

Gems Contained in Dharma That Every Buddhist Must Follow by Dorje Amang Nopu Pamu

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PREFACE

These Gems represent my summary of points Dorje Pamu made throughout this book. They are the jewels of wisdom that she imparted. Although I lived with her for many years, she did not review or approve of or agree with what I did in this document. I made a point of never sharing these gems with anyone until I was sure that person had read and studied the *Dharma That Every Buddhist Must Follow*. because I was afraid they would use my humble simplification of Dorje PaMu's great book instead of reading the book itself. I am only releasing this now as it may be difficult to find the original source. The last time I checked on Amazon, the book was only available used and was selling for over \$100. Because it is now a rare book, and so expensive when found, I am hopeful that my summary can be helpful. Please remember that this was done around 2002 before we had the benefit of English translations of the discourses by H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha. Since it is required reading before practicing the Vajra Yoga Perfection Dharma, I wanted to make this accessible to all who may want to practice that Dharma.
Zhaxi Zhuoma

INTRODUCTION

I. THE BUDDHA DHARMA

1. *The Gem of Understanding the Principles of Buddhism in Attaining Enlightenment:* Studying the principles but not practicing or, conversely, practicing but not understanding the principles or concepts are both superficial approaches to the Buddha Dharma. Mastery of principles will cause one to attain a certain understanding or awareness and enable one to cultivate oneself accordingly. To realize enlightenment¹, it is absolutely necessary for one to have thoroughly understood the principles, but one must not be attached to a mere understanding of the principles.

2. *The Gem of Buddha Dharma:* The truth and the original nature of all conditioned and unconditioned phenomena in the universe are contained in the two words Buddha Dharma. The Buddha Dharma is all causes and effects in the universe. To understand all causes and effects, yet not be controlled by cause and effect, is to realize liberation and the Buddha Dharma. No matter how many schools or sects there are, the Buddha Dharma has only one truth. It is the truth of the universe: the Dharma of ending the cycle of birth and death! The Buddha Dharma is the life order of another world and dimension. The word Dharma has several meanings. Its two main meanings are the cosmic law underlying the universe, especially the law of karmically determined rebirth as used here and secondly the teachings given by the Buddha and other enlightened beings that express the universal truth and show the way to enlightenment.

¹ This is a state wherein all obscurations have been removed from the mind and one lives in unlimited compassion and wisdom. Also known as a full awakening or Buddhahood.

3. *The Gem of Vajrayana:* The highest Dharma within the Buddha Dharma is that of the Vajrayana² and the deepest, highest, greatest and brightest Dharma of the Vajrayana is Tibetan Tantra. This is not to say that Vajrayana Buddhism is superior or that exoteric³ Buddhism should be considered a low level of Dharma. The Buddha Dharma is not divided into high and low as comparisons. All 84,000 Dharma methods came into being in response to the different innate faculties of living beings. The Buddha Dharma has only one truth no matter how it is expressed. Exoteric Buddhism and Vajrayana Buddhism are not two separate schools. Exoteric Buddhism is half of a Dharma system. True Vajrayana Buddhism includes the teachings of the various schools of exoteric Buddhism plus mantras, mudras, visualization, mandala offerings practiced either in a group or alone and inner and outer tantric initiations. It includes a foundation in the cultivation of the Dharmakaya from exoteric Buddhism as well as the more advanced cultivation of the Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya. In Vajrayana Buddhism one strives to and is able to realize all Three Bodies (kayas) in one lifetime. This state of the Three Bodies is far lower than the high, perfect, magnificent, supreme state of enlightenment attained by Sakyamuni Buddha. That is, one might be able to practice and realize the Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Nirmanakaya. However, one's state of realization would be far lower than the perfect Three Bodies state of Sakyamuni Buddha! The three kinds of bodies possessed by a Buddha according to the Mahayana view are the Dharmakaya (the body of reality), the Sambhogakaya (the body of delight or the reward body) and the Nirmanakaya (the body of transformation). The basis of this teaching is the conviction that a Buddha is one with the absolute and manifests in the relative world in order to work for the welfare of all sentient beings. In Vajrayana Buddhism one strives to realize all four forms of wisdom of a Buddha.⁴

A. CAUSE AND EFFECT

4. *The Gem of Cause and Effect:* All Buddha Dharma can be condensed into the words cause and effect. All conditioned phenomena are subject to the processes of cause and effect and the four stages of arising, subsisting, changing and passing away. Those who realize the unconditioned obtain enlightenment as a result of certain causes. Yet, they are not attached to the thought of obtaining enlightenment. All Buddhist disciples must understand cause and effect, but merely understanding this principle is not enough. One must clearly believe in the principle and live accordingly. One must use this principle in one's actual practice to solve one's worldly problems. One ends causes and effects through cultivation. All karma created in the present life and previous lives is stored in the alaya consciousness or the eighth consciousness. The alaya consciousness is regarded as that which undergoes the cycle of birth and death.

