses of] Reasoning it says that an ultimate truth is merely posited as existent by means of worldly conventions.230

That being so, the meaning of the word ‘truth’ in ‘conventional truth’ which is ‘a truth from the point of view of the apprehension of true existence’ and [the meaning of the word ‘truth’ in] ‘ultimate truth’ are not the same.
1 How to identify the definition of an ultimate truth

First: The definition of an ultimate truth is as explained above: in the Entrance [to the Middle Way] it is said to be that which is found by seeing the meaning of a real object of knowledge. In the commentary on that it says:

That is to say the ultimate gains its own entity through being the object of the special exalted wisdom of those perceiving reality but it is not established by way of its own selfhood. This is one nature.

[82]

It is said to be found by uncontaminated exalted wisdom comprehending suchness and not to be established by way of its own entity, so the proposition that something is established as truly existent if found by uncontaminated meditative equipoise, is being refuted. “Special exalted wisdom” indicates that what is found by any wisdom of an aryas is not sufficient, and that instead only what is found by a special exalted wisdom, the exalted wisdom that knows the mode\(^{231}\), is an ultimate truth. The meaning of “found” is “established as such by that consciousness”, like with conventionalities.

2 How it is found by an aryas uncontaminated exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise that knows the mode

Yet how does it find it? While the eyes of someone with a cataract see falling hairs on the basis of the air around, {346} the eyes of someone without a cataract do not see even an appearance of falling hairs on the same basis. Likewise, those who are damaged by the cataract of ignorance observe an own entity of aggregates and the like. With the uncontaminated exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of those who have exhausted all the predispositions of ignorance and [of] aryas on the path of learning, employing the mode of perception of suchness, not even subtle dualistic appearance is perceived, like with the eyes of someone who does not have a cataract. The inherent nature perceived through this mode of perception is an ultimate truth.

3 A source for that

In the Entrance [to the Middle Way] it says:

Where wrong entities such as falling hairs
Are imputed through the force of cataracts
One with pure eyes sees the nature, suchness.
Suchness should be known here in like manner. [83]

In its commentary it also says:

“Whatever inherent nature of aggregates and the like those free from the predispositions of ignorance, the Buddhas, perceive in the manner of those without cataracts seeing falling hairs - that is their ultimate truth.” [84]
4 Indicating that a nirvana is an ultimate truth

The ultimate perceived in this manner is the ultimate nature of two natures that each and every phenomenon has. More specifically, it is both the naturally pure nirvana, which is the emptiness of inherent establishment of phenomena, and just that free from all the different seeds of defilements, the nirvana which is a true cessation.

5 It is not the intended meaning of the commentary on Sixty [Verses of] Reasoning that nirvana is a conventional truth

In the commentary on Sixty [Verses of] Reasoning it says:

If you ask ‘is nirvana also a conventional truth?’ - it is so.

Also:

Therefore, a nirvana is only imputed as a conventional truth.

[85]

That means positing a nirvana, an ultimate truth, as existent, also implies positing it as merely existent for a conventional consciousness, a conventional truth. It does not mean this system views a nirvana as a conventional truth, because that same commentary also explains that the three truths are conventional truths and that nirvana is an ultimate truth. In the Commentary on the Entrance to the Middle Way the other three truths are also set forth as conventional truths and the truth of cessation as an ultimate truth. In response to the objection that if a nirvana were posited as conventionally existent, this would contradict the statement that it is an ultimate truth, it says that it was taught as conventionally true only by worldly designations.

6 A source for positing all phenomena by the power of designations

Therefore, everything posited as existent is posited by the power of worldly designations. In the [Sutra of the] Perfection of Wisdom in 100,000 Verses it says:

All these phenomena are labelled in dependence on worldly designations, they are not ultimate.

[86]

And in the Seventy [Verses on Emptiness] it also says:

Abidance, production, destruction, existence,
Non-existence or low, equal, special
Were taught by the Buddha by the power of the World’s designations and not reality.

[87]

[In other words] all the various presentations of production, destruction and abidance, low, supreme and intermediate, ‘This exists and this does not exist’ the Jina taught, were taught as merely posited by the power of worldly designations. He did not say they were posited by the power of appreciating real abidance that is not merely merely posited by power of designations.
Master Jñānagarbha explains:

Since it is a truth for an ultimate [consciousness], it is an ultimate truth.

He thereby also explains that a reasoning consciousness is ultimate and thus says that what is non-deceptive for it is a truth. However, he \{348\} does not mean truly existent in terms of bearing analysis, because in that text the true establishment of all phenomena is refuted. Therefore, we assert the proposition “If the ultimate were not true for an ultimate [consciousness], the conventional would not be true for a conventional [consciousness]”. However, to propound that “If the former were not established for the former, the latter would not be established for the latter” is to say that if the negation of a truth were not truly established, the phenomenon that is the basis of the negation would be truly established. This is because an ultimate truth is posited as the mere negation of true existence in the phenomenon which is the basis of the negation, and because to suggest that phenomena are not conventionally established is to suggest that they are not falsely established. Like that it would be totally incoherent, because it is due to the very fact that the appearing phenomena, which do not exist in a truly established way, are not established as truly existent, that the bases of negation must be established as falsities.

Therefore, although for something to be posited as conventionally existent it need not be established by a reasoning consciousness of suchness, it must not be damaged by any valid cognition, \[that is by\] a conventional or reasoning consciousness. The commentary on Sixty [Verses of] Reasoning explains that since the appropriated aggregates conventionally abide as the four, impermanent and so forth, the apprehension of the four is unmistaken in relation to them, and since the aggregates do not abide even conventionally as the four, permanent and so forth, the apprehension of those four is mistaken in relation to them. In the Entrance [to the Middle Way] it says:

The self as imputed by non-Buddhist extremists
Carried away by the torpor of unknowing
And what is imputed on magic displays and illusions
Does not even exist from a worldly perspective.

This is saying that the self, the primal substance, and so forth, imputed by non-Buddhist extremists, as well as the objects conceived as the horses, elephants, and so forth of illusions do not even conventionally exist. Therefore, the proposition that it is the Prasangika approach to posit as conventionally existent what only exists for a mistaken mind, \{349\} is meaningless prattle. None of the other great Madhyamikas asserts this either.

Also, in Entrance [to the Middle Way] objects and subjects are taken to be equal in terms of existence and non-existence. This is so not with reference to mere existence and non-existence in general. Rather, the two are taken [to be equal in terms of] inherent existence and non-existence.
Although [phenomena] are merely posited by the power of designations, this does not eliminate their establishment by valid cognition and so forth. That being so, [whatever] is posited as conventionally existent is posited as existent by the power of nominal conventions, but not everything posited by the power of these is asserted to be conventionally existent. Although [phenomena] are asserted as merely posited by the power of designations, the word “mere” eliminates the meaning that they are not subjective conventions. It does not at all eliminate that the object posited is established by valid cognition.

What this system does not do is search - dissatisfied with such a way of positing [phenomena] by the power of conventional imputation - for an imputed object which is not merely that but exists in accordance with its meaning and, if it is found, posit it as existent whereas if it is not, posit it as non-existent. Rather, it asserts that if something findable emerged as one searches with this search method, it would be truly established. Therefore, it does not assert even conventionally that anything is found to exist upon such analysis. From there the diving line between analyzing and not analyzing suchness is also drawn. So [the Prasangikas] see that if [something] established by way of its own characteristics existed, it would have to exist by way of its own entity as an object not merely posited by the power of subjective designations. [Having seen that], they do not even conventionally assert inherent existence, existence by way of own characteristics or existence by way of an own entity. This has already been explained in detail elsewhere.

Rejecting an objection

1 Setting out an objection

2 Explanatory answer

If the Buddha’s exalted wisdom knowing the mode [of being of phenomena] finds ultimate truths, [how about] the following statement from the Commentary on Entrance [to the Middle Way]:

Is such a nature not invisible? Therefore, how do they perceive it? That is indeed true, however, [350] it is said that they perceive it by means of non-perception. [90]

It explains the non-perception of anything at all to be suchness. As a source for that the explanation that ultimate truth transcends even the objects of omniscient exalted wisdom is quoted. It is also explained that at the level of buddhahood the movement of mind and mental factors has permanently stopped and that at the time of [attaining] the ten powers, when the Buddha does not perceive aggregates and so forth, he knows all phenomena. How are you not contradicting these [explanations]?

A There is no contradiction, because what that system [representative] means to point out is that from the point of view of an exalted wisdom knowing the mode and perceiving the ultimate, conventionalities are not observed

“They perceive by means of non-perception” does not refer to not seeing any objects at all. Rather, it points out that if these objects, observed due to the cataract of ignorance, existed in reality, they would have to be observed by the uncontaminated exalted wisdom of an arya’s
meditative equipoise, so their suchness is perceived by way of their utter non-perception. This is because if the object of negation existed, it would be observable, so given its non-observation the realization of the negation of the object of negation is posited. The meaning of “Without seeing seeing is best“ should also be understood in this way.

B A source for that

Thus it also says in the Summary [Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom]:

‘Those who don’t see forms, and also don’t see feelings, Don’t see discriminations, and do not see intentions, Do not see consciousness nor mind nor intellect, See reality’, is what the Tathagata teaches.
Sentient beings see space and put that into words.
Through that way in which space is seen investigate this!
That’s how reality’s also seen, the Tathagata teaches.
Through other analogies, seeing cannot be expressed. [91]

What is not seen are said to be the five aggregates and what is seen is reality. {351} That is the meaning of suchness just as in the statement “He who sees interdependence sees reality.”

C Elucidating the meaning of that sutra [passage]

More specifically, in the analogy, space is the mere elimination of obstructive, tangible objects and seeing or realizing it is like not seeing the obscuring obstructive objects of negation which would be observable if they were present. What is seen is space and what is not seen are obscuring obstructions.

The two last lines negate that suchness is seen the way you see blue rather than in accordance with the analogy. The statement that the five aggregates are not seen indicates that in the face of suchness perceived by uncontaminated meditative equipoise, phenomena are not seen.

D The Sutra on Engaging in the Two Truths explains that in the face of perceiving the ultimate with an exalted knower of all aspects, dualistic appearance disappears, but it does not teach that the ultimate is not realized

In [the Sutra on] Entering the Two Truths it says:

Son of the gods, ultimate truth is beyond [all objects] up to and including objects of omniscient exalted wisdom possessing the supreme of aspects; it is not like what is expressed by “ultimate truth”. [92]

What is being explained is that [ultimate truths] are not seen in accordance with the appearance to the mind of object and subject as separate when you say “ultimate truth”. Therefore, the quotation is a source for the disappearance of dualistic appearance rather than for the non-realization of the ultimate by the Buddha.

E How such a mode of perception is also set forth in the Commentary on Entrance [to the Middle Way]

In the Commentary on Entrance [to the Middle Way] it also says:
Without touching created things, he realizes suchness by making manifest their nature only. That is why he is called “Buddha”.

[93]

From the perspective of perceiving suchness with a Buddha’s exalted wisdom knowing the mode, reality only is said to be realized without touching what dependends on other233.

F The sutra statement that during meditative equipoise there is no movement of mind posits that there is no movement of conceptual thought.

The movement of mind and mental factors234 coming to an end {352} means that while suchness is actualized, the movement of conceptual thought comes to an end. It does not indicate that the mind or mental factors do not exist. In Clear Words it says:

If conceptual thought is movement of the mind, suchness is non-conceptual, for it is free from it. As is set forth in sutra: “What is ultimate truth? If there is not even movement of the mind in it, what need is there to mention the written word.”

[94]

The meaning of the statement that there is no movement of the mind is explained as the absence of conceptual thought. Moreover, in the Commentary on Entrance [to the Middle Way] it is set forth that at the time of an arya’s meditative equipoise on the path of learning, it has not come to a permanent end, whereas at the time of buddhahood it has.

G How the proposition that ultimate truth is not an object of knowledge and such like are nothing but wrong.

Apart from that, Entering [the Middle Way] establishes with an accompanying source, that if that inherent nature did not exist, the bodhisattvas would pointlessly undergo hardships for the sake of realizing it:

One may well ask: “What is their nature?” That which is unfabricated about them and which does not depend on anything else: their own nature235 that is realized by a consciousness free from the cataract of ignorance. Whoever wonders whether or not it exists: If it did not exist, then for what purpose what would bodhisattvas cultivate the path of the perfections, why would bodhisattvas undertake hundreds of hardships in order to realize reality? [95]

And as a source for that:

Son of the lineage, if the ultimate did not exist, pure conduct would be meaningless and it would be pointless for tathagatas to come forth. Since the ultimate exists, bodhisattvas are called ‘those skilled in the ultimate’.

