

Vajrasattva Practice*

1 The purpose for practicing Vajrasattva

The main obstacles that prevent all the extraordinary experiences and realisations of the profound path from arising are negative actions, obscurations and habitual tendencies. Just as it is important to clean the surface of a mirror if forms are to be reflected clearly in it, so too, it is important to eliminate our obscurations so that realisation can appear like a reflection in the mirror of the Ground of All. The Conqueror taught countless methods of purification for this purpose, but the best of them all is meditation and recitation related to the teacher as Vajrasattva.

There is no harmful act that cannot be purified by confession. As the great teachers of ancient times affirmed:

There is nothing good about negative actions, except that they can be purified through confession.

Of all negative actions, be they external breaches of the pratimoksa vows, inner transgressions of the Bodhicitta training, secret violations of the tantric samayas, there is not one, however serious, that cannot be purified through confession.

However, purification only takes place when you confess sincerely in the right way, using four powers¹ as antidotes. The purification process will never work if your eyes and mouth are otherwise occupied, or you are just mouthing the words, "I admit... I confess..." while your mind is pursuing other thoughts. And to think, "In future, even if I do wrong it won't matter because I can confess afterwards," will stop the purification from working at all, even if you confess.

Milarepa says: "You may doubt that confession can really purify negative actions, but if your thoughts have become positive, you are purified."

*A large extent of the description of the practises has been obtained directly from the excellent writings in "The words of my perfect teacher" by Patrul Rinpoche.

¹the four powers are: 1) the power of support 2) the power of regretting having done wrong 3) the power of resolution 4) the power of action as an antidote

It is absolutely fundamental that any confession should include as antidotes all of the four powers.

2 Practice in meditation

Each session of meditation practice includes the three sublime points, the preliminaries, the main practice and the conclusion.

2.1 The Preliminaries

The preliminaries for each session are further sub-divided into two parts, namely, the preparation for the preliminaries and the actual practice of the preliminaries.

2.1.1 Preparation for the preliminaries:

Before each session, get yourself prepared and then sit down. Put aside all external affairs, and make aspirations that even if your parents of this present life request to see you, you wouldn't allow for this session to be interrupted; even your flesh is gouged out piece by piece, and you are tormented to death, you would not forsake this. In meditation, determination like this can dispel obstructions caused by human and non-human factors.

2.1.2 The actual practice of the preliminaries:

This includes the three sections of key points relating to body, speech and mind as well as the four thoughts that turn the mind from samsara through renunciation. Pray to your root teacher that you may attain the four empowerments.

Begin with the key points relating to body, speech and mind(as before): The key points relating to body - Seven Point Vairochana Posture, the key points relating to speech - expelling the impure air (according to the YachenLongchen Nyingtik Lineage), the key point of mind - generating Bodhichitta . Then the four thoughts that turn the mind from samsara with renunciation:

Visualize and contemplate the "Precious human birth with its freedoms and endowments", "Impermanence of life", "The sufferings and defects of samsara" and "The infallibility of the law of cause-and-effect" to give rise to true renunciation and the wish to seek liberation. Pray to your root teacher and visualize (that you attain the four empowerments as described before for Refuge practices)

Begin reciting "Longchen Nyingthik Ngöndro". Recite from the beginning until

བཞི་པ་རྡོ་ར་སེམས་སྒྲོམ་བཟུངས་ནི།

Vajrasattva Purification

ཨཱཾ བདག་ནིད་ཐམས་པུ་བྱི་ལོ་རུཾ།

ah daknyi tamal chiwo ru

Āh! I am in my ordinary form. Above my head

then pause.

Simultaneously contemplate the meaning of the content when you recite the text. (it means that you contemplate the text when you read it until the part of Vajrasattva practice)

2.2 The Main Practice : Vajrasattva - Longchen Nyingthik

When reciting and visualising the Vajrasattva practice. In the space in front of you, one arrows length above one's head, visualize a white, thousand petal lotus. On the lotus is a moon disc, on the moon disc is the source of all great compassion, Vajrasattva (or your precious root Guru - make this choice according to the practise that has been described to you. If you haven't had specific instruction visualize Vajrasattva), whose essence is all the Buddhas of the three times in one, appearing in the form of Sambhogakaya Buddha, Vajrasattva, pure white in colour, bright as ten thousand suns shining on a snowy mountain peak. He has one face and two hands. In his right hand which is positioned in front of his chest, he holds the five pronged vajra symbolising unified awareness and emptiness. In his left hand, which is positioned at his left hip, he holds the bell symbolising unified appearance and emptiness. His legs are crossed in Vajra posture. (Vajrasattva picture 1).

