



• Dakpo Tashi Namgyal (1513–1587), "Part 1: Common Samādhis (1. Śamatha and Vipaśyanā, 2. Śamatha, 3. Vipaśyanā)," *Moonbeams of Mahāmudrā: with Dispelling the Darkness of Ignorance by Wangchuk Dorje, the Ninth Karmapa*, translated by Elizabeth Callahan, Boulder: Snow Lion, 2019, pp. 13-86.

#### Common Samādhis -1

#### Chapter 1: Śamatha and Vipaśyanā

- II. The Explanation of the Ways to Cultivate Samādhi
- A. The Presentation That Summarizes the Exposition of the Common Samādhis
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- a. The Common Exposition of Samatha and Vipasyanā
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  - ii. The Elimination of the Obscurations of Samatha and Vipasyanā
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#### Common Samādhis -2

#### Chapter 2: Śamatha

- b. The Ways to Cultivate Samatha and Vipasyanā Individually
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      - 1) The General Exposition of the Objects of Meditation
      - 2) Who Should Observe What
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      - 4) The Way Mindfulness and Alertness Sustain the Object of Meditation
    - C) The Way to Practice Samatha
      - 1) The Way the Eight Applications Produce Mental Stillness
      - 2) The Way to Achieve Mental Stillness through Nine Stages
      - 3) The Way Those [Nine] Mental States Are Achieved through the Six Strengths
      - 4) The Way the Four Types of Attention Are Involved in This [Process]

#### Common Samādhis -3

- ii. The Way to Cultivate Vipaśyanā
- A) The General Way of Cultivating Vipasyanā
- B) The Way to Generate the View for Vipaśyanā
  - 1) Various Ways to Determine the View
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  - a) The General Presentation of the Ways to Meditate on the Absence of Self
    - i) The Reasons for Meditating on the Absence of Self
    - ii) The Ways to Meditate on the Twofold Absence of Self
    - iii) The Way Those [Meditations] Generate the View
    - b) The Specific Explanation of the Ways to Meditate on the View
      - i) Identifying the Correct View
      - ii) The Way That [View] Is Cultivated in Meditative Equipoise
      - iii) The Way [the View] Is Experienced During Postmeditative Attainment

• A summary of samādhi. It is said in *Unraveling the Intent*:

Know that all the many aspects of samādhi, which I have presented for śrāvakas, bodhisattvas, and tathāgatas, are included within śamatha and vipaśyanā.

Similarly, in Mahāmudrā, all states of mind, high or low, that are concentrated undistractedly on their particular object of meditation are in keeping with samatha. Differentiation and awareness of the nature of that object are in keeping with vipasyanā.

#### Six Causes of Samatha

- Reside in a conducive place.
- · Have few desires.
- Be content.
- Reduce activities.
- Have pure ethical conduct.
- Relinquish thoughts involving desire and so forth.



Three Causes of Vipasyanā

- Rely upon holy beings.
- Pursue much listening.
- Reflect properly.

• The Elimination of the Obscurations of Samatha and Vipasyanā

#### A) The Identification of Obscurations

It is said in *Unraveling the Intent*:

"Bhagavān, among those five obscurations, which are the obscurations for śamatha? Which are the obscurations for vipaśyanā? Which obscure both?"

"Maitreya, agitation and remorse obscure śamatha. Sluggishness, drowsiness, and doubts obscure vipaśyanā. Pleasure-seeking and malice obscure both."

- The Elimination of the Obscurations of Samatha and Vipasyanā
- B) The Explanation of the Remedies That Remove Those [Obscurations]

This has two parts:

- 1. The General Explanation of the Remedies for Obscurations
- 2. The Specific Explanation of the Ways to Prevent Dullness and Agitation

We should be aware of the following key points.

- For agitation, bring your mind down by meditating on impermanence.
- When feeling remorseful, do not pay attention to its object.
- For dullness, rouse your mind.
- When drowsy, generate a sense of illumination.
- Doubts [are quelled] by settling the mind on one point.
- Pleasure-seeking [is overcome] by reflecting on the problems with the sense pleasures and by feeling content.
- For a malicious mind, arouse kindness and altruism.