If ultimate truth {353} did not exist, it would be pointless to engage in conduct for the sake of the purity of final nirvana, disciples would not be able to realize it, it would be pointless for a buddha to come to the world, and the great children of the jinas would not be skilled in
ultimate truth. Thus a sutra establishing that ultimate truth exists is quoted. Therefore, it is simply wrong to say that the great master's system propounds ultimate truth not to be an object of knowledge and the exalted wisdom realizing suchness not to exist in an arya's meditative equipoise.

Furthermore it says in the *Commentary on Entering [the Middle Way]*:

> Therefore, it is posited from imputation that suchness is realized, but actually it is not that something is known by something else, because neither the knower nor the object of knowledge have even arisen.

[96]

The first [part] means that the realization of suchness is posited with the two, exalted wisdom and suchness, taken separately as object and subject. It is posited merely from the perspective of conventional consciousness rather than from the perspective of that wisdom. "The knower has not arisen" means that it has not inherently arisen and is said to be like water put in water with respect to its object.

Suchness is actualised by way of stopping the movement of conceptual thought

[When] it says:

> Since mind and mental factors do not operate with respect to suchness, the object of exalted wisdom, it is actualised only by the body.

[97]

... the object to be actualised is suchness, the subject, exalted wisdom, is that which actualizes it, and the enjoyment body is the agent of actualisation, that is the knower. The manner in which it is thereby actualized is by way of stopping conceptual minds and mental factors as explained earlier. From the explanation in the *Commentary*, it is understood that the body by means of which suchness is actualized is in the nature of peace because it is free from mind and mental factors.

If a buddha did not perceive the aggregates and the like, his exalted knowledge of varieties would be deprecated

If a buddha did not perceive the aggregates and the like, his exalted knowledge of varieties as well as the varieties of all objects would be deprecated, because the two, existing and not being known by a buddha, are contradictory.

Therefore, the varieties of objects must appear to the exalted knower of varieties, and since knowledge without aspects is not [part of] this system, the aspects occur [to it]. Yet the varieties of appearing objects consist both of that which is unpolluted by the predispositions of ignorance such as the major and minor marks of a buddha, and that which is polluted by the predispositions of ignorance such as the impure inanimate and animate world. As for the
first of these, it would be meaningless if they came to an end at the Buddha level, whereas the latter come to an end at that level because their causes have come to an end.

L How the manner in which they appear to an exalted knower of all aspects that realizes varieties differs from the manner in which they appear to other persons

The mode of appearance is as follows. When a Buddha’s major and minor marks appear to a person who has not abandoned ignorance, they are not established by way of their own characteristics, but still appear to be. The reason for this is not that those objects arise due to the predispositions of ignorance. Rather, they appear due to the subjects being polluted by the predispositions of ignorance. This is not because they appear to that subject merely from the perspective of appearing that way to other persons, but because they appear that way from its own perspective. Forms, sounds, and the like, objects that are not established by way of their own characteristics, but still appear that way to someone who has not abandoned ignorance, appear to a buddha’s exalted wisdom knowing the varieties only by means of their appearance to persons with the pollution of ignorance. They do not appear from a buddha’s own perspective, independently of their appearing that way to others. Therefore, a buddha knows forms and the like that are not inherently established but still appear to be, yet it is from the perspective of their appearing that way to the ignorant. Independently of their appearing that way to those persons, from a buddha’s own perspective, he would not know them in the manner of their appearing that way. Hence, there is no sense that he is deceived by appearances, because they do not appear from pollution existing within exalted wisdom but due to the fact that that wisdom necessarily knows all objects of knowledge. That being so, all things appear to be selfless, inherently non-existent entities from the perspective of an exalted knower of the varieties whereby they appear as illusion-like falsities. They do not appear as truths. When they appear to that exalted wisdom in terms of their appearance to the ignorant, they merely arise as that which appears true for other persons

M It is also set forth like this in the Sixty [Verses of] Reasoning

In Sixty [Verses of] Reasonings it also says:

Those who are skilled with respect to things
See collections - impermanent things,
Deceptive phenomena - and [their] emptiness,
Selflessness as [their] aspects as “isolates”.       [98]

In the commentary on this it says that those who have completed the deeds perceive things in that way.

N Although they are one entity, it is not contradictory to posit individual exalted knowers in relation to the two truths, the object

Thus it says in the Two Truths:

Omniscient knowers directly perceive
All the dependently arisen
Free from imputed entities -
Just this, just as it appears.               [99]
They are said to perceive all the varieties directly and vividly. Furthermore:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{When consciousness and objects of knowledge} \\
\text{And the self are not perceived,} \\
\text{Since signs do not appear [to him],} \\
\text{[He] firmly abides, so he does not arise.}
\end{align*}
\]

What is being explained is that he never arises from the concentration in which dualistic appearance has been completely pacified.

(356) To someone who does not understand these statements of two modes correctly, it will seem contradictory to assert both and not [just] one of the two, but there is no contradiction. The exalted wisdom perceiving suchness and the exalted wisdom perceiving the varieties are one entity, but that does not in the least contradict the fact that in relation to individual objects it is the two, a reasoning consciousness and a conventional consciousness.

\[
\text{O When the two valid cognitions comprehend objects individually on the occasion of the view of the bases or on the occasion of the fruit, you need to know which of the two valid cognitions is active}
\]

This depends on knowing well that there is not the slightest contradiction in the occurrence of two different modes of finding [objects] by means of the two, reasoning and conventional valid cognitions, on the basis of one object on the occasion of the view of the bases\(^{239}\). If you know well that on the occasion of the fruit, when the objects are comprehended by means of the two exalted wisdoms, that is [indeed] the case, and furthermore which of the two valid cognitions is active, then you will also be able to know that they do not become a common locus\(^{240}\) even though they do not ascertain their objects separately. Through this you will also understand fine details of the definitions of the two truths.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4B-3 Explaining the divisions of ultimate truths

A The fact that different ways of dividing ultimate truths have emerged

When ultimate truths are divided, it is in accordance with the Commentary on Entering [the Middle Way] which sets forth 16 emptinesses in case emptiness is divided in detail, four in case of a middling division - the emptiness of things, non-things, self entity and other entity - and two if it is abridged - the selflessness of persons and phenomena.

Other texts set forth the two, actual ultimates and concordant ultimates. In Illumination of the Middle it says:

\[
\text{This non-production accords with the ultimate and is therefore called an “ultimate”, but actually it is not, because in actuality the ultimate is beyond all elaborations.} \quad [100]
\]

And in Ornament of the Middle it also says:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Since it accords with the ultimate,} \\
\text{This is (357) called an “ultimate”.} \\
\text{If it really were, it would be} \\
\text{Free from all hosts of elaborations.} \quad [101]
\end{align*}
\]
In the *Two Truths* this is set forth in the same way and in the auto-commentary on the *Two Truths* as well as the *Ornament of the Sutras* it is explained that the negation of ultimately (existent) production and the like is conventional.

B How [masters of] earlier generations explain the entity of the ultimate set forth in those texts

With respect to the meaning of those [statements], many earlier [masters] differentiate two ultimate truths, specified and unspecified ones. They assert that the emptiness which negates ultimate production and so forth with regard to form and the like is the former - an imputed ultimate truth with the characteristics of a conventional truth – and that the latter cannot be made the object of any awareness whatsoever, so that it is not an object of knowledge.

C Those texts explaining the two ultimates are not meant to refer to objects only

Since that is not the meaning of those [texts], they should be explained like this: although the object, reality, must indeed be taken as ultimate, the subject, a reasoning consciousness, is also often explained as such. In the *Two Truths* it says:

Since it is without deception, a reasoning [consciousness] is an ultimate.

[102]

It is just as it says in *Illumination of the Middle* as well:

Propositions such as ‘Ultimately, there is no production whatsoever’ are also asserted to mean this: all consciousnesses arisen from correct hearing, thinking, and meditating are unmistaken subjects and therefore, called “ultimate”, because their objects are most superior.

[103]

Of the two types of reasoning consciousness, the non-conceptual exalted wisdom of an aryā’s meditative equipoise is without conceptions whereas the reasoning consciousness comprehending suchness based on signs is conceptual and so forth. The explanation in *Blaze of Reasoning* that with respect to the ultimate, there is both a non-conceptual exalted wisdom and a wisdom that accords with it, has the same implications as the explanation of two ultimates in *Illumination of the Middle*. Therefore, the meaning of the texts is not that the explanation of two ultimates should be applied to objective ultimates only without applying them to subjects.

D How to separately posit the two reasoning consciousnesses, the actual ultimate and that which accords with it

In this regard, the first one is an actual ultimate, because when engaging in suchness, it is able to simultaneously eliminate elaborations of true existence and dualistic appearance with respect to its object. That is also what is meant by “beyond all elaborations”⁷⁴. The second one is able to refute the elaboration of true existence with respect to its object, however, it cannot eliminate the elaboration of dualistic appearance. Therefore, it is an ultimate that accords in aspect with the supramundane ultimate.

E In relation to the perspective of the[se] minds, it is necessary to explain two modes also with respect to the ultimates of objects

It is necessary to explain two modes also with respect to the ultimates of objects which refute ultimate production and so forth with regard to forms and so forth. For a reasoning, non-
conceptual consciousness that emptiness of the objects is the actual ultimate always free from the two elaborations. For a reasoning, conceptual consciousness on the other hand, it is not an actual ultimate always free from the two elaborations, because it is only free from one class of them. Still, this is not to say that in general it is not an actual ultimate truth. So, except for some minds from whose perspective all the elaborations of dualistic appearance are gone, the emptiness of true existence cannot be free from all elaborations. Therefore, the meaning of the texts is not that if something is an ultimate truth, it must be free from all elaborations of dualistic appearance.

F The ultimate asserted by [those propounding] an establishment of illusion by a reasoning [consciousness] is not an actual ultimate

This being so, [proponents of] the establishment of illusion by a reasoning [consciousness] assert that a mere object established by an inferential reasoning consciousness, the collection of a basis such as an aggregate and the appearance of its emptiness of true existence, is an ultimate truth. It is a concordant ultimate, but it is not an ultimate truth.

G It is inappropriate to prove that sprouts and the like appear to lack true existence with their appearing free from [being] one and many

Also, proving that sprouts and the like lack true existence with their appearing free from [being] one and many (359) does not have the point of such a proof for a person with understanding, who has not eliminated doubt as to whether or not that basis truly exists. For those who have eliminated the doubt, this sign, although a sign, is not correct. In *Illumination of the Middle* it says that both the sign and the predicate are mere eliminations and that it is the same if “it is neither one nor many” or non-duality are taken as signs. From those very examples, you know that the statements do not refer to affirming negatives. Therefore, this is not at all the assertion of Master Shantarakshita, his son [Kamalashila], or Master Haribhadra.

H The manner in which Madhyamika [proponents] of complete non-abidance assert the ultimate is not in accordance with how earlier [scholars] explain it

As for the elimination of elaborations that are the object of negation with regard to appearances, a distinction is made between a mere elimination and a determining elimination. None of the great Madhyamikas asserts that the latter, the mere object comprehended by an inferential conference, is an ultimate truth. The explanation of their presentations in the extensive lamrim should be understood in detail along these lines.

I Although the refutation of ultimate production and so forth is not a conventionality, that does not contradict the demonstration that it exists conventionally

In the course of explaining the negative of production and so forth as a concordant ultimate truth, [Jñanagarbha in his] auto-commentary on the Two Truths says:

> Others hold it to be only real. So, ‘also’ has the meaning of union. In fact, if analyzed with reasoning, it is only conventional. Why? Since the object of refutation does not exist, it is clear that, in reality, what has been refuted does not exist. [104]

[He is saying that] others, Cittamatrins, assert the emptiness which refutes a self of phenomena in the basis of refutation to be established in reality while [his] own system teaches that since the object of refutation, the self of phenomena, does not exist, the negation
that is its negative is not established in reality. Therefore, the explanation that a negative of ultimate production and so forth is conventional means that it exists conventionally rather than indicating that it is a conventionality.

J. The statement that when something blue appears, its emptiness of true existence appears to the eye consciousness implies an affirming negative. Therefore, it is not contradictory for its emptiness of true existence to be an ultimate truth.

In the same [commentary] it also says:

‘Since real production and so forth {360} does not appear when a thing appears, it is a wrong conventionality. Likewise, the negative of real production and so forth is a conventionality: when the thing, the basis of negation, appears, it does not appear.’ The answer to that: it is not that it does not appear, because it is not different from the entity of the thing.