He adorns the thirteen ornaments of Sambhogakaya. (Vajrasattva picture 2). Five silken garments which are: a headband, an upper garment, a long scarf, a belt and a lower garment. Eight types of jewels which are a crown, earrings, two long necklaces (one longer than the other), a short necklace, armlets on each arm, a bracelet on each wrist, a ring on each hand and an anklet on each foot.

While being empty without any inherent nature or substance, like the reflections of the moon in water, or like images reflected in a mirror, Vajrasattva's appearance is vividly present and three dimensional. (Vajrasattva picture 3). This visualization and contemplation is not flat like that of a tanka or a painting, nor is it inert nor inanimate like clay or gold statue, which is solid or material. From the perspective of appearance It appears: Every detail appears clearly and distinctly, even that of the pupils and the white of the eyes. From the perspective of emptiness Yet it is empty: there is not one atom of solid substance to it, no flesh, no blood, no internal organs. It is like a rainbow appearing in the sky, or like dustless crystal. This visualization provides the power of support.

Having visualized in this way, pray with sincerity : "O protector Varjasattva, my kind root guru! With your infinite wisdom, love and compassion, think of me and all sentient beings! " All the ten negative actions accumulated of body, speech and mind, the five crimes with immediate retribution, the four serious faults, the eight perverse acts, all transgressions of the external vows of pratimoksa, the inner Bodhisattva precepts or the secret tantric samayas all the promises that you have not kept, all the lies that you have told and everything that you have done that is shameful so on and so forth, all negative actions that you have committed as you remember, confess as if you are confessing them all in the presence of Vajrasattva, your whole body breaking out in gooseflesh in fear, remorse and shame. It is certain that for one's infinite lives in samsara, one has performed and accumulated many negative actions that one cannot remember. Confess all of these also, keeping nothing secret, hiding nothing, confess openly and ask for forgiveness. "Have compassion on me! Right away, at this very moment, and in this very place, cleanse and purify me of all of my negative actions and obscuration, so that not a single one remains! " This is the power of remorse/regret.

Think of that since beginningless time I have accumulated harmful negative actions due to my confusion and ignorance. Now, thanks to the compassion of my kind teacher, I know what is beneficial and what is harmful, and I will never commit them again, even if it costs me my life. This is the power of resolve.

Practice as many positive actions as you are able as the antidote to all your negative actions. In particular, prostrating to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, rejoicing in the merits of others, dedicating all sources of merit to Buddhahood, cultivating Bodhicitta in aspiration and action and staying in the essence of the unaltered natural state. All these are the powers of action as an antidote.

There is no more profound way to cleanse oneself of past negative deeds than to meditate on Bodhicitta and to maintain the flow of the unaltered natural state of mind. Keep these two things in mind as a foundation as you practice the details of the Vajrasattva visualization and meditation, the stream of nectar, purification of karma, recitation of the hundred syllable mantra, and so on. Keeping in mind the pure meaning of the visualization, possessing the four powers of the antidote, recite the root text from (text starts from next page)

བཞི་པ་རྡོ་ར་སེམས་སྒོམ་བཟུངས་ནི།

Vajrasattva Purification

ཨཱ། བདག་ཉིད་ཐ་མལ་སྒྲིབོ་རུ།

ah daknyi tamal chiwo ru

Āḥ! I am in my ordinary form. Above my head

ཕད་དཀར་ཟུ་བའི་གདན་གྱི་དབུ་ས།

pekar dawé den gyi ü

On a white lotus, in the centre of a moon disc seat

ཏྲུ་ལས་བླ་མ་རྡོ་རྗེ་སེམས།

hung lé lama dorje sem

Is hūṃ, which becomes the Lama Vajrasattva:

དཀར་གསལ་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་རྒྱུ་གས་པའི་སྐུ།

karsal longchö dzokpé ku

Brilliant white, with complete saṃbhogakāya adornments,

རྡོ་རྗེ་དྲིལ་འཛིན་སྟེམས་མ་འཁྱིལ།

dorje dril dzin nyemma tril

Holding vajra and bell, and embracing the consort Vajratopa.