² Vajra (Tibetan: Dorje) literally means *diamond* or *adamantine*. In general, it is that which is beyond arising and ceasing—hence, indestructible. It is a symbol of unchanging and indestructible wisdom capable of penetrating through everything. Vajra is also a small implement used in conjunction with a bell during Tantric rituals.

³ Literally, Buddhist teachings that are open, not secret [p 357]. In actuality the exoteric teachings make up the first part of true Vajrayana practice. [pp 302-308] The most accomplished practitioners of exoteric Buddhism are Arhats. Those who have attained the level of Bodhisattva are rare since the highest level within exoteric Buddhism is the prajna state and the “Dharmakaya” state. They do not also cultivate the “Sambhogakaya” and “Nirmanakaya.”

⁴ Sometimes expressed as the Four Wisdom Buddhas: (1) the great mirror wisdom of Aksobhya, (2) the universal wisdom of Ratnaketu or Ratnasambhava, (3) the profound observing or discriminating wisdom of Amitabha, and (4) the perfecting wisdom of Amoghasiddhi.

5. *The Gem of the Eight Winds and Non-Attachment:* One must be able to freely proceed into or step back from favorable or adverse circumstances without experiencing certain emotional states. One must not become delirious with joy or sob with sadness. Knowing that everything is a matter of cause and effect, one should have no attachments, joy, anger, or sadness over whatever happens. One must not be moved by the “Eight Winds” or “Eight Dharmas” of gain and loss; honor (fame) and disgrace (infamy); praise and ridicule (criticism); and pleasure and suffering (pain) which give rise to greed, hatred, craving, ignorance, joy, anger, pleasure, or sorrow. These Eight Winds cause people to fall into confusion. They stir up people’s hearts. They are like hurricanes that wreak havoc. People get lost in them. They are like the axle that controls the turning of the fire-wheel known as the six realms of reincarnation. Unless one truly believes in cause and effect it will be difficult not to be moved by the Eight Winds. One must strive to be unmoved by the Eight Winds. One can then vigorously cultivate oneself. Only then does one have the capacity to become a Great Bodhisattva or Great Holy One. To be unmoved by these Eight Winds is a mark of a true practitioner.

6. *The Gem of Impermanence:* Everything in this world comes into being through the occurrence of certain causes and conditions and passes away with the cessation of such causes and conditions. Nothing can be held on to and nothing can be kept forever. In fact, there is nothing to obtain, seek, lose, or take.

7. *The Gem of Karmic Retribution:* Karma literally means action. It refers to the universal law of cause and effect whereby positive actions produce happiness and negative actions produce suffering. One must be willing to rid oneself of evil according to the principles of karmic retribution for doing evil and likewise be willing to do good for the same reasons. Only in this manner will one bring about true happiness and good fortune for oneself and others. It is futile to say that one fears hell or karmic retribution when one often engages in wrongdoing].

8. *The Gem of Interdependence between Oneself and Other Living Beings:* We would not exist without other beings. Our cultivation and any accomplishment we achieve are dependent upon and made possible by other living beings. We must repay the kindness of the countless living beings in the six realms of existence.⁵ Otherwise, we will violate the law of cause and effect.