• Mindfulness. The Compendium of Abhidharma says:

What is mindfulness? It is not forgetting a familiar object. Its function is to be undistracted.

When we don't forget an object of meditation that is something with which we are previously familiar, our mind engages it continuously and is not distracted to anything else. That is like, for example, if we are afraid of forgetting something we value, we will make sure we don't forget it by repeatedly recollecting it. In the beginning we must arouse mindfulness repeatedly.

- The equanimity of remaining in a natural state.
- The Śrāvakabhūmi says:

What is <u>equanimity</u>? It is the evenness of a mind free from any afflictive phenomena when it is focused in śamatha or vipaśyanā. It is [characterized by the ability] to remain in a natural state, to enter [that] automatically, to focus with effortless activities following [the development of] mental flexibility, and by mental ease.

• Generally speaking, it is clearly taught that concentrating on any object of meditation and resting the mind one-pointedly without distractions is <u>śamatha</u>. And it is taught that the mind that differentiates and analyzes by discerning the nature of knowable objects is vipaśyanā.

• Furthermore, everything from the first stages of settling the mind on its object and resetting up through the final stages of creating a single continuum and equipoise is said to be <u>śamatha</u>. Everything from attention and differentiating the characteristics of the nature of knowable objects up through the final stages, the full development of the spontaneous engagement of expertise and prajñā, is said to be vipaśyanā.

- The Explanation of the Results of Samatha and Vipasyanā
- Unraveling the Intent states:

What are the results of those [śamatha and vipaśyanā]? Pure mind is the result. Pure prajñā is the result.

In that statement, pure mind is [the result] of śamatha and pure prajñā is that of vipaśyanā. Pure mind means that thoughts involving mental afflictions have been purified. Pure prajñā means that the latent tendencies of ignorance have been purified.

- The Way Mindfulness and Alertness Sustain the Object of Meditation
- The proper practice of samādhi is crucial. First, we should be certain about the identification of mindfulness and alertness, and dullness and agitation, according to the previous explanations. Here, mindfulness properly maintains the stream of awareness in which our mind is not distracted from its object of meditation. Alertness recognizes whether our mind has strayed from that or not. The Explanation of the "Ornament for the Mahāyāna Sūtras" states:

Mindfulness and alertness create a close focus because the first prevents the mind from straying from its object and the second recognizes when it has strayed.

- The Way to Practice Samatha
- This has four parts:
- 1. The Way the Eight Applications Produce Mental Stillness
- 2. The Way to Achieve Mental Stillness through Nine Stages
- 3. The Way Those [Nine] Mental States Are Achieved through the Six Strengths
- 4. The Way the Four Types of Attention Are Involved in This [Process]

The Way to Achieve Mental Stillness through Nine Stages
The Ornament for the Mahāyāna Sūtras says:

After you have directed your mind to an object of meditation, do not be distracted from the continuity of that.

That begins its description of the nine mental states of resting.

1. Settling. Completely draw in the mind that is not resting—when it strays to, and is distracted by, externally appearing objects and so forth—and direct it inwardly to the object of meditation. As the text says:

After you have directed your mind to an object of meditation,...

2. Continuous settling. Without letting the mind that was initially directed towards an object of meditation be distracted to anything else, settle in prolonging the continuity of that [concentration]. As it says:

...do not be distracted from the continuity of that.

3. Renewed settling. If you are distracted by forgetfulness, recognize that and again apply your mind to its object of meditation. The text continues:

Recognize distraction immediately, and renew [your focus] on that [object] once again.

4. Increased settling. Repeatedly withdraw your mind from broader diversions. As you refine [your concentration,] you settle more and more fluidly. It continues:

More and more, the wise draw their mind inward.

- 5. Taming. By contemplating the excellent qualities of samādhi and dedicating yourself to [achieving] those, your mind is tamed. It continues:
  - Then, seeing the virtues in this, your mind is tamed within samādhi.

6. Pacification. Contemplating the disadvantages of distractions, any dislike of samādhi is pacified. The text continues:

Because you see the faults of distraction disinclination towards [samādhi] is pacified.