The explanation that when[ever] something like blue appears, its appearance of true existence will [also] appear. [does] not [imply] that a mere elimination, the negative of true existence, appears to the eye consciousness. Rather, it implies an affirming negative. Therefore, something like that has the characteristics of a conventionality, yet it is not contradictory for an emptiness, the mere elimination of true existence, to be an ultimate truth.

L. The way in which the two reasoning consciousnesses, non-conceptual and conceptual, along with their objects, are posited separately as actual and concordant ultimates is the same as before.

The Ornament of the Middle explains that although the negative of ultimate production and so forth is included among real conventionals, it is [a concordant ultimate] since it accords with the ultimate. As for the ultimate, it says that the entire web of elaborations such as the existence and non-existence of things has been abandoned. As for the web of elaborations, it says in the auto-commentary on Two Truths:

“It is not empty, not non-empty,
Not existent nor non-existent,
Neither produced nor non-produced”
Such is what the Bhagavan taught.

And:

Why is that? It is without elaborations. Suchness is free from the entire web of conceptions246.

As explained [here], the web of conceptions is a web of elaborations. However, since those stop in the face of the direct realisation of suchness, that is the actual ultimate. A reasoning consciousness, which is unlike it, along with its object, is concordant with the former and so forth as before. With regard to the negative of ultimate production and so forth, there are also the two, the reasoning consciousness that negates it and its object of comprehension, so the way in which it is included among real conventions should also be understood on that basis.

This manner of explaining freedom from the web of all elaborations that exist in association with the two truths is {361} needed on many occasions.
Third: If a given basis is positively set off as a false, deceptive object, it is necessarily eliminated as being a non-deceptive object. Therefore, non-deceptive and deceptive are mutually exclusive, so that there presence is contradictory. Since they pervade all objects of knowledge in a mutually exclusive manner, they also exclude a third group. For that reason, you should know that with respect to objects of knowledge, the enumeration as the two truths is definite.

In [the] Meeting of Father and Son [Sutra] it says:

In this manner, the Tathagata realizes the two truths, conventional and ultimate, and objects of knowledge are also exhausted in these conventional and ultimate truths. [107]

[Thus,] all objects of knowledge are said to be exhausted in the two truths. In the Noble Concentration Definitely Showing Suchness the enumeration as the two truths is set forth clearly:

Everything is a convention or likewise an ultimate;
A third truth whatsoever does not exist. [108]

It is said that if you know the division between the two truths, you will not be confused about the words of the Muni whereas if you do not know it, you will not know the essence of his teachings. Moreover, you need to understand it in accordance with how the Protector Nagarjuna settled it. In the Entrance [to the Middle Way] it says:

Outside the path of Lord Nagarjuna,
Methods for pacification do not exist.
Those are corruptions of truths, of conventions and suchness.
Through their corruption one cannot attain liberation.
Once conventional truths have turned into methods,
Ultimate truths will be produced from them.
One who does not know this twofold division
Enters bad paths because of wrong conceptions. [109]

Therefore, it is extremely important for those who want liberation to be skilled in the two truths.
Now, how many [types of] special insights are there? Here, not the special insight of exalted levels but the special insight you should cultivate while still a normal being will mainly be pointed out.

If you carry out an exhaustive division of that special insight, there are the special insights of the four natures, the three gates, and the six search modes.

The four are thorough differentiation and so forth taught in [the Sutra] Unravelling the Thought. In this regard, thorough differentiation observes the varieties of things. Exceedingly thorough differentiation observes the mode. The first has two types, full investigation and full analysis. The second one also has two types, investigation and analysis. They discriminate coarse and fine objects. The identification of those four is set forth in Shravaka Levels, Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom and other scriptures.

The three gates, arisen from a sign, arisen from thorough searching, and arisen from individual investigation, are stated in [the Sutra] Unravelling the Intent. To illustrate, with regard to the meaning of selflessness for example, those three are identified as follows: The first one observes the selflessness already ascertained and attends to its signs, but does not settle much [itself]. The second one does settle [the meaning] for the sake of ascertaining that which has not been ascertained before. The third one carries out an analysis, as [was done] before, of the meaning already ascertained.

The six search modes {363} carry out a thorough research of meanings, things, characteristics, sides, time as well as reasoning and, having sought them, also individually investigate them.

With regard to those [six], the research of meanings is the research “The meaning of this word is this”. The research of things is the research “This is an internal thing. This is an external thing”. There are two search modes of characteristics: “This is a specific characteristic, that is a general characteristic,” or the common and the uncommon. The research of sides is a research in terms of faults and disadvantages, the black side, and in terms of positive qualities and benefits, the white side. The research of time is the research “In the past, such and such occurred. In the future, such and such will occur. At present, such and such is occurring”. As for the research of reasoning, the reasoning is of four types. The reasoning of dependency is that the occurrence of effects depends on causes and conditions. It is also [a reasoning] in
terms of the conventional, the ultimate and their bases. The reasoning of the performance of
functions is that phenomena perform their own functions, such as fire performing the
function of burning. It is also the research “This is the phenomenon. This is the function.
This phenomenon performs this function”. The reasoning of establishment through validity
is to establish a meaning without contradicting valid cognition. It is a research where you
wonder whether or not the three valid cognitions, direct perception, inference, and reliable
scripture, are present with regard to such and such. The reasoning of nature is dedicated to
natures that are well-known in the world, such as heat being the nature of fire, moisture being
the nature of water and so forth, to inconceivable natures, and to abiding natures. They are
sought without thinking of other reasons for their being like that.

C  Explaining those six as three [groups] from the point of view of their object of observation

Through the sixfold presentation in this way, the objects to be known by a yogi (364) are
ascertained as three: the meaning of expressions, the varieties of objects of knowledge, and
the mode. The first research is [posited] in terms of the first [object]. The research of things
and the research of characteristics is [posited] in terms of the second one. The remaining
three and the research of general characteristics are posited in terms of the third one.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2B3C  Explanation of condensed divisions

1  The way in which the three gates and the six [search modes] are included in the four natures

The gates of the four special insights explained first are three [in number] while the search
modes are taught as six. Thus, the three gates and the six researches are included in the
former four.

2  How there are four types of mental attention with regard to them

In the *Shravaka Levels* it is set forth that the four types of mental attention explained above,
forced attention and so forth (247), are common to both calm abiding and special insight.
Therefore, the four mental attentions are also present with special insight.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2C  How to cultivate special insight

1  Explaining the meaning of the statement that special insight is cultivated in dependence on
calm abiding

2  What point of view this system adopts, that of Hinayana or Mahayana paths

3  Explanation of the actual way to cultivate special insight in dependence on calm abiding

The third one has three points: Explaining the meaning of the statement that special insight
is cultivated in dependence on calm abiding, what point of view this system adopts, Hinayana
or Mahayana paths, and explanation of the actual way to cultivate special insight in
dependence on calm abiding.

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2C1  Explaining the meaning of the statement that special insight is
cultivated in dependence on calm abiding

A  The statement in many texts that they should be practiced in this order

In [the Sutra] *Unravelling the Thought* it says that special insight should be cultivated later, after
calm abiding has first been accomplished. This is also stated similarly in many other texts
such as those by Venerable [Maitreyal], the *Bodhisattva Levels*, the *Shravaka Levels*, Bhavaviveka,
Shantideva, Kamalashila’s three [tomes] *Stages of Meditation* and the *Instructions on the Perfection
of Wisdom*.
B. Those texts do not say that after prior generation of calm abiding observing the varieties, special insight consists in just sustaining the observation of selflessness. The intended meaning of these [texts] is not that after prior generation of calm abiding observing any object without observing the meaning of selflessness, special insight is understood as just sustaining the observation of selflessness. This is because the two, calm abiding and special insight, are not differentiated by way of their object of observation. The Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom also explain that after observing suchness, the emptiness of duality between subject and object, and generating calm abiding, you generate special insight through analytical meditation observing that same object of observation. Arya Asanga also discusses a special insight observing the varieties and says that after calm abiding has been generated, in dependence on it special insight with peaceful and coarse aspects is cultivated. Moreover, he says it is a path common to both non-Buddhists and Buddhists as well as to common beings and aryas.

C. When calm abiding is initially being achieved, it is inappropriate to analyze various aspects in the object of observation rather than placing [the mind] on it single-pointedly. That being so, it is inappropriate for someone who has not attained calm abiding, as he newly practices, not to practice placing [the mind] single-pointedly on whatever object of observation it may be, but rather to practice analyzing various aspects with regard to his object of observation. The reason for this is that if he proceeds in the former manner, he will achieve calm abiding, whereas if he proceeds in the latter manner, he will not be able to achieve it.

D. If instead of mere placement meditation by means of the calm abiding achieved previously, analytical meditation is carried out, very powerful single-pointed concentration is achieved. If instead of extending your earlier habituation to mere placement meditation by means of calm abiding achieved previously, you carry out analytical meditation that individually differentiates with wisdom whichever object is appropriate on a [given] occasion - the mode or the varieties - you can eventually induce a special single-pointed concentration. Since the extremely powerful kind of single-pointed concentration achieved through that cannot be achieved through the former [method of mere placement], analytical concentration is praised.

E. Just that manner of achieving it is the reason why the different modes of sustaining either calm abiding or special insight occur even with regard to one single object. Just that manner of achieving it is how you first seek calm abiding and then afterwards cultivate special insight in dependence on it. Therefore, it is the general reason why the two different modes of sustaining either calm abiding or special insight occur even if the object of observation, for instance selflessness, is the same.

F. The great power of cultivating the special insight that has the aspect of peacefulness and coarseness, and the special insight that has the aspect of selflessness. In particular, the cultivation of the special insight that has the peaceful and coarse aspects of individually analyzing the faults and positive qualities of higher and lower realms as well as the cultivation of the special insight that has the aspect of selflessness in which the meaning of selflessness is investigated and then sustained by means of the wisdom of individual investigation are necessary for the development of strong and stable ascertainment. Therefore, they have great power with respect to abandoning their individual objects of abandonment.

G. How there are yet other special insights observing the varieties. The special insight observing the varieties is not restricted to the meditation that has the peaceful and coarse aspects of abandoning manifest mental afflictions. According to the
Middle Length Lam-Rim
Special Insight

explanation in the Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom, there is also the analytical meditation differentiating the characteristics of the 18 spheres. Thus, from that illustration, you should know [that there are] yet other special insights where you meditate differentiating the objects of the varieties.

H The way in which the [order] here, while different from that explained in the Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom, is in accordance with the assertions of Shantideva and so forth

The Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom explain that prior to the development of calm abiding and special insight observing the mode, calm abiding and special insight at the level of yoga observing the varieties should be developed. However, here, in accordance with the assertions of Shantideva, Kamalashila and so forth, some kind of calm abiding is developed first and then special insight is developed. In fact, just that special insight observing the mode will be taught [here].

2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2C2 What point of view this system adopts, that of Mahayana or Hinayana paths

A Explanation that [this procedure] is common to all [vehicles], Mahayana and Hinayana, and that it is similar even for the three lower classes of tantra

Second: Now, what point of view does this sequential approach to the development of calm abiding and special insight adopt, that of Mahayana or Hinayana, sutra or mantra? It is common to hearers and pratyekabuddhas as well as practitioners of the Mahayana perfection vehicle, that is to say to the four tenet systems. In my [Great Exposition of the] Stages of the Path of Mantra, I have already explained the assertions of individual tantras and their great commentators that it is similar for the three classes of tantra.

B Highest Yoga Tantra asserts a mode of attaining calm abiding and special insight through the yoga of analysis and placement, observing mind only, suchness, and so forth

{367} With regard to Highest Yoga Tantra it says in the Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom quoting from the Guhyasamaja Tantra:

When you investigate your own mind -
All phenomena dwell in your mind.
These dharmas dwell in that vajra of space.
Phenomena do not exist nor their nature. [110]

Also, in [the Sutra] Descent from Lanka:

In dependence on mind only -
External things are not conceived. [111]

With these and other statements [Ratnakarashanti] explains that three levels of yoga are taught: the one mentioned, observing mind only, one observing suchness, and one without appearance. It appears that the mode of attaining calm abiding and special insight on the first two levels through placement and analytical meditation is explained as above. Therefore, he asserts that the way they are generated in a mind observing the mode is similar.
Even in the context of Highest Yoga Tantra, our system requires one’s method for developing an understanding of the view to be in accord with what appears in the Madhyamika texts. With respect to how it is sustained, there is analysis of and then mental attention to suchness during some subsequent attainment phases of the generation and perfection stage. However, those practicing the perfection stage who have attained the ability to penetrate vital points of the body\textsuperscript{249} certainly must meditate placing [the mind] within the view when sustaining [the meditation on] suchness, nevertheless they do not perform the analytical meditation of special insight in accordance with what appears in other texts. Therefore, at that point, do not stop your single-pointed meditation on suchness within the view on the occasion of stopping analytical meditation. Since this is not the time to clarify the reasons why proceeding like that is sufficient, I shall explain here the reasons for proceeding like that on the other paths.