ཁྱོད་ལ་སྐུ་བས་གསོལ་སྤྱི་ག་པ་སྤྱོད་ས།

khyö la kyab sol dikpa jong

I take refuge in you and pray—purify all our negative actions!

འགྱོད་སེམས་དྲག་པོས་མཐོལ་ལོ་བཤགས།

gyösem drakpö tol lo shak

With the deepest regret I acknowledge them all and ask your forgiveness:

ཕྱིན་ཆད་སྟོག་ལ་བབས་ཀྱང་སྡོམ།

chinché sok la bab kyang dom

From now on—even if my life is at stake—I shall refrain from indulging in them again.

པའི་སྟེང་ཁྱོད་ཐུགས་ཟུང་བ་རྒྱུ་ས

khyö tuk dawa gyepé teng

In your heart, upon a full moon

ཏཱྱེ་ཡིག་མཐའ་མར་སྒྲགས་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱོར་མོ་རྩེ་

hung yik tamar ngak kyi kor

Is the letter hūṃ, encircled by the mantra.

བཟུངས་པ་སྒྲགས་ཀྱིས་རྒྱུ་དྲ་བསྐྱུལ་བས་མོ་

depa ngak kyi gyü kulwé

Reciting the mantra invokes your wisdom mind, and

ཡབ་ཡུམ་བདེ་རྩེ་སྤྱོད་མཚམས་ནས་མོ་

yabyum dé rol jortsam né

From the point of union of the blissful play of yab-yum

བདེ་དྲ་རྩི་བྱུང་ཆུ་བ་སེམས་ཀྱི་སྤྲིན་མོ་

dütsi changchub sem kyi trin

A cloud of Bodhicitta nectar

ག་བྱུར་རྒྱུལ་ལྟར་འཇག་པ་ཡིས་མོ་

gabur dul tar dzakpa yi

Flows down like a shining stream of milk.¹³ Through this,

བདག་དང་ཁམས་གསུམ་སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་མོ་

dak dang kham sum semchen gyi

For me and all sentient beings of the three worlds

ལས་དང་ཉོན་མོངས་སྤྱུག་བསྐྱུལ་རྒྱུ་མོ་

lé dang nyönmong dukngal gyu

May our negative karma and destructive emotions—the causes of suffering—

ནད་གདོན་སྤིག་སྐྱིབ་ཉེས་ལྟུང་གྲིབ་མོ་

nedön dikdrib nyetung drib

Illnesses, harmful influences, negative actions and obscurations,

along with wrong doing, downfalls, and blockages due to breakages of samaya,

མ་ལུས་བྱུང་བར་མཛད་དུ་གསོལ་མོ་

malü jangwar dzé du sol

Be purified, till not a single one remains!

Note: Although *Vajrāṭopā* is sometimes given as the Sanskrit name of *Vajrasattva*'s consort, whose Tibetan name is *Dorje Nyemma* (*rdo rje snyems ma*), it seems that the correct Sanskrit name, which is attested in several extant sources, is *Vajragarvā*.

Source : <https://www.lotsawahouse.org/tibetan-masters/dodrupchen-I/longchen-nyingtik#ref13>

Visualize while reciting the hundred syllable mantra.

Recite the hundred syllable mantra:

**oṃ
vajrasattva samaya manupālaya
vajrasattva tvenopatiṣṭha dṛḍho me bhava
sutoṣyo me bhava supoṣyo me bhava
anurakto me bhava sarva siddhi ṃme prayaccha sarvakarmasu
ca me citta ṃśreya ḥkuru hūṃha ha ha ho ḥbhagavan
sarvatathāgatavajra mā me muñca
vajrī bhava mahāsamayasattva
āḥ**

While reciting, visualize: the hundred syllable mantra at the heart centre of Vajrasattva, visualize the hum is circled by the one hundred syllables, none of the syllables touch each other, like the horns of cattle when they stand close together. (Vajrasattva picture 4).