- 7. <u>Full pacification</u>. When faults in samādhi arise (such as attachment, unhappiness, sluggishness, or drowsiness), pacify them with the appropriate methods. It continues:
  - When attachment, unhappiness, and so forth arise, pacify them accordingly.

8. One-pointedness. By actively applying yourself to samādhi, you familiarize yourself with it so that later it arises continuously and without effort. The same text says:

Then, those committed to their vows achieve a natural flow in their mind with active application.

9. Equipoise. After familiarizing yourself with the eighth mental state, your mind settles effortlessly, spontaneously, and naturally. You attain mastery. It concludes:

Familiarity with that yields a lack of application.

- The Way Those [Nine] Mental States Are Achieved through the Six Strengths
- According to the teachings in the Śrāvakabhūmi on cultivating śamatha by means of the six strengths, the six are the strengths of hearing, reflection, mindfulness, alertness, diligence, and familiarization.

#### The General Way of Cultivating Vipaśyanā

- Broadly speaking, there are three types of vipaśyanā: mundane vipaśyanā, a lesser type of supramundane vipaśyanā, and Mahāyāna vipaśyanā.
- The first is vipasyanā that focuses on the aspects of calmness and coarseness.
- The middle is the vipasyanā that focuses on the four truths with an emphasis on refuting a self of persons.
- The latter is the vipaśyanā that is to be cultivated here.

- Unraveling the Intent explains three types of vipasyanā:
- 1. The vipaśyanā that arises from characteristics is the prajñā that engages the characteristics of the objects, which is a preparatory phase of vipaśyanā.
- 2. The vipasyanā that arises from thorough investigation is the prajñā that understands what was not understood about the abiding state of the view.
- 3. The vipaśyanā that arises from discernment is the prajñā that isn [capable of] liberation and is [directed towards] dharma topics that were well understood.



- The Way to Generate the View for Vipaśyanā
- This has two parts:
- 1. Various Ways to Determine the View
- 2. The Way to Determine the View in This Context

- Various Ways to Determine the View
- According to [the teachings of] Maitreya's Dharma Treatises and Asanga and Vasubandhu, when we explore the view there are two types of reasonings to use to determine [the nature of] percepts and perceivers:
- 1. Cittamātra reasonings, such as that one thing can arise as many and the ascertainment of simultaneous observation, which demonstrate that perceived objects do not exist;
- 2. Madhyamaka reasonings or the reasoning that if one [of a pair] is absent the other does not arise, which demonstrate that if there are no perceived objects, the perceiving mind does not exist.
- 3. Their approach explains that the actual view is the wisdom in which the duality of percepts and perceiver is absent.

- The Way to Determine the View in This Context
- This has two parts:
- a. The General Presentation of the Ways to Meditate on the Absence of Self
- b. The Specific Explanation of the Ways to Meditate on the View

- The General Presentation of the Ways to Meditate on the Absence of Self
- This has three sections:
  - a) The Reasons for Meditating on the Absence of Self
  - b) The Ways to Meditate on the Twofold Absence of Self
  - c) The Way Those [Meditations] Generate the View
- The Reasons for Meditating on the Absence of Self
- This has two parts:
  - A. The Refutation of a Self of Persons
  - B. The Refutation of a Self-Entity of Phenomena

- The Specific Explanation of the Ways to Meditate on the View
- This has three parts:
  - 1. Identifying the Correct View
  - 2. The Way That [View] Is Cultivated in Meditative Equipoise
  - 3. The Way [the View] Is Experienced During Postmeditative Attainment

• Once you are habituated to yoga, you can mix your meditative equipoise that does not move from dharmatā and your postmeditative attainment [of seeing things] as illusionlike. Then everything manifests as the play of dharmatā. Freed from dualistic perception, you attain the realization of unification. The *Verses That Summarize the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras* states:

There is no manipulation of thinking, "I am resting evenly," or "I am getting up."

Why? Because you understand the nature of phenomena.

Having discovered the view for vipaśyanā, when you are sustaining it, do the following.

- Cultivate a stream of mindfulness that is not distracted from that very view.
- Be watchful with the alertness that dispels dullness and agitation.
- Arouse applied intention right within the view, free from dullness and agitation.
- Rely on equanimity such that your mind does not apply itself to anything other than that [view].