\textbf{Middle Length Lam-Rim}

\textbf{Special Insight}

C The requirement that even in the context of Highest Yoga Tantra, the method for developing an understanding of the view accords with the Madhyamika texts, and the subtlety that although it is necessary, during completion stage meditative equipoise, to place [the mind] within the view, no analytical meditation is done

If although you have an understanding of the view, you are not mindful of it and place the [mind] upon it during meditation on suchness, it will not be a meditation on suchness. Therefore, placing [the mind] without reflecting on anything at the end of each preparatory analysis of the view does not constitute sustaining suchness either. Becoming mindful of the view and merely familiarizing oneself with placing the mind upon it also amounts to nothing more than the above method for sustaining calm abiding. Hence, that is not the meaning of texts explaining a different method for sustaining special insight.

That is why you should individually analyse the meaning of suchness by means of wisdom as explained before and then sustain it. If you only do analytical meditation, however, your calm
abiding developed before will deteriorate. Therefore, you should mount the horse of calm abiding, sustain analysis and occasionally alternate it with stabilizing meditation.

If the stability factor lessens through too much analysis, stabilizing meditation is needed, and if too much stabilizing meditation damages one's analysis, more analysis is needed.

More specifically, if the stability factor lessens through increased analytical meditation, you should do more stabilizing meditation and refresh the stability factor. If you do not want to analyze because of increased stabilizing meditation or if despite analysis your mind is not fit to go anywhere and becomes engrossed in the stability factor, you should do more analytical meditation. Since it is very powerful if you cultivate the two, calm abiding and special insight, in continuous equality, you should do it that way. In the final [part of] Stages of Mediation it says:

At times when wisdom becomes very predominant because special insight has been cultivated, stability is lessened. Therefore, since the mind will be moving like a butter lamp set in a breeze, it will not perceive suchness very clearly. That is why you should do stabilizing meditation at those times. Also, whenever calm abiding predominates, like someone asleep, you do not see suchness clearly. Therefore, at those times, you should cultivate wisdom.

It is inappropriate to stop analytical meditation, holding that all conceptions are apprehensions of signs i.e. apprehensions of true existence.

With respect to sustained analysis in this manner, it is inappropriate to hold all conceptions whatsoever to be apprehensions of signs, i.e. apprehensions of true existence, and stop them. This is because it was proven several times before that conceptions that apprehend true existence are only one class of conceptions.

The view that anything apprehended by conception falls down, a casualty of reasoning, is a deprecation whose object of negation is excessive, and it has been proven that this is not the meaning of the scriptures either. Even if you do not make such an assertion regarding other objects, if you think that everything the mind apprehends regarding suchness is an apprehension of signs, which is an adherence to true existence – the latter would [indeed] be the fault of an erroneous mode of apprehension. However, it does not concern everything apprehended, for it has been set forth that those who do not see beyond and seek liberation need to search for suchness by various means of scripture and reasoning.

Here one may think: “If meditation on suchness is for the sake of generating non-conceptuality, it will not arise from individual investigation, for cause and effect must agree.”
A  How non-conceptual wisdom arises from individual investigation

The Bhavagavat himself gave a clear answer to that. In the Kashyapa chapter he says:

Kashyapa, it is like this. Fire springs up from two trees rubbed together by the wind and once it has sprung up, both trees are consumed by it. Likewise, Kashyapa, when there is correct individual investigation, an arya’s wisdom faculty develops and through its development that individual investigation itself is consumed.

Thus, [the Buddha] says that an arya’s wisdom arises from individual investigation.

B  If you analyze in this manner, non-conceptual wisdom will arise; it does not arise because you abandon mental attention

In the middling Stages of Meditation it also says:

That is how they analyse with wisdom. When yogis definitely do not apprehend any entityness of things ultimately, they enter the meditative stabilisation of complete non-conceptuality. They also realize that the entityness of all phenomena is non-existent. Those who fail to individually investigate the entityness of things with wisdom, and to meditate upon that, who instead cultivate just the mere abandonment of mental attention, will never stop conceptual thought. They will never realize the non-existence of entityness either, because they will be without the light of wisdom. The Bhagavat said: ‘When the fire of knowing reality just as it is thus springs from correct individual investigation, it consumes the wood of conceptions like the fire that springs from wood rubbed together.’

C  It would be very absurd if cause and effect had to be alike in all aspects

If it were not like that, it would be impossible for the uncontaminated to arise from the contaminated, for the supramundane to arise from the mundane, for a Buddha to emerge from among sentient beings, for an arya to emerge from among ordinary beings and so forth because the causes and the effects are not alike.

D  The passages where Nagarjuna, in his Commentary on Bodhicitta and so forth, reviles adherence to concepts such as the object of investigation and the investigator indicate the refutation of adherence to true existence, but they are not refutations of discriminating wisdom

In the Commentary on Bodhicitta it says:

Where conceptual thought appears,  
How could there be emptiness?  
Tathagatas don’t perceive minds with aspects of  
Investigators and things to investigate.  
Where these agents and objects exist,  
Enlightenment does not exist.
What is being pointed out is that someone who apprehends objects of investigation and investigators as truly existent has not attained enlightenment. If the wisdom of individual investigation were refuted and if the mere objects of investigation and investigators were refuted, this would be in contradiction to the settling of suchness, in this text, through many avenues of analysis associated with individual investigation. Also, if those two were not perceived by buddhas, they would be non-existent.

And in that same text it says:

Meditating on emptiness -
Called non-production, emptiness,
And selflessness - as inferior nature,
Is not to meditate on it. [116]

This does not refute the meditation that observes selflessness, the emptiness which is the non-existence of inherent production. Rather, it refutes meditation on an emptiness that is being reviled, an inferior nature apprehended as truly existent. In Praise of the Transcendent it says:

When teaching the nectar of emptiness
To clear away all conceptuality,
Whosoever adheres to it,
Is very much reviled by you. [117]

In the same way it says in the Precious Garland:

Accordingly, self and selflessness
Are not, as they should, correctly observable.
The views of self and selflessness were
Therefore opposed by the Mahamuni. [118]

This is also saying that since neither self nor selflessness are established in reality, the Buddha opposed the view that the two really exist, but he did not refute the view of selflessness. This is because according to the above quotation from Rebutting Points of Contention, if [phenomena] were not without the inherent existence of inherent establishment, inherent establishment would exist.

E Likewise, how sutra statements about engaging in signs also imply truly established signs

In the Summary [Sutra] of the Perfection of Wisdom it says:

Although the bodhisattva thinks “This aggregate is empty”,
Engaged in signs he distrusts the basis of non-production. [119]

And in the [Sutra] Great Mother:
When engaging in so-called empty form and selflessness one engages in signs, one does not engage in the perfection of wisdom. [120]

The meaning of these statements refers to the apprehension of emptiness and so forth as truly existent.

F Otherwise it would contradict the fact that, in the suttas, the analysis of emptiness with wisdom is praised.

Otherwise [the phrase] “he distrusts the basis of non-production” would not make sense either, for having trust in it also constitutes engaging in signs. In the same sutra it says:

One who thoroughly knows that things lack inherent existence
Is engaged in the supreme perfection of wisdom.

And:

When non-products and products and black and white phenomena
Are shattered by wisdom and not even dust remains to be seen,
In the world this is counted as the perfection of wisdom. [122]

Again, in the King of Concentration it says:

If phenomena are discerned as selfless,
And once discerned are meditated on,
That is the cause for attaining the fruit, nirvana.
Through any other cause [you] won’t find peace. [123]

Also, in the Essence of the Perfection of Wisdom, Shariputra asks:

“How should a bodhisattva who wishes to engage in the profound perfection of wisdom train?”

and Avalokiteshvara replies:

“He should thoroughly and correctly view even these five aggregates as empty of inherent existence.” [124]

There are many statements like these which would be contradicted.

G Nagarjuna and Chandra[kirti] praise individual investigation and analysis of the meaning of selflessness as the cause of complete liberation.

That is why it says in Praise of the Dharmadhatu:

The Dharma supremely cleansing the mind
Is the lack of inherent existence. [66]

And:

As long as “I” and “mine” are conceived,
Attributes are ascribed from without.
When the two aspects of non-self are seen,
The seeds of conditioned existence cease.

In Entering [the Middle Way] it also says:

Therefore, by viewing the self and mine as empty,
The yogi will be completely liberated. [125]

You should understand this in accordance with the statements and sustain the causes of ascertaining selflessness and the absence of inherent existence.

The meaning of [the Sutra] Dharani of Non-Conception is also not merely to abandon mental activity; it implies investigation by means of wisdom followed by placement [of the mind] free from the observed object of the apprehension of true existence.

Here it says in the first [part of] Stages of Meditation:

In the Dharani of Non-Conception it says: “The signs of form and so forth are abandoned by not attending to them”. This implies that one does not attend to whatever is not observed upon investigation with wisdom. It does not imply the mere absence of attention. It is not an abandonment where you merely abandon the attention which is your beginningless strong adherence to form and so forth, like in the absorption of non-discrimination.

These passages from the scriptures are saying that the apprehension of signs should be abandoned through meditation in which the mind does not attend to anything. Yet the intended meaning set forth is that you correctly investigate with analytical wisdom and then establish meditative equipoise on the meaning of your realization that not even a shred of the observed object apprehended as truly existent is observed.

In the Stages of Meditation the Jewel Cloud Sutra is quoted and said to mean that one enters into signlessness only through analytical meditation on the meaning of emptiness and not by merely abandoning mental activity.

In the middle Stages of Meditation it says:

There is the following statement: ‘When you search what the mind is, you realize that it is empty. When you thoroughly search for the mind realizing that, its entityness, you realize that it is empty. Through such a realization you enter the yoga of signlessness.’

This indicates that preparatory reflection is the entrance to signlessness. It very clearly indicates that it is impossible to enter into complete non-conceptuality [by] merely abandoning mental attention altogether, without analyzing the entityness of things by means of wisdom.

This statement from the Jewel Cloud Sutra is saying that if you have not gained the view of suchness through correct prior analysis, you will not be able to engage in the meaning of suchness non-conceptually.
Advice that you need to understand the ways in which the Stages of Meditation refute the bad propositions of the Chinese Hoshang, the assertions that one enters complete non-conceptuality by abandoning mental attention.

In the last [part of] Stages of Meditation it says:

In order to refute the presumptuous claim that you can realize what is said to be inconceivable, beyond mind and so forth by merely hearing and thinking about the profound meaning, it was taught that since these are objects known by each individual aryā himself, they are inconceivable by others, and so forth. This was also set forth in order to refute improper reflection following the apprehension of the profound meaning as truly existent. However, it does not refute correct analysis by means of the wisdom of individual investigation. It is said that if that were refuted, many reasonings and scriptures would be contradicted. Although it is held to be an entity of conceptual thought, it is an entity of correct mental attention, so that nonconceptual wisdom arises from it. Therefore, those who want that wisdom should rely on it.

[128]

It is very important to understand the way in which these statements refute the Chinese abbot’s proposition that even without gaining the view settling suchness in dependence on scriptures and reasoning, suchness is realized by meditative equipoise without any mental attention whatsoever.

How this manner of sustaining [the view] was taught by siddha pandits of the past such as Atisha.

A How the past Kadam masters [have] explained the meaning intended by Atisha

These methods of meditation have also arisen from earlier instructions on the stages of the path. In Potowa’s Jewel Box²⁶⁰ it says:

While hearing and thinking, through reasoning, some say,
You settle that there’s no inherent existence,
But when you meditate, cultivate non-thought²⁶¹.
If so, this emptiness, unconnected,
Practiced²⁶² apart, would not serve as antidote.
Therefore, even at the time of meditation,
Discriminate²⁶³ what you’re familiar with such as
Not one nor many, dependent connectedness, ...
Abide a bit, also, in what’s nonconceptual.
Meditating like that {375} is an antidote for kleshas²⁶⁴.
Those wishing to follow the singular deity,
And wishing to practice the system of perfections
Cultivate wisdom in that manner.-
Once familiar with the selflessness of persons
They should engage in it accordingly. [129]
Between the two, Madhyamikas and Cittamatrins, Atisha praised Nagarjuna and his [spiritual] son. The explanations of his oral instructions are in agreement with Master Kamalashila.