B. EMPTINESS AND ENLIGHTENMENT

⁵ The Sanskrit term is *triloka* for the three spheres or worlds into which the six realms of existence are divided. These three spheres are as follows: (1) the material sphere of desire where sexual and other forms of desire predominate. Within this sphere are the hell realm, the animal realm, the preta or ghost realm, the human realm, the asura realm, and the first six levels of the heavenly realm. The sixth heaven is the highest heaven in the material or Desire Sphere (Kamaloka). The deity who is lord of this heaven is known as Mara or “the killer” or “the Evil One” or the “non-liberator” since he is the opponent of liberation. This sphere is the lowest of the three spheres that constitute the universe. (2) The sphere of desireless corporeality or form where desire for sexuality and food falls away, but the capacity for enjoyment continues. This sphere is inhabited by the gods dwelling in the four dhyana (meditation) heavens. This sphere has a degree of materiality, but is much subtler than the Desire Sphere and is not visible to ordinary beings. (3) The immaterial sphere of bodilessness or formlessness, which is a purely spiritual sphere. The inhabitants of this sphere are free from both desire and the restrictions of matter. It has four non-substantial heavens.

9. The Gem of Emptiness: True emptiness or non-being is the same as wonderful existence or being. Form and emptiness are one and the same. Nothingness and somethingness are not different. All worldly phenomena exist in a false manner. They arise due to the convergence of causes and conditions. They vanish when these causes and conditions break up or cease. This is the truth underlying the cycle of birth and death. The ignorant person thinks that there is a self underlying the five aggregates⁶ or skandhas or that one or more of the five aggregates are the self. All five aggregates are intrinsically empty.

10. The Gem of Defilements Being Inseparable from Enlightenment: The Sanskrit word for defilement is *kilesa*. The Chinese word *fan nao* can be translated as defilements or afflictions. The use of the word *afflictions* emphasizes the effects of the defilements. Defilements refer to the passions and ignorance that cause one to wander in samsara and hinder one from attaining enlightenment. Six of the basic defilements are greed, hatred (anger), ignorance (delusion), conceit, doubt and wrong views. [p 345] Defilements are the same as enlightenment or “afflictions are Bodhi” is a Mahayana teaching of the highest level. The defilements are inseparable from Buddhahood. Enlightenment is achieved only when one realizes that the defilements themselves have no real, independent existence. When one sees the empty nature of the defilements, one realizes that there is, in essence, nothing to eliminate in order to enter into enlightenment. This phrase is often used in conjunction with the phrase “Samsara is the same as nirvana.” [p 348]

11. The Gem of Understanding One’s Original Nature: One is only able to leave the cycle of reincarnation when one can thoroughly understand the original nature of mind, realize the truth of emptiness and comprehend the nonexistence of a real self in human beings. It is futile to cultivate concentration if one does not know or have a concept of one’s original nature. If one only seeks realization and does not have this understanding, one will not even know what it is one is supposed to realize. One will simply enter into a state of mental confusion. Even if, upon reflection and introspection, one’s original nature suddenly manifest before oneself, one will still not recognize it. However, it is through the practice of concentration that one can thoroughly understand the original nature of mind. To realize the truth concerning one’s original nature, one must go from understanding to vision, from vision to penetration, from penetration to realization. One must have a working model or concept about what one is looking for to proceed. Knowing the principles or concepts involved, which is the starting point, is not the same thing as realizing one’s original nature. One’s original nature is the pure Dharma body of all sentient beings within the three spheres of existence. It is united with the universe. It has no form or shape, no physical body or appearance. All living beings possess this original nature equally. It is the same as the Dharma body of the Tathagata or Dharmakaya. It does not come and does not go. It is not too much nor is it lacking. It is immaculate (not clean or not dirty). The Dharma body realized by living beings has just not reached the level of perfect realization attained by the Buddhas, but it is not different. This concept is sometimes called Buddha-nature, Dharmakaya, wonderful prajna wisdom, etc. as well as original nature. To understand principles regarding the emptiness of one’s original nature and what wonderful prajna wisdom is, one should study the 600 volumes of the *Great Prajna Sutras*, *The Mahamudra of Liberation* or *The Prajna of Ultimate Reality*.

⁶ The five aggregates or skandhas represent the body and mind. They are (1) form or corporeality, (2) feelings, (3) perceptions, (4) mental formations, and (5) consciousness.

C. WISDOM (Prajna)

12. *The Gem of Using Appropriate Dharma Methods:* It is said that there are 84,000 different Dharma methods for realizing the end of the cycle of birth and death. The appropriate method needs to be matched to meet the particular karmic destiny and capabilities of each person. One method is basic. One must attain prajna and understand one's original nature.

