**Upadesha I**

**Distilling the Quintessential Nectar of Rigpa:**

**Meeting the Lama’s Mind in Non-Dual Union**

*Tashi Deleks.*

*May All Beings Become Happy And Enlightened!*

This concise upadesha is a simple yet profound guide for vajrayana practitioners when they are preparing to receive dharma teachings, lungs (oral transmission) and wongs (empowerments) whether one on one with a qualified lama or in a public dharma teaching environment. This upadesha, of course, is also pre-eminently for one’s daily sadhana practice.

This is the way of the gomchen (great meditator). In the dzogchen tradition it is said yoginis and yogis are very intelligent and very lazy. They streamline the path by utilizing pith instructions regarding view, meditation and conduct. Their apparent laziness is intelligence cutting through to the ground (thregchod), avoiding lengthy “profundities.”

Karma Chagme Rinpoche states it thusly:

“You may know a lot, but if you don’t put it into practice, it’s like dying of thirst on the bank of a great lake. Likewise, it sometimes happens that a common corpse is found in the bed of a great scholar.”

*The meaning of the title:*

1. The derivation of the word distilling is from the latin verb “distillare,” meaning “to drip down.” In ancient alchemy a downward slanted tube cooled and condensed vapors from heating an herbal or other preparation. The Tibetan practice of chulen, “extracting the essence,” combines rasayana (5 material elements) and a variety of postures, mantras, and meditative techniques to derive the sublimest quintessential nectar of rigpa (quintessential is literally the fifth distillation and amrita is sanskrit for “immortal/deathless”).

Rigpa, which in Tibetan means “awareness” is used in Dzogchen teachings to mean the “knowledge of the ground” (ground in Tibetan is “zhi”). One way this is translated is as “intrinsic awareness.” At any moment of meditation in which one effortlessly maintains the knowledge of the ground one is, as the Omniscient Longchenpa states, “realizing both primordial purity and spontaneous presence and if this vajra like samadhi is continuously realized, one becomes a rig-dzin or knowledge holder.”

2. When receiving teachings, wongs or empowerments, to the degree practitioner has

accomplished this quintessential distillation of rigpa, they will be able to meet the lama’s mind in non-dual union. Giving katas, money,or gifts to the lama has merit, but dynamically engaging the lama’s mind is the quintessence of respect for the guru and the quickest method of awakening our meditation siddhis, as well as absolute and relative bodhicitta. At this moment, we will never need to engage in “chasing the musk deer” again.

It is vitally important that you, the attending dharma student, begin your preparation to receive a dharma teaching, oral transmission, or empowerment (in advance of the teaching, if possible), by purifying your 3 gates of body, speech and mind. For example, by reciting the 3 purifying syllables, “OM AH HUNG.” Or, if time permits, one may utilize a meditation with support, lung jon, the small vase breathing technique, to remove gross and subtle toxins created by the 3 poisons of ignorance, desire and hatred (see footnotes). This process brings the purified winds (lung) into one’s central and we become calm and relaxed. Deep relaxation is a golden key which will unlock your treasure mind, that is, rigpa or sublime intrinsic awareness.

One’s gross and subtle body 5 elements, earth, fire, wind, water and space are in a state of equipoise vibrating with the outer phenomenal 5 elemental energies… this is a primordially pure, inseparable unity. For those practitioners who wish to follow the profound path of the ngakpa/ngakmo, this inseparable unity of the inner and outer 5 elemental energies creates the ground for manifesting the common siddhis, e.g., weather modification and dur healing ceremonies.

Now, when the practitioner is “relaxing in the natural state,” they begin with the four contemplations that turn one's mind to dharma:

H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, agreeing with the Great Drikungpa, emphasizes the 4 contemplations - acknowledging that although other lamas emphasize the extra ordinary ngondro practices, the ordinary preliminary practices of the 4 contemplations are necessary to turn one’s mind to dharma for the beginning of truly meaningful dharma practice or to receive teaching and transmissions. One can then, from that point, deeply appreciate the rare causes and conditions for a precious human birth with healthy mental & physical facilities, the kindness of our mother and father (or other caregiver) to care for our physical needs and acculturate us morally and spiritually, to be born and raised in a land where the sublime dharma is taught by qualified teachers and to have the leisure time receive and practice the rare jewel of the Buddhadharma, while knowing all phenomena are transient, with no permanency at all, and that our death is always at hand. From birth to old age, our lives are subject to constant mental and physical suffering.

E MA HO! When we realize there is a path to the cessation of suffering available to us, culminating in the realization of the true nature of mind, samyak sambuddha, that is, total complete enlightenment. Then, our dharma practice and reception of Buddha’s teachings and transmissions from sublime masters are truly the wish fulfilling jewels. We can invoke the power of the 3 jewels, the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and generate bodhicitta, that is, the enlightened mind for the benefit of all sentient beings. If one is a dzogchen or mahamudra practitioner, one utilizes view (tib. tawa), meditation (tib. gompa) and action/conduct (tib. chopa) as one’s methodology on the basis of bodhichitta.