Jowo [Atisha] also said this:

Through whom to realize emptiness?
Through him foretold by the Tathagata,
Who saw reality, the truth,
Nagarjuna [and] Chandrakirti, his student.
Through oral instructions transmitted from them,
The truth, reality will be realized.    

These instructions set forth by Atisha in [his] *Instructions on Madhyamaka*, and Master Kamalashila’s intentions which appear to be similar are being presented more extensively here.

In order to sustain special insight in that manner, you should know about reliance on the six preparatory practices and about what to do during the actual meditation session, afterwards, and in between sessions. In particular, [you should know] the above methods of sustaining it free from laxity and excitement.

As long as you investigate with the wisdom of individual investigation and the pliancy explained above does not arise in your meditation, it is a similitude of special insight. When pliancy has arisen, it is fully qualified special insight. The entity of pliancy and the way it arises are as explained above.

Yet, since the calm abiding that has [already] been attained is present without deteriorating, also inducing pliancy, this is not the mere presence of pliancy. Well then, what is it? When the power of analytical meditation itself is able to induce pliancy, there is special insight. It is the same for both the special insight observing the varieties and the special insight observing the mode.

In accordance with that [the Sutra] *Unravelling the Intent* also says:

‘Bhagavat, as long as that bodhisattva has not achieved physical and mental pliancy, what do you call his mental attention that mentally attends to images within, to the objects of meditative stabilisation for phenomena he has properly thought about’? ‘Maitreya, it is not special insight. It should be described as an aspiration that accords with special insight and is similar to it.’

And in the *Instructions on the Perfection of Wisdom* it also says:
Thereby, he abides in that physical and mental pliancy he has attained: he should individually investigate the object of that very reflection with intense interest in the inner object that is the image of his meditative stabilisation. As long as physical and mental pliancy have not arisen, it is a mental attention that accords with special insight. However, when they have arisen, at that point it is special insight.”

D  How stable concentration is induced when pliancy is induced by analysis

When it is able to induce pliancy by its own power, it is also able to induce single-pointedness of mind. Therefore, this inducement of calm abiding by the power of individually investigating analytical meditation is a positive quality of having accomplished calm abiding before.

E  How misconceptions [about this] are therefore inappropriate

Through the analytical meditation practice of someone well-accomplished in calm abiding, more excellent calm abiding is thus going to come about. That is why you should not hold that if you practice the analytical meditation of individual investigation, the stability factor [of your meditation] will lessen.
Explanation of how calm abiding and special insight unite

Third: (377) How calm abiding and special insight unite: If calm abiding and special insight have not been achieved as explained in the context of the measure for their accomplishment, there will be no causal basis for their union. That is why, for their union, both must have definitely been achieved.

Now, from the point where special insight is first achieved, the union is also achieved. [It is] therefore like this: When mental attention is achieved by the power of analytical meditation in dependence on the above calm abiding, [that attention] operating by itself without actual application as explained before in the context of calm abiding becomes the union.

A scriptural passage concerning the union of calm abiding and special insight, [saying] that the two need to be united equal in strength

In the Shravaka Levels it says:

To what extent do calm abiding and special insight mix and unite evenly, and why is it called the “path where they enter into union”?

From the nine mental abidings [onwards] it is like this: One attains the kind of meditative equipoise that constitutes the ninth [stage], and in dependence on that full accomplishment of meditative stabilisation, one puts great effort into higher wisdom, the thorough differentiation of phenomena. At that point, the path of that thorough differentiation of objects will operate completely by itself and effortlessly. Since it is without actual application just as the path of calm abiding [is], special insight will be thoroughly conjoined with perfect purity, perfect refinement, as well as a sense of bliss, and it will follow calm abiding. This is why calm abiding and special insight mix and equalise, and why it is called the “path where calm abiding and special insight enter into union”. [133]

A source for the time when the union is accomplished

In the final Stages of Meditation it also says:

When (378) the mind is balanced due to freedom from laxity and excitement and becomes extremely clear with respect to suchness because it operates by itself, at that point you should establish equanimity by letting go of the effort. You should know that at that
Middle Length Lam-Rim

How calm abiding and special insight unite

point, you have accomplished the path of union between calm abiding and special insight. [134]

It is as stated: from the junction where fully qualified special insight has been achieved [there is union].

5 A source [saying that] at the time when investigation induces calm abiding, calm abiding and special insight simultaneously unite in mutual association.

In the Instruction on the Perfection of Wisdom it also says:

After that, you observe that very image connected with the analysis. When you experience both of them in your mind through the continuum of uninterrupted and unobstructed mental attention, it is called the path of union between calm abiding and special insight. That is to say calm abiding and special insight are a couple and their connection is one of conjunction: they operate bound to each other. [135]

"Unobstructed" means that there is no need to stop the analytical meditation and place the mind in non-conceptuality. Non-conceptuality is induced by that analytical meditation itself.

6 Although analysis and placement [were] sequential, not simultaneous, they operate in correlation once united.

To “experience both” is to experience both the calm abiding that observes the non-conceptual image and the special insight that observes the image connected with analytic conceptions. “Through the continuum” means this: the special insight that analyzes and the calm abiding at the end of the analysis do not arise simultaneously. However, when there is actual calm abiding induced by the power of analysis, both special insight, the intense differentiation of phenomena observing the mode, and calm abiding, the meditative stabilisation firmly and single-pointedly abiding on the mode, operate in association. At such time calm abiding and special insight are mixed and operate equally.

For that, it is [379][?*] necessary to gain a realisation arisen from meditation. Therefore, a combination of the two allowing one to individually investigate the meaning of selflessness from within a non-conceptual state of firm stability - like a little fish moving through water that remains unmoving - may be posited as something concordant with calm abiding and special insight. Yet this is not the meaning of the actual union of calm abiding and special insight.

You should understand this manner in which calm abiding and special insight unite in accordance with what appears in those authentic texts rather than trusting explanations that fabricate it in some other way.

Reasoned final analyses, scriptural source passages, and detailed methods for cultivating the stages of the path to enlightenment should be gleaned from the Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path.
Now I shall present a short summary of topics of the general path: Before anything else: the root of the path meets back to the way you rely on a spiritual teacher, so you should be clear and decisive about that. Then, if an uncontrived wish to take advantage of your leisure has arisen, it will urge you on to practice from within. Therefore, in order to generate it, you should meditate on the topics of leisure and endowments. Then, if you endeavour for [things of] this life is not inverted, a serious endeavour for future lives will not arise. Therefore, apply yourself to meditation on impermanence, the fact that the body you have obtained will not last long, and the way you will wander about in bad migrations after death. At that time, a natural attitude of conscious fear will arise, so you should sincerely develop certainty about the positive qualities of the Three Refuges, abide by the vow of common refuge, and practice its trainings. Then, you should develop - from many angles - the faith of conviction in actions and their effects, the foundation of all white dharmas. Having made it firm, you should try hard to engage in virtue and counteract non-virtue, always entering the path of the four powers.

Once you have thus internalized the cycle of teachings of lesser beings, you should think about the general and specific disadvantages of cyclic existence a lot and turn your mind away as much as you can from cyclic existence in general. Then, identify the causes from which cyclic existence arises, actions and mental afflictions, and develop the uncontrived desire to abandon them. Apply yourself to the three trainings in general, the path of liberation from cyclic existence, and in particular to the [vow of] individual liberation which you yourself have undertaken.

Once you have thus internalized the cycles of training of intermediate beings, contemplate that just like you yourself have fallen into the ocean of existence many others have. Train in bodhicitta which has its root in love and compassion. You need to try as hard as you can for it to arise; without it the six perfections, the two stages and so forth are like upper stories without foundations. Once you have had some little experience of it, you should assume it through a ritual and apply yourself to its trainings, so that you make the aspirational mind as stable as you can. Then hear about the great waves of [bodhisattva] conduct. As you get to know the boundary between what should be counteracted and what should be engaged in, generate the desire to train in it. When it has arisen, take the engaging vow through the ritual. Train in the six perfections that ripen your own mental continuum and in the four means of gathering and so forth that ripen the mental continua of others. In particular, risk your life to [avoid] a root downfall. Try hard not to be tainted by small and medium contaminations or infractions either. If you are, try hard to restore [your vow].

Then you need to train in the last two perfections in particular. Therefore, become skilled in the method for sustaining concentration and accomplish meditative stabilisation. Do everything you can for the pure view of the two selflessnesses to arise in your mind and having gained it, understand how to sustain it by placing the mind right on the view and sustain it. Such concentration and wisdom are designated with the names of calm abiding and special insight. However, since they are not different from those two, they come within the points of training of the bodhisattva vow once it has been taken.
Now, cultivating the lower paths, you should grow more and more keen on attaining the higher ones and when you hear about the higher ones, you should increasingly wish to accomplish the lower ones. When you meditate on them, you also need purify your thoughts for a balanced mind. Thus, if your respect for the spiritual teacher who guides you on the path appears to be low, you put effort into your manner of relying on him, for the root of your collection of goodness would [otherwise] be severed. Likewise, if your enthusiasm for practice is small, you should make the topics of leisure and endowments your main thing whereas if your adherence to this life increases, you should mainly work on the topics of impermanence and disadvantages of the bad migrations. If you seem to neglect the [ethical] boundaries you have accepted, you should mainly meditate on actions and their effects. If your disenchantment with cyclic existence is small, your endeavour for liberation will be nothing but words, so reflect on the disadvantages of cyclic existence. If it appears that your mind is not forcefully making everything you do into something for the benefit of sentient beings, the root of the Mahayana will be severed, so you should train in the aspirational mind [of enlightenment] along with its causes. In case you take the vow of the Jinas’ children and train in their conduct: if the bond which is the apprehension of signs appears to be very strong, you should unravel the object aim of that apprehension with a reasoning consciousness and train in space-like and illusion-like emptiness. If your mind does not stay on its object of observation and appears to become subservient to distractions, you should mainly train in the stability factor of your single-pointed [meditation]. This is what the earlier [masters] taught.

C Advice that your practice should not become one-sided

From these indications, you should also understand [situations] that have not been explained. In brief, you should not become one-sided. Your mind should be serviceable in all virtuous directions.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION

Explanation of how to train in the uncommon vehicle, the Vajrayana

A The advice to make sure and engage in mantra

Second: In particular how to train in the Vajrayana:
Having thus trained in what the two paths of sutra and mantra have in common, you should doubtlessly engage in mantra, because that path is extremely rare compared with other Dharma teachings and lets you complete the two collections quickly.

B It is essential to rely on a spiritual teacher when you engage in it

When you engage in it, you should first make your teacher happy in excess of what has been explained above according to the statements in Lamp on the Path. It should be someone who has at least all the characteristics explained there.

C The gateway, receiving an empowerment, and the importance of guarding one’s commitments and vows

Then you should first have your mental continuum ripened by means of an empowerment explained in the authentic tantra texts. Then you should hear and understand the vows and commitments taken on that occasion and guard them. If a root downfall occurs, even if the vow is taken again, the development of positive qualities of the path will be greatly delayed in one’s continuum, so endeavour not to be tainted by that. Try not to be tainted by serious downfalls and even apply the means of restoring the 100 lesser ones, if you get tainted [by them], because they are the root for cultivating the paths so that without them, it will be like an old house whose side walls are collapsing. In the Manjushri Root Tantra it says:

Lord Buddha did not say that you would accomplish Mantra with twisted ethical discipline. [136]

Statements such as this are saying that there will be no great, medium or small accomplishments whatsoever. In the highest yoga tantras it also says that those who do not guard their commitments, have an inferior empowerment or do not understand suchness will not accomplish anything despite their practice. Therefore, someone claiming to cultivate the path without keeping his commitments and vows is straying far from the principles of mantra.

D How to train in the paths of ripening and liberation

That being so, those who are guarding vows and commitments should gradually train in the two yogas with and without signs according to the three lower tantra classes and in the two stages of yoga according to the highest one in order to cultivate the paths of mantra. Here only the side of entering mantra is presented just nominally, so you must get to know these more in detail from the Stages of the Path of Mantra.
E  How to make your leisure and endowments meaningful in that manner

If you train in such a way, you will perfectly complete the [entire] body of the path that summarises all the essential points of sutra and tantra, and make the leisure you have achieved meaningful through your training. You will be able to make the jewel of the Jina’s teachings develop in your own mind and that of others.