Visualize that from the hundred syllables, nectar of compassion and wisdom drips from each syllable, one glistening drop after the other like ice melts near a fire flowing down through the body of Vajrasattva and passing through the crown of your head and through your body flows into you, and into the crown of the heads of all sentient beings too. (Vajrasattva picture 5). Like particles of earth being washed away by a powerful stream, all your physical illnesses are flushed out in the form of spiders, scorpions, toads, fish, snakes, tadpoles, lice and the like, and all harmful actions and obscurations as black liquid, pus, dust, smoke, clouds and vapour. All this is carried away by the irresistible flood of nectar and pours out of your body as a black shower through the lower orifices, the soles of your feet and all the pores of your skin. The earth beneath you opens up and in the depths appears death, personification of your past actions, surrounded by all the male and female beings to whom you owe karmic debts and all those who seek to avenge themselves on your flesh. While you recite the hundred syllable mantra, visualize all those impurities pouring down into their open mouths and into the hands and claws they raise expectantly towards you.

If you are able, visualize the whole process simultaneously. Otherwise, alternate. As you recite the mantra, concentrate on the body of Vajrasattva, his face, hands and so on. Sometimes concentrate on his clothes and ornaments, sometimes on the flow of nectar purifying illnesses, negative forces, evil actions and obscurations; and sometimes on your regret for what you have done and your resolve to never repeat it. At the end, visualize that death, Yama (Lord of Hades) the embodiment of past actions, and all the others below the earth, every kind of karmic creditor and all those who seek vengeance on your flesh, are appeased and satisfied. Past scores are settled, debts have been repaid and vengeance has been appeased. You are cleansed of all past negative actions and obscurations. Death, Yama, closes

his mouth, hands and claws. The earth closes again.

Practice in this way and recite the hundred syllable mantra to the best of your ability. In order to complete the Ngondro Vajrasattva requirement, complete a minimum of one hundred thousand recitations as a minimum. (See pictures in the next page)



金刚萨垛修法观想示意图

2.3 Concluding the meditation session

When finishing reciting the hundred syllable mantra, imagine your body has now become a body of light, transparent inside and out. Visualize a central channel running vertically down from the crown chakra to the navel chakra. Along the central channel are four wheels from which channels, like the spokes of an umbrella, branch out radially. At the level of your navel is the wheel of manifestation, with sixty four radial channels which turn upwards. At the level of your heart is the wheel of Dharma, with eight radial channels which turn downwards. At the level of your throat is the wheel of enjoyment, with sixteen radial channels which turn upwards. At the level of your crown of your head is the wheel of great bliss, with thirty two radial channels which turn downwards. (Vajrasattva picture 6)

As before nectar starts to flow down, beginning with the wheel of great bliss at the crown of your head, it completely fills the central channel and each of the four wheels and spreads outward filling the entire body to the tips of your fingers and toes. Brimming with white nectar, you are like a crystal vase filled with milk. Think that you are receiving the four empowerments: the vase empowerment, the secret empowerment, the wisdom empowerment and the precious word empowerment. You are purified of the four kinds of obscurations: karmic obscurations, obscuration of negative emotions, conceptual obscurations and obscurations of habitual tendencies. The wisdom of the four joys arises in you: joy, supreme joy, extraordinary joy, and innate joy. The levels of the four kayas are established in you: the nirmanakaya, the sambhogakaya, the dharmakaya and the svabhavikakaya.

Then continue reciting

མགོན་པོ་བདག་ནི་མི་ཤེས་རྣམས་པ་ཡིས།

gönpo dak ni mishé mongpa yi
O protector! In my ignorance and delusion

དམ་ཚིག་ལས་ནི་འགལ་ཞིང་ཉམས།

damtsik lé ni gal shying nyam
I have gone against and corrupted my samaya.

བླ་མ་མགོན་པོས་སྐྱབས་མཛོད་ཅིག།

lama gönpö kyab dzö chik
Lama protector, be my refuge!

གཙོ་བོ་རྡོ་རྡུ་འཛིན་པ་སྟེ།

tsowo dorje dzinpa té
Chief of all the maṇḍalas, vajra holder,

ཐུགས་རྟེན་ཆེན་པོའི་བདག་ཉིད་ཅན།

tukjé chenpö daknyi chen
Embodiment of great compassion:

འགྲོ་བའི་གཙོ་ལ་བདག་སྐྱབས་མཆི།

drowé tso la dak kyab chi
Chief of all living beings, in you I take refuge!