The view is to see the non-substantial nature of one’s mind and all phenomena, which are inseparable from the vast openness (tib. longchen) and its spontaneously arising (tib. lhundrup) dynamic activity manifesting as luminous clarity (tib. osel) and great bliss (tib. dechen). Vast openness, luminous clarity, and great bliss are a union and this union is the Tathagatagarbha (skt. womb of all the buddhas). This womb analogy aptly suggests vast openness, luminous clarity, and great bliss is a very natural resting place for a sentient being. In this way, after incarnating, the white seed of our father and the red seed our mother merge as pink bodhicitta and become rigpa, our vajra-like awareness, resting comfortably on a blue lotus… after our incredible earthshaking arrival into our mother’s womb from the sky of the Great Perfection (tib. nam; skt. akash). During and after death, this awareness remains unchanged. It does not belong to a being, nor does it have an identity. What is called the mindstream is simply an effect, one and the same with a sentient being. A purified mindstream is wisdom itself (tib. Yeshe, skt. jnana); awakening through purifying the mindstream into yeshe is called perfecting (skt. Bodhi, tib. jangchub). Accomplishing this is known as becoming a Samyaksambuddha (completely enlightened Buddha). Meditation (skt. Bhavana tib. gom) means gaining familiarity or cultivating this naturally occurring treasure of reality, in whatever sense we are able. If, after clearly seeing the turmoil of samsara as illusory like visions in the intermediate states (tib. bardo), like that of a bardo being (skt. gandharva) finally finding the solace of the unity of the red and white seed, we relax like an embryo in the womb of reality, then we are definitely resting in the natural state! With this analogy, it is easy to see that, for ordinary beings, this is the first time after incarnating in our mother’s womb that we are able to realize our natural state. Whether conscious or unconscious, this fact is a portend for our future ability to realize the true nature of mind.

H.H. Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama likens this profound deep resting (we first encounter in our mother’s womb-lyr) to a person going through a vigorous physical training regimen, resulting in them totally letting go of rigid mental and muscular control. This is a wonderful opportunity to implement the dzogchen view, meditation and conduct. Dream yoga meditation can also utilize this exhaustive state. (which teaching is this from? I remember HH Dudjom Rinpoche saying this)

The journey of womb entrance is not consciously undergone by sentient beings (regardless of the type of coming incarnation, human or other types). Maintaining primordial awareness in the intermediate states, the womb, and during birth, finally exploding out into a nirmanakaya realm such as our jambudvipa - with a healthy body and critical awareness - is what Buddhas and bodhisattvas do. This is because they are resting in primordial awareness without pause, to varying degrees. A Buddha has full awareness, and Bodhisattvas have varying degrees of awareness. Remember this as you begin your voyage of what my most sublime dzogchen master, H.H Dungse Thinley Norbu Rinpoche, calls “the white sail’s crossing to the further shore.” Thus:

OM GATE GATE PARAGATE PARASAMGATE BODHI SWAHA:

*Gone, Gone, Gone Beyond, Gone Utterly Beyond - Oh, What An Awakening!*

*Gone, Gone, Gone Beyond, Gone Utterly Beyond - Oh, What An Awakening!*

*Gone, Gone, Gone Beyond, Gone Utterly Beyond - Oh, What An Awakening!*

Having contemplated like that, you should practice distilling the quintessential nectar of rigpa: meeting the lama’s mind in non-dual union as you receive teachings. We conclude our receiving of transmissions, teachings, and/or practice by dedicating the merit we have accumulated for the benefit of all sentient beings.

*Sarvam Mangalam!*

**Upadesha II**

**The Sublime Cycle Of The Red And White Seed**

**Part I: The Returning**

*E MA HO!*

*Oh, Fortunate Daughters and Sons of this Fortuitus Kali Yuga, Listen Closely:*

In the Mahatanhasankhaya Sutta, Lord Buddha states that a human embryo develops upon the presence of three factors:

(1) a women is at the correct point of her menstrual cycle

(2) a man and woman engage in sexual union

(3) a bardo being (skt.) gandharva, which in this situation means either: a 1st or higher level bodhisattva choosing the mother and father and other environmental circumstances or a sentient being magnetized in an unconscious or befuddled state into the mother’s womb, joins their most subtle red and white seeds with those of the parents. The subtle body parallel structural components mirror, in many cases, the physical body’s manifestation. That is, the bardo being’s mindstream is made up of the white and red essences, which when they take a coarser, physical form, become physically manifested as the red and white seeds of their parents.

Not only do the subtle white seed of the male and subtle red seed of the female merge with their physical counterparts of semen and egg at the moment of ejaculation, but from the sixth bardo of becoming or transmigration (tib. sidpa bardo), a gandharva becomes a sentient being of one of the six realms. This is the beginning or returning aspect of the cycle of the red and white seed.

The Omniscient Longchenpa tells of the ancient age when the time was perfect, and dharma students achieved instantaneous realization upon hearing the sublime teachings. Now, in this degenerate obscuring age of kali , the dimming light of dharma is on the wane.

A la la ho! The Second Buddha, Guru Padmasambhava, promised his disciples that they would establish themselves in the dzogchen/mahamudra view, meditation and action. with true guru devotion and unshakeable faith in the 3 jewels and 3 roots and deep commitment to their bodhisattva vows, and that in so doing, they have the potential to achieve liberation in one lifetime. Therefore, we have the potential to achieve liberation in this very lifetime.

The Very Venerable Lama Tharchin Rinpoche, my dear dzogchen master for over a quarter century, described the speed of karmic action/reaction in a less volatile age as if karma made a circle around our globe while, in the kali yuga, it circles around our finger.

*Sarvam Mangalam!*