3  Conclusion of the explanations
   A  How the treatise was composed
   B  Dedicating the virtue of its composition
   C  The author who put together the text and how he did it

3A  How the treatise was composed
   1  Explaining the greatness of the instructions
   2  The purpose of a writing a treatise that has such great qualities
   3  Indication of the sources: the instructions from which the subject matter of this treatise was transmitted

3A1  Explaining the greatness of the instructions
   A  The greatness that, in general, all the scriptures of sutra appear as instructions
   B  The greatness that, in particular, all the essential points of the paths shared by sutra and mantra are [made] clear
   C  The greatness of removing places of error about the meditative stablisation of yogis through a clear explanation of how the meditative stabilisation common to non-Buddhists and Buddhists is achieved

Moreover you realize well the errors of paths
Sought by yogis and correctly explained
According to very clear texts by many scholars
On stabilization,270 common to Buddhists, non-Buddhists, Hinayana, both kinds of Mahayana, Higher and lower tantras and both stages.

3A2  The purpose of a writing a treatise that has such great qualities

This summary of the stages of the path271 I rearranged for those who want liberation

3A3  Indication of the sources: the instructions from which the subject matter of this treatise was transmitted

The path of the view that’s profound and extensive behaviour
Passed on from the regent, Maitreya, and noble Manjushri
To the protector, Nagarjuna, Asanga
And Shantideva, three rivers that were merged -
The supreme instructions of Shri Atisha.

3B  Dedicating the virtue of composing the treatise as a cause for the propagation of the teachings

Through the merit gained here by my effort
May the Jina’s teachings, root of all welfare272
Prosper, uncorrupted, for a long time.

The author who put together the text and how he did it

This was a summary of all the scriptures of the Buddha, the tradition of the great trail-blazers Nagarjuna and Asanga, the Dharma system of supreme beings who progress towards the level of omniscience. [It was a presentation of] the stages of the path to enlightenment that teaches in full all the stages to be practiced by the three types of beings, the meaning of instructions that I have heard and that were transmitted both from Gönpawa to Neuzurpa and from Jenngawa, from Potowa to Sharawa as well as from Potowa to Tölpa. This additional summary of [an extensive presentation of] the stages of the path was composed by the learned and renounced monk Tsongkhapa Lozang Dragpa in the glorious mountain monastery of Geden.

This Middling Exposition of the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment composed by the Lord of the teachings of the three realms, the great Tsongkhapa, is also known as the lesser Lamrim. Its outlines are not restricted to the ones found in the original text. Since I had never seen nor heard about a thorough explanatory division, I thought ‘If only there were a thorough division along the lines of the Four Annotations on the Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment’. With that intention I started off from the points that clearly match in the outlines of Four Annotations as my basis. Where the sequence is different and where the divisions are more condensed or more detailed I left things out and made insertions as appropriate in a given context. The outlines of new divisions that have become necessary, for instance in the sections on calm abiding and the two truths, were put in wherever the argument could be broken up. I have received profound and extensive explanations on this Middling Exposition of the Stages of the Path from both the exalted master possessed of inconceivable great compassion, Bülüdü Dorje Chang Lobzang Yeshe Tenpä Päl Sangpo of Drä Gomang and the sovereign holding the essence of kindness that comprises all the refuge objects of the three times till the end of samsara, Dorje Chang Phabonkha in that order. Written down by the indolent lazybone lying around and lacking practice, the guise of a teacher, the tutor named Ganden Trijiang in this life [and known as] Lobzang Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso, in the Tibetan year of 2903 and the Western year of 1966 in Dharamsala, in the state of Himalcha Pradesh, India. I kindly request impartial scholars to correct any distortions - additions, omissions and errors - that I have made.

Through this virtuous effort may all lives
Be undivorced from this supreme, complete,
And flawless path. May I grasp all the Jina’s teachings,
And gain the power to guide all migrating beings.

Prayer for the purity of publications:

Meant for a multiplicity of good things, either present or future, such as the complete propagation of the Buddha’s long-standing tradition that points out the path of non-harm and peace all over the world, the [following] lines were composed as a dedication prayer that may be appended to any publication or reproduction of Buddhist scriptures associated with non-partisan schools of thought by the Shakya’s monk, the exponent of Dharma, the Lord of speech Lobzang Tendzin Gyatso.

Of the same taste as that ocean-like peace - liberation:
The slow-moving river of limitless Dharma that leads there
Whose every word component removes some stains
Of the three poisons - this nectar of good explanations

Through the massive virtue of its publication
May open the hundreds of thousands of doors of pure Dharma.
May all five kinds of beings without exception
Command the jewel treasure of definite goodness.
NOTES

1 Dharma king
2 bcom ldan 'das, a title of the Buddha combining the concepts of “conquering” and “transcending” is rendered here by its Sanskrit contextual equivalent “Bhagavan” (“possessing fortune, prosperous, happy, glorious, adorable, venerable”) 
3 rgyal ba, “conqueror, victorious one” is a close equivalent of Sanskrit jina, which will be used consistently here for rgyal ba
4 bde gshegs “gone to bliss” is the equivalent of Sanskrit “sugata” (“going well, one who has fared well”) which will be used consistently here for bde gshegs
5 Nagtso, who was among the envoys inviting Atisha to Tibet and who acted as his translator and companion for many years
6 Bengal
7 by Dharmakirti
8 Mahavibhasha
9 King of Guge
10 the nephew of Lha Lama
11 thub pa, “capable one” - as in Shakyamuni
12 i.e. Nagarjuna and Asanga
13 perfection vehicle - the Sanskrit terms Mahayana, Hinayana, Paramitayana and Vajrayana are used where possible
14 sems skyed, lit. mind-generate(d) is a very common ellipsis for “byang chub mchog tu sems skyed” “generation of a mind or mental attitude [aiming] for supreme enlightenment” or “generated mind/mental attitude [aiming] for supreme enlightenment”
15 Sanskrit for “enlightenment”
16 the implication being that in the mantra vehicle, too, the rules of conduct binding upon bodhisattvas apply
17 i.e. Dromtonpa. This could also be rendered as “the precious Tonpa”, the Tibetan word for “teacher” - “tonpa” forming part of the name of Atisha’s foremost disciple.
18 i.e. the Treasury of Manifest Knowledge - Abhidharmakosha by Vasubandhu
19 The word “hear” (thos pa) includes reading texts. “thos pa mang po” lit.: “hear/having heard a lot” means “well read”, “educated” which is why, depending on the context “thos pa” may also be rendered as “study”.
20 Udanavarga
21 “legs par rab tu nyon la yid la zungs shig” – the division into three is not quite clear
22 Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour
23 cf. Note 18
24 Sutra Requested by Drag Shul Chan
25 common epithet of the Perfection of Wisdom (sutras)
26 i.e. the Buddha
27 1 yojana (Tib. dpag tshad) is equivalent to 4.5 miles (7.4 km) or 9 miles (14.8 km)
28 lit.: planted (to) thrive
29 i.e. full moon day
30 Sutra on the Vows of Individual Liberation
31 the three collections of scripture or pitakas, i.e. sutra, vinaya and abhidharma
32 cf. Note 20
33 lit. “eye support” - something to rest the eye on
34 “capable” as in the “muni” of Shakyamuni
35 Aryadeva’s Four Hundred Verses
36 to be more precise: “with a mind in anguish due to bias”
37 Sutra of the Ten Dharms
38 theg pa'i mchog - vehicle as in Mahayana, “great vehicle”
39 Gandavyuha
40 lit. “everything should be done”
41 lit. “this accumulation turns into the highest attainments”
42 gang gis bla mar mi 'dzin pa - lit. “and does not hold/apprehend as (a/the) spiritual teacher”
43 by Shantideva, better known as Guide to a Bodhisattva's Way of Life
44 lus gnas 'ba’ zhig phyogs shing – lit. “just for the body to endure”
45 cf. Note 19
46 i.e. true existence
47 Summary of the Perfection of Wisdom in 80000 Verses
48 i.e. realms of form and formlessness – as opposed to “higher realm”
49 “three” - “dang gsum” is an insertion by Trijang Rinpoche
50 i.e. leisure complemented by the endowments
51 JN: Is this correct? It seems like two outlines have been merged into one.
52 Lamp on the Path to Enlightenment by Atisha
53 ‘srid pa'i bde la rgyab phyogs shing” – lit. : “having turned one’s back on the happiness/pleasures of existence
54 Vasubandhu’s Auto- Commentary on the Treasury of Manifest Knowledge cf. Note 18
55 i.e. “bodhicitta” or “the mind toward supreme enlightenment”
56 According to the cosmogony alluded to here, everything physical will be destroyed by fire at the end of a cycle of eons.
57 See introduction above, note 27
58 bsdus 'joms – lit. “(hell of) bringing together (and) destroying”, Skt. samghata
59 The tibetan expression, which is consistently translated as “well-being” here, consists of a combination of the two syllables “bde legs” (lit. “happy good”), “bde” referring to the happiness of happy, i.e. “higher” realms and “legs” referring to “certain goodness” i.e. liberation from cyclic existence or enlightenment. Thus “well-being” implies both temporary and ultimate happiness.
60 dkon mchog, “rare (and) precious/most excellent” is the word used for “jewel” in the context of going for refuge.
61 a berry with a somewhat transparent skin that allows for the veins, seeds and pulp to shine through.
62 Six principal Indian tenet systems at the time of the Buddha, literally “forders”, so called [?] because they were pointing out fords for crossing the river of suffering – paths to liberation – which they did not achieve due to ignorance about the truly appropriate means.
63 lit.: this is the root of all carelessness
64 go rim - 1) [in] [intrinsic or situational] order/sequence; 2) succession of causes and effect; 3) steps, rank class, strata
65 de dag gyi phud kyis mchod pa – what has been rendered here as “offer the first portion” literally mean “worship with the first portion” and thus follows on to the previous paragraph
66 This verse from Engaging in Bodhisattva Behaviour (chapter 2, verse 7) is commonly recited during offering ceremonies.
67 “myang ‘das kyi bsam pa” – the literal meaning of “myang ‘das”, a contraction of “mya ngan las ‘das pa” is “passing beyond suffering”. It is the Tibetan rendering of the Sanskrit term “nirvana”.
68 In Tibetan, the word for “action” and “karma” is the same (“las”). It will be useful to keep this in mind throughout the following explanations on karma. The word “karma” has been chosen in cases where the term “action” failed to put across the implied relation with an effect, e.g. “karma that is certainly experienced” or “accumulate karma”.
Geshe Thubten Ngawang (Tib. Centre Hamburg) offered the following explanation for this passage: Buddha Shakyamuni, apart from accumulating the collections of merit necessary for attaining Buddhahood, also spent some time accumulating further merit which he dedicated to the goal that his followers may meet with the necessary living conditions. However, according to the laws of karma, they can only experience the corresponding results, if they themselves accumulate part of the causes.

Lit. “lus can rmas” – “those endowed with bodies”

Synonym for “shravaka”, the “hearers” of [Buddha’s teachings]

Synonym for pratyekabuddha – solitary realizer

Synonym for bodhisattva

In this context the term “basis” (“gehī”) refers to the object of the action

That is, as regards the discrimination, the basis is correctly perceived as what it is. As regards the mental affliction, one or several of the three poisons may be present. This is how the following references (“as above”) should also be understood. (?) (Oral explanation by Geshe Soepa)

I.e. your mother or other close relatives

In the corresponding passage of his Great Treatise of the Stages of the Path, Je Tsongkhapa also mentions women under the care of their families in general, as well as the wives of other men.

Following common practice at the time, the text addresses male readers. Contemporary Tibetan scholars point out that to women, the opposites apply.

chung ma – wife, mate, consort, partner

In this regard, Geshe Thubten Soepa explains that all these aspects of denying existent phenomena are associated with the problem of nihilism, the refusal to accept certain conventional truths. In this context each of them has its special significance.

Despite the precise distinction drawn here, the general term “ten non-virtuous actions” has become common in English. Tibetan texts, too, frequently refer to “actions” in less specific contexts, although, according to the definition proposed here, the last three of the “ten non-virtues” (?) do not constitute actions. Thus “action” should often be understood more loosely as a term that only requires specification in certain contexts.

“khor sgyur (khor los sgyur ba’i rgyal po) - lit. “wheel-turning king” - legendary universal monarchs ruling by means of a wheel made from gold, silver, copper or iron

In this context “support” refers to the vows of ethical discipline.

cf note 10

Trijang Rimpoché is proposing an additional classification of Je Tsongkhapa’s first item into five sections some of which, however, overlap with Je Tsongkhapa’s second item. Trijang Rimpoché’s points three to five belong to Je Tsongkhapa’s second item and thus do not form a sub-division of the first one.