ཉམས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་མཐོལ་ལོ་བཤགས་སོ།སྐྱབས་ཀྱང་ཐུགས་རྟེན་བ་དང་ཡན་ལག་གི་དམ་ཚིག་

ku sung tuk tsawa dang yenlak gi damtsik nyampa tamché tol lo shak so
I confess all my impairments of the root and branch samayas of the body, speech and mind.

སྡིག་པ་དང་སྒྲིབ་པ་ཉེས་ལྟུང་དྲི་མའི་ཆོགས་ཐམས་ཅད་བྱང་ཞིང་དག་པར་མཛོད་དུ་གསོལ།

dikpa dang dribpa nyetung drimé tsok tamché jang shying dakpar dzé du sol
I implore you: let my negative actions, obscurations, wrong doing and downfalls—all my flaws—be completely cleansed and purified!

After reciting these lines Vajrasattva is delighted, and smiling grants your prayer with these words: "Fortunate one, all your negative actions, obscurations, violations and breaches are purified". He then melts into light and the light dissolves into you, so that you yourself are now transformed into Vajrasattva, a mirror image of how you just visualized him before. Visualize in his heart centre a moon disc the size of a mustard seed. In its centre stands a

blue hum (ॐ). Surrounded by the other four syllables of the mantra, in front a white om (ॐ), to the left is the word vajra (འཇམ་མཁའ་) in yellow, behind is sa (སྐ) in red, and to its right is tva (ཏ) in green (Vajrasattva picture 7): As you recite the heart mantra of Vajrasattva "Om Vajra Sattva Hum" five rays of light, white, yellow, red, green, and blue, emanate from the respective syllables in the ten directions.

Visualize these innumerable light rays from the five syllables touches all living beings dwelling in the six realms of the three worlds and purifying all their negative actions, obscurations, sufferings and habitual tendencies just like the light of the rising sun dispelling darkness. The whole universe becomes the Buddhafield of Manifest Joy. All beings within it are transformed into white, yellow, red, green and blue Vajrasattvas. Rest in the state inseparable from Vajrasattva, when discriminatory thoughts start to arise, again visualize the whole universe becomes the Buddhafield of Manifest Joy of Vajrasattva. (Vajrasattva picture 8)²

Thereafter, complete reciting the rest of the "Logchen Nyington Ngöndro". Then do the dedication and make other aspiration prayers.

When practicing any meditation and recitation, it is important to focus body, speech and mind, not to let your mind be distracted from concentration on the practice, and not to interrupt the recitation with ordinary speech. If you stay undistracted and do not mix your recitation with ordinary speech, to say the one hundred syllable mantra one hundred and eight times without interruption will undoubtedly purify all your negative actions, obscurations, and all violations and breaches of vows and samayas. This is promised by Vajrasattva.

The Tantra of Immaculate Confession says:

"The hundred syllable mantra is the quintessence of the mind of all the Sugatas. It purifies all violations, all breaches, all conceptual obscurations. It is the supreme confession, and to recite it 108 times without interruption repairs all violations and breaches and will save one from tumbling into three lower realms. The Buddhas of past, present and future will look on the yogi who recites it as a daily practice as their most excellent child, even in this very life time, and will watch over and protect him. At his death he will undoubtedly become the finest of all the Buddha's heirs."

What ever violations and breaches of the root and branch samayas you may commit after setting out on the Secret Mantra Vajrayana, the daily repetition of the hundred syllable mantra 21 times every day while meditating on Vajrasattva constitutes what is called the "protection from the downfalls". It will prevent the effects of those downfalls from developing or increasing. One hundred thousand recitations will completely purify all your downfalls.

When your meditation is finished, observe whether or not you have performed the practice

²The above dissolution is explained according to the Achen Monastery green practice book. If you have received instruction in this method also, feel free to follow the dissolution as explained in "The words of my perfect teacher".

properly according to the aforementioned practice (as before)

Whether your meditation session was practiced according to the requirements of the lineage, or not. Every meditation session must include the proper practice of the three sublime points (the preliminaries, the main practice and the conclusion).