13. *The Gem of Attaining Prajna:* To attain prajna, one must follow the sequence of morality⁷, concentration, and then wisdom. If one does not behave morally by following the precepts,⁸ one will not attain concentration. Without concentration, one will not attain wonderful prajna wisdom.

14. *The Gem of the Three Types of Prajna:* Prajna obtained through the written word and prajna obtained through contemplating reality are both cultivated in order to realize the prajna of ultimate reality. The first two types of prajna are the prerequisites necessary to realize the prajna of ultimate reality. Sakyamuni Buddha said that there is nothing that surpasses prajna. The Dharma of prajna is the highest Buddha Dharma. It expounds the original nature of all the Tathagatas⁹ and all living beings. It is the truth of the universe. One must realize prajna to liberate oneself from the cycle of birth and death. In order to realize the prajna of ultimate reality, one must penetratingly comprehend the principle that the nature of all things is originally empty. One must know the impermanent nature of all things. One must know that all worldly phenomena are illusory, empty and false like dreams, illusions, bubbles and shadows. Prajna is sometimes called understanding, knowledge, wisdom, or insight. It is an intuitive wisdom that cannot be conveyed by concepts. It is insight into emptiness, which is the true nature of reality. It is a Sanskrit word for wisdom that basically means purifying insight into emptiness—the true nature of reality.

D. COMPASSION

15. *The Gem of Having the Correct Motivation in Benefiting Sentient Beings and Performing Meritorious Deeds:* There are two types of acts one can do to benefit sentient beings: those done with an awakened mind and those done with a mind that is not awakened. Acts done with an awakened mind are done spontaneously and from one's innermost being. There is no external motivation. It is an extremely natural act and there is not consideration of any reward. Acts done with a mind that is not awakened refers to benefiting sentient beings only because doing so is somehow related to one's own vital interests or because one is coerced into doing so by others, by law, by established rules, etc. The motivation for such acts is neither natural nor pure. It is merely

⁷ The Sanskrit term for morality, *sila* or *shila* can also be translated as moral discipline or moral practice. It is abstaining from all unwholesome actions.

⁸ These are the basic five precepts that all Buddhists should observe (the first five of the eight) plus three precepts lay Buddhists should observe on certain days or retreats. They are (1) not killing; (2) not stealing; (3) not engaging in prohibited sexual activity; (4) not engaging in wrong speech; (5) not drinking intoxicants; (6) not eating after noon; (7) avoiding music, dance, plays, and other entertainment; and (8) not using perfumes or ornamental jewelry. Monks and nuns have two more basic prohibitions: not sleeping on raised beds and refraining from coming into contact with money or other valuables.

⁹ Tathagata means literally, *thus-gone one* or *thus-come one*. It refers to one who has attained supreme enlightenment. It is one of the ten titles of Sakyamuni Buddha, which he himself used when speaking of himself.

superficial practice to make donations when one is miserly. Although even superficial charitable activities do in fact bring about merit and will bring about karmic rewards, any wrongdoing done in conjunction with such charity will likewise have its karmic retribution. “Spending money to eliminate calamities” is a wrong view and not a correct understanding of the law of cause and effect! Merit can also be seen as good karma or the positive energy generated by wholesome actions of body, speech and mind. One must practice charity with an unconditional, unlimited state of mind and not have worldly and selfish motives, such as greed for worldly benefits. The amount of karmic reward from charity depends upon the mentality and conditions of the person who is giving and is not a function of the amount or type of gift. One should perform more and more meritorious deeds but should not be attached to such deeds. Only when one performs meritorious deeds with the mindset that doing so is simply part of one’s original nature, is one truly performing more meritorious deeds! It is futile, however, to perform meritorious deeds if one continues to commit evil deeds.

16. *The Gem of Developing a Heart of Great Compassion:* It is futile to speak about benefiting others when one does not have great compassion. In order to save living beings, one must first seek one’s own salvation. During this process, one must open up one’s awareness and give rise to thoughts of compassion. Only then will one be able to carry out one’s vow to save all sentient beings. Not everyone can receive the Mahayana Dharma. It is futile to attempt to practice the Mahayana Dharma if one does not have a heart of great compassion. Furthermore, one might misapply any supernormal powers one might receive if one does not have a heart of great compassion as one’s foundation. When one has a heart of great compassion, one is able to quickly realize the nature of one’s mind, understand thoroughly the principles of the Dharma and know one’s original nature. Occasionally performing some acts