The ten exceptions are set out in Je Tsongkhapa’s Great Treatise of the Stages of the Path: Actions carried out (1) in a dream, (2) unknowingly, (3) unconsciously, (4) without intensity or long duration, (5) mistakenly, (6) forgetfully, (7) without meaning to, (8) actions that are naturally neutral, (9) that have been purified through regret or (10) through antidotes.

lit. “second” life. The “third life” was rendered as “next but one life” below.

This quality is not listed in the Sera edition of the text, however, it may be found in the Asian Classic Input Project version and in Je Tsongkhapa’s Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path. The present translation follows the latter because the list of eight positive qualities would be incomplete. Apart from that it is included in the subsequent explanation of the qualities of the Sera edition as well.

As has been noted above in the context of the teacher disciple relationship, the term vessel (“snod”) refers to someone fit for receiving instructions etc. In Je Tsongkhapa’s - and to some extent even contemporary - Tibet these were mainly men. The social determination is obvious from the following explanation of advantages associated with this quality.

This sūtra consists of numerous life stories illustrating the karmic consequences of actions.
The somewhat unusual term “chos kyi sgrib pa” is unclear. According to Geshe Soepa's oral commentary it is either a synonym for “shes sgrib” i.e. “obscuration of objects of knowledge” or “chos spong gi sgrib pa”, i.e. “obscurations [caused] through abandoning the Dharma”.

Depending on whether gods and demigods are listed separately or grouped together.

Geshe Thubten Ngawang's explanation of the phrase “gag bsdoms” (lit. “stop - bind”): imagine a central station where all the various tracks come together and where tracks in certain directions can be blocked or joined.

Depending on whether gods and demigods are listed separately or grouped together.

The term implies that the elements of one's present existence have arisen under the power of karma and mental afflictions which is why they entail corresponding tendencies tainting them (cf. [?] Geshe Thubten Ngawang in Systematic Study of Buddhism, semester XII, transcript 4/5, p. 8). See also the fourth aspect of the suffering of birth.

He thereby emphasizes that the karmic action itself which is decisive for its effect consists in the intention - see also note 24 [*] for the exceptions of accumulated karma.

The special ability to see through matter and over long distances without obstruction.

The colours refer to the complexion of beings in a given intermediate state (Geshe Thubten Ngawang, Systematic Study of Buddhism, semester XII, lesson 8/9, as well as oral explanations by Geshe Soepa).

According to the Tibetan understanding “birth” signifies the entry into the maternal womb rather than one's exit from it.

According to an oral commentary by Geshe Soepa the consciousness at that point connects with two subtle aggregations contained in the mixture of paternal and maternal substances: one that will develop into the sense faculties and another one that will become the seat of the mental consciousness.

The opposite of the vows “sdom min” whereby killing, harming etc. are given up.

The three scriptural collections (Skt. tripitaka) often referred to more literally as “three baskets” are vinaya (words of the Buddha on monastic discipline) sutra (his teachings proper) and abhidharma (“higher knowledge” – a systematic, philosophical presentation of his teachings).

These are products of a cow that has lived in remote mountain areas for a certain period of time feeding only on the pure grasses and herbs of such places (oral explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa).

Although the Tibetan text actually says smon lam, prayers, it would seem to be more correct for it to read smon sems, aspiring mind.

Those six characteristics of the higher realms constitute results related to the six perfections as their respective causes: excellent commodities as the result of giving, excellent bodies as the result of ethics, excellent companions as the result of patience, conditions for the accomplishment of one’s enterprises as the result of joyful effort and the absence of wrong views concerning actions as the result of wisdom. (cf. Wayman, Alex: Ethics of Tibet, Delhi 1992, S. 106)

Terms for certain concentrations: “liberation” from attachments of the various realms, control over colours and elements in the concentration of “complete pervasion” and of forms and other objects in the concentration of “overcoming”.

rgyud

literally: taking bad states

so sor rtog pa, usually translated here as individual investigation

The term “sems nyid” (mind itself) is often used synonymously with “nature of the mind”.

synonym for emptiness

‘ong ba
The implication here is that analytical meditation generates a level of pliancy exceeding that of calm abiding, which, however, does not come about without it. Cf. A. Wallace, The Bridge of Quiescence, Open Court 1998, p. 125, and R. Thurman, Life and Teachings of Tsongkhapa, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1993, p. 114 and 235.

Investigation of phenomena from the point of view of their nature, the performance of functions, dependence and logical establishment.

rnyed pa, usually translated here as find/obtain

ting nge 'dzin, usually translated here as meditative stabilisation

i.e. “antidotes”

skyon

nyes

gang zag so so, lit. individual persons

ten

gahi

sogs, the examples for colour, shape, number, and size are each concluded by this word

bsten, usually translated here as rely on, attend to

thub pa

zin pa

rnyed

bsgrims

The process of developing calm abiding is divided up into nine stages associated with four types of attention. The first two stages, known as “placement” and “thorough” placement (often referred to as “continuous” placement), are associated with the concentrated attention mentioned here.

dam du gzung

Ita ba, usually translated here as view

1 “chu tshod”, a unit based on traditional Indian time measurement and used in the Abhidharma. It is equivalent to one out of 60 parts of a day i.e. 24 minutes.

“half a night watch”

“one night watch” – common measure for a full meditation session

dmigs pa, usually translated here as observe

That does not mean distraction is a totally pure state without any mental affliction but rather that it does not necessary come under the 20 secondary afflictions, because there are wholesome varieties, too. (oral explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

Although in the latter case it is not unwholesome it is nevertheless a mental affliction. Another example of such a “neutral mental affliction” is the attachment of beings in higher realms. It also belongs to the afflicive obscurations, however, it is not classified as unwholesome. (oral explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

mtshong, usually translated here as see

yon tan, usually translated here as positive qualities

cf. 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2A1B: Individual explanations on the four antidotes to laziness

bral ba, usually translated here as free from

mtshan nyid theg, vehicle of characteristics, vehicle of metaphysical dialetics

Unless identified otherwise all the following quotations are taken from the same text.

ting nge 'dzin, usually translated here as meditative stabilisation

rang dbang, usually translated here as independence

goms pa, usually translated here as familiarization

think again and again

brtson, the first component in brtson 'grus, translated here as joyous effort

bsgrub, usually translated here as accomplish
bral ba, usually translated here as be free from.

Getting rid of negative mental tendencies and the development of the antidote are in direct opposition to one another: the more you have of one, the less the other one will be present. Otherwise the obvious question would be why the antidote develops if you are already rid of negative states. The relationship should rather be understood in these terms: at the point where the negative states have come to an end, the antidote is fully developed - according to Geshe Thubten Soepa: “Like hot and cold. One comes [as] the other one goes away.”

lit. joy of the mind

A so-called worldly special insight that consists in looking at lower levels as coarse and higher levels as peaceful (cf. 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C2 B).

In this context “becomes pure” means 'becomes a higher level path' (oral explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa).

up to the equivalent of “direct the mind” in the Tibetan text

up to the equivalent of “is placed on” in the Tibetan text

A given meditation does not need to have this view as its object. Still, it remains linked with it in so far as it is shaped by it, deriving its particular taste from it (oral explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa).

“Selflessness” forms part of the 16 aspects of the four noble truths. It is the most important one in this context.

yan lag

This term for the stage where calm abiding has been accomplished was mentioned in 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C1A-1C and 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C1A-2A7B-2.

One out of six special attentions taught in the context of the access stage to the first meditative stabilization. Cf. also note 16.

Those six attentions are not equivalent to the four attentions described above (p. 43). Rather they are another set of attentions associated with special contemplations which, however, Tsongkhapa does not elaborate on here. Cf. also notes 21 and 16.

in other words calm abiding and the access stage to the first meditative stabilization are attained simultaneously and may be thought of as synonymous. This access stage is not the first meditative stabilization proper and therefore not its lowest path. Between the realization of calm abiding and the attainment of the actual first meditative stabilization there is a phase of investigative mediation - the so-called six attentions. It follows that the first of those is not the first mental state of the access stage, as the latter is preceded by actual calm abiding which is the first mental state of the access stage. (Explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

cf. 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C1A-1E

Tib. “dbu ma”, lit. “centre, middle” and, by extension, the “Middle Way” i.e. “Madhyamaka” as a philosophical system. Its exponents are referred to as Madhyamika.

These two philosophical positions will be taken up below when the divisions of ultimate truth are presented under 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4B-3F through H.

Tib. rnam rig, synonym for Chittamatra (Tib. sems tsam): the philosophical school of Mind Only so called because its proponents maintain that all phenomena are of the same nature as the mind cognizing them. Also a synonym for Yogachara.

In the system of Dharmakirti and Chandrakirti which the present text is largely based on, delusion (gti mug) and ignorance (ma rig pa) are synonymous. It is only in the system of Asanga and Vasubandhu that the two terms are defined differently with ignorance covering a wider range of meaning than delusion.

the ultimate nature of phenomena without any elaborations; synonym for emptiness

“sgro ’dogs” literally means “attach feathers”. It is usually rendered as “imputation”, “misinterpretation”, “exaggeration”, “misconception”, “superimposition” etc.
This is a popular analogy: in the twilight someone mistakes a coiled up rope for a snake and gets frightened, 'designating' it as "snake" and 'imputing' the characteristics of a snake to it. "btags pa" ("distort, tie, attach, put on, name, impute") is therefore translated here and below as the near-synonyms "impute" and "designate" commonly used in this context. However, the main emphasis is not on the actual designation but rather on the characteristics the mind thereby imputes on the object apprehended.

Exponent of one philosophical system within Hinayana Buddhism

Follower of the "Mind-only" school of Mahayana Buddhism

Tib. "lhan skyes", lit. "connascent", "co-emergent" - refers to an association whereby every living being perceives itself as well as other persons and phenomena independently of conscious thought or philosophical doctrines/[tenets].

cf. chapter III, 2B4B-2B2B-1B2B-1B1F[*where is that]. Although the view of the transitory collection consists in "regarding the aggregates one has assumed[?] as self or possessions of the self" ("la dmig nas"), they are not its referent object according to the Prasangika system. The statement that this view is directed at the aggregates should be understood as an explanation of the term "view of the transitory collection" rather than a description of its referent object. (oral explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

in other texts, particularly those associated with debate[*Tibetan debate], "mtshan gzhī" is also translated as "illustration" or "example"

Tib. "nga yi ba nyid", lit. "mine-ness"

The Tibetan word used, "kun rdzob", is also part of the term for "conventional truth", "kun rdzob kyi[*] bden pa". That term therefore explicitly signifies conventional truths as something concealing or obscuring something else.

for "true" or "truly existent" refers to something existing (merely) by way[through the power of] of its own characteristics, i.e. independently of other factors. Cf. 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2A-4

"bda" ("self") and nga ("I") are used synonymously in the Tibetan source text..


S. 9, Zitat [10]

It is important not to confuse the object of observation[*referent object?] ("dmigs yul", "dmig pa") of the conception of self with the object it will apprehend[*?*], i.e. the one that (wrongly) appears? doesn't make it clearer!]. See 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2A-5B on the object of observation and 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2B-4 on how it is apprehended, i.e. the "aspect of the mode of apprehension" ("'dzin stangs kyi mam pa") which again should not be confused with the "object of the mode of apprehension" ("'dzin stangs kyi yul") which is non-existent.

the six types of beings in samsara


because one can neither say that it consists in the aggregates at a given point of time nor at an earlier or later point. Where else in the continuum would it be found?

"tshogs can", lit. "that which has collection", "that which possesses collection", i.e. the parts

"nga" ("I") and "bda" ("self") are equivalent

as the self in terms of the "mere I" which is the referent object of the person according to the Prasangika system. This is mentioned under 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2A-5B1. (oral explanations by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

in the sense that an inherently existent person is accepted as existing conventionally

This point is explained in detail in Je Tsongkha's Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path (which was composed before the present text/[Midddling Lamrim]) and other works.

In order to get a real sense of this manner we apprehend our own selves, the teachings suggest imagining a situation where one is unjustly blamed for something. One then observes the sense of I that emerges ("why, not me!") which is considered a particularly tangible apprehension of "I" in that case.

"by its own nature" ("rang bzhin gyis" also rendered as "inherently"), "by its own essence" ("ngo bo nyid kyis" also rendered as "essentially") and "through its own characteristics" ("rang gi mtshan nyid kyis") are synonyms.
Generally speaking, the opposites “one and distinct” (“gcig dang tha dad”), “one and many” (“gcig dang du ma”), “single and several” (“zla med dang zla bcas”) are not real synonyms, however, their alternative use here is due to the fact that Je Tsongkapa is summarizing the arguments from various texts. They may therefore be considered equivalent here. (Oral explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

As it is conventional disintegration which is dependent rather than inherently existent, there is the possibility of transformation and continuation in a future dependent continuum.[?] Je Tsongkapa is giving two common examples for uncompounded phenomena - the flower in the sky for something non-existent and nirvana for a (conventionally) existent phenomenon.

Gandharvas (“scent-eaters”) are deities from the ancient Indian Vedic scriptures who reveal celestial secrets. Their task is to prepare the divine potion soma. In the Tibetan tradition they are treated as one kind of spirits.

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Gandharvas (“scent-eaters”) are deities from the ancient Indian Vedic scriptures who reveal celestial secrets. Their task is to prepare the divine potion soma. In the Tibetan tradition they are treated as one kind of spirits.

In Tibetan a clear distinction is made between “to be” as in “to be young” or “to be a farmer” (“yin”) and “to be” as in “to exist” (“yod”). However, in this particular case where the two are combined i.e. “yod pa yin” (“to be existent”) as opposed to “yod pa” (“to exist”) there is no difference in meaning.

In the case of a non-compound phenomenon one investigates in detail whether it is the same as or different from its definition and definiendum, from its basis of designation and imputed phenomenon, from its essence and its characteristics etc. (Oral explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

There is an important distinction here between “own essence” (something which does indeed exist conventionally) and “inherently existent essence” (something which is not possible even conventionally according to the Madhyamika position).

The term “nirvana” is used here as explained on p. 60***, under 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2A2B

The word “rtags” (“sign”) is used as a technical term of debate here meaning “logical sign”: that which contains/holds the reason in a proposition. For instance, in the proposition “there is a fire on the hill, because smoke is rising” the logical sign is “smoke is rising”.

The argument is dependent origination, the thesis is “there is no self that inherently exists[?]”.

Origination from self, from other, from both or from neither i.e. without cause.

Je Tsongkapa is playing on the double-entendre of Tib. “mtha’“ meaning both “extreme” and “bottomless abyss”. Here/Tib. the whole paragraph explores its use in the sense of “extreme”, indicating that it does not refer to one pole of arbitrary sets of opposites (such as warm and cold) - which may well be valid conventionally - but to certain misconceptions.

In Tibetan a clear distinction is made between “to be” as in “to be young” or “to be a farmer” (“yin”) and “to be” as in “to exist” (“yod”). However, in this particular case where the two are combined i.e. “yod pa yin” (“to be existent”) as opposed to “yod pa” (“to exist”) there is no difference in meaning.

Analytical cessations are achieved by overcoming mental afflictions through methods of the path such as investigation, meditation, etc. Cessations are not “compound phenomena”, because they consist in the absence of something.

In the case of a non-compound phenomenon one investigates in detail whether it is the same as or different from its definition and definiendum, from its basis of designation and imputed phenomenon, from its essence and its characteristics etc. (Oral explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

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The term “nirvana” is used here as explained on p. 60***, under 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4B-2A4

“shes bya” - literally: “(things) to be known” - everything there is

“kun rdzob” - literally: “concealing”, “all-veiled”. As the literal translation may easily lead to misunderstandings (for instance if you say that paths to be cultivated are based on “concealing” truths or if you criticize philosophical positions because they neglect “concealers”) the common term “conventional” is/will be employed here. Wherever the concealing aspect is stressed, it is/will be pointed out explicitly. The same is true for sections where the primary meaning of its near-synonym “tha snyad”, “designation” is stressed.

i.e. a non-product, a permanent phenomenon

“bdag nyid gcig” (“of one nature”) and “ngo bo gcig” (“of one essence”) are synonyms in this context.
219 Everything that exists has its own essence, however, none that subsists only through its own nature. In that respect the statement does not contradict the argument presented in the previous paragraphs, as it does not refer to an essence established by its own nature independently of anything else.

220 insertions based on explanations by[ due to] Geshe Thubten Soepa

221 The Tibetan term “bden pa” can mean “truth” as well as “true”. Likewise, “kun rdzob” can mean “conventional”, “conventionally existent”, and “convention”. This uncertainty as to the grammatical function of words can lead to ambiguities, misinterpretations and extensive explanations of how each word should be understood - like the one here.

222 This does not refer to a conceptional consciousnesses only. Direct knowledge of suchness may also be called a “reasoning consciousness” (“rigs shes”), presumably because such knowledge is also based on reasoning, having arisen from logical investigation. (Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Dictionary, A project of the Tibetan Studies Institute, Boonesville, Virginia, and the University of Virginia Tibetan Studies Program, © Jeffrey Hopkins 1992, ongoing project). - Cf. 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4B-3C.

223 According to the above explanations (2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4B-3C) the two truths are two distinct aspects of one essence (“ngo bo”). Here these two aspects are being stressed and referred to as two essences (“ngo bo”). To avoid confusion the term will be rendered as “nature” here.

224 The Svatantrika-Madhyamika assert that all phenomena exist conventionally, but not ultimately, through their own characteristics.

225Appearances that do not accord with reality and are recognized by the world as deceptive are wrong conventionalities according proponents of Svatantrika-Madhyamaka. By contrast conventional phenomena commonly taken to exist and certifiable by conventional means are referred to as true conventionalities in that system. The Prasangika-Madhyamika do not subscribe to the latter view. (Geshe Thubten Ngawang, Systematisches Studium des Buddhismus, semester no. 7, unit 16, transcript p. 5)

226 “That is why the Prasangika-Madhyamika do not accept the division of conventional truths into true (unobjectionable)/(irreproachable)? and false (wrong)? conventional truths, the way Svatantrika-Madhyamika do: According to the proponents of Prasangika conventional truths are false conventional truths at any rate. Consequently a conventional truth is always deceptive and never unobjectionable and genuine. The only division they endorse discriminates between phenomena the world apprehends as unobjectionable conventional truths and phenomena the world apprehends as wrong conventional truths.” (Geshe Thubten Ngawang, Systematisches Studium des Buddhismus, semester no. 9, unit 10, transcript p. 5 f.)

227 This is a departure from the foregoing and an exception in that, here, one's perception is impaired by a temporary source of deception which is not detected as wrong by one's worldly understanding.

228 The topic is taken up under 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4B-2B2L. It is explained in detail in Je Tsongkhapa's Illumination of the Thought (dgongs pa rab gsal), his commentary on Chandrakirti's Entrance [to the Middle Way]. There it says: “In the case of a Buddha, indirect (implicit) knowledge such that something is known without itself[?] appearing [to the consciousness] is inconceivable. Therefore [conventional phenomena] must [also] appear [to his wisdom?] and be apprehended in this manner [directly (explicitly)]. It follows that the Buddha knows [conventional phenomena] in a way where they appear to his[?] wisdom that realizes the multiplicity of phenomena, with the duality of object and subject.”

Guy Newland comments on this in The Two Truths (New York, 1992, p. 199): “When a concealer-truth appears to a non-conceptual awareness that explicitly realizes it, it must appear in association with dualistic appearance. This holds true regardless of whether the person involved is a Buddha or an ordinary sentient being. However, when sentient beings - including Foe Destroyers[Hinayana] and pure ground Bodhisattvas - see a concealer-truth, the latencies of their own ignorance cause the object to appear to be inherently existent. Buddhas, on the other hand, do not have any appearance of inherent existence from their own side. They see the appearances of inherent existence that arise within the minds of sentient beings, but see them only through the force of their appearance to those sentient beings. Therefore, while Buddhas do have dualistic appearance of pure and impure conventionalities, they have no error or imperfections because all phenomena appear to them exactly as they are, without any superimposed appearance of inherent existence.

229 Depending on the context, the Tibetan term “don” can mean “object”, “meaning”, “purpose”, “result” and many other things.
“Without relying on conventions, the ultimate cannot be taught.” (Nagarjuna, Root [Text on] Wisdom, chap. XXIV, verse 10, quoted from Geshe Thubten Ngawang, Systematisches Studium des Buddhismus, semester no. 9, unit 3, transcript p. 3)

231 The other distinctive feature of wisdom is knowledge of the multiplicity of phenomena along with their individual characteristics.

232 Here the double meaning (“convention” and “designation”) of “tha snyad” should be kept in mind. In this paragraph and the following it is translated as “designation[s]” because of the context. Cf. note 52***

233 According to an explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa, this should be understood as “manifesting”[*suchness] in the sense of “realizing” and “without touching” should be understood metaphorically “the way you can take an egg from underneath a brooding hen without touching her.”

234 in the statement by Chandrakirti quoted in the objection (under 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-2A2C-2C4B-2B1)

235 “rang bzhin” (“inherent nature”) and “ngo bo” (“nature”) should be understood as synonyms here. (Geshe Thubten Soepa)

236 As the word translated here as “object” can also mean “meaning”, the Tibetan sentence allows for two slightly different readings of this simile:

1) The consciousness has not arisen through its own nature and is thus of the same nature as its object: the two are not distinct from each other and therefore like water poured into water.

2) The very meaning of non-origination through an inherent nature is the object being realized, so one’s consciousness pours into that meaning like water being poured into water.

237 “How is it manifested? - Through wisdom. Who manifests it? - The sambhogakaya. That is a description of realization and embodiment[*] at the time of buddhahood.” (Explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

238 Cf. note 66***

239 conceptual understanding at a time when emptiness has not yet been realized directly (Geshe Thubten Soepa)

240 “gehi mthun mong ba” (cf. note 37***)

241 in quotation [100]

242 According to the Tibetan theory of debate, the question as to whether or not something is a logical sign also depends on whether it is suited to the opponent/opposite party, e.g. whether, given his level of understanding, the argument may bring about fresh insight. In the former case the reason is given prematurely (as the person is lacking certain conditions that would make it meaningful and thus worthwhile). In the latter case the reason is given too late to spur new realizations. (Explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

243 Affirming negatives are negatives that do not just negate something but also imply i.e. affirmatively establish something else.

A correct reason according to Prasangika-Madhyamaka: “The subject, a sprout[*], is without true existence, because it is free from being one or many.” In contrast, the reason advanced as part of the position criticized here: “The subject, a sprout, appears to be without true existence, because it appears to be free from being one or many.” - which is not a mere negation due to the manner of appearing[??]. The “exponents of complete non-abiding” mentioned in the next outline also accept an understanding which is tied up with appearances and does not realize a mere negation. (Explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

244 It is debated whether or not the refutation[*] of ultimate origination is an ultimate. The Svatantrika-Madhyamika (such as[*] Jnanagarbha) do not accept the refutation of ultimate origination as an ultimate, because the object of this refutation is not the same as with[*] the refutation of true existence. (Explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

245 The commentary quoted refers to the word “also” in the root text it elucidates.

246 Contrary to our common understanding of “conceptions”, “rtog pa” is not restricted to conscious thought, but also refers to unconscious mental construction - any meaning the mind imputes on its object (and which a conventional consciousness would then take to be present in the object by its own nature).

247 See chap. IV B under 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1B2B-2B3

248 cf. chap. IV B, p. 50, note 16*** and p. 54, 2B4B-2B3B-3C1C-3B2F-1C2B
i.e. causing his energies to enter the central channel (explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)


thub pa chen po, the great sage, the great subduer

da pa is usually translated as faith here

chos, usually translated here as phenomena

more commonly referred to as Heart Sutra

’dzin, usually translated here as apprehend(ed)

btags, usually translated here as imputed

bdag med, usually translated here as selflessness

“yid la byed pa” can mean “attention”, but also, more generally, “mental activity”. It is the mental factor directing the mind to a given object.

A level of the formless realm where the mind is so deeply absorbed that it abides in some kind of unconscious state.

The word “be’u bum” denotes a round container, Tibetan Lamas use to stow and carry texts as well as other precious items. (Explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

mi rtor, usually translated here as non-conceptuality

bsgoms, usually translated here as meditate(d) or cultivate(d)

so sor brtag, usually translated here as individually investigate

nyon mong, usually translated here as (mental) affliction

chap. I, 2B4A-2

In the first chapter Trijang Rinpoche anticipated this headline under 2B4B-2. It was not inserted there as a separate headline, because it seemed somewhat out of context. Je Tsongkhapa himself appends this paragraph here without prior announcement and without setting it off from the foregoing.

cf. chap. I, note 1***.

An inferior empowerment is one where either the one giving it or the one receiving it does not meet all the necessary requirements. (Explanation by Geshe Thubten Soepa)

dang, usually translated here as and

ting nge ‘dzin, usually translated here as meditative stabilization

byang chub gyi lam, usually translated here as path to enlightenment

lit.: root of the welfare of all living beings

Well-known text book by scholars of Sera Monastery. It contains a detailed outline and annotations to Je Tsongkhapa’s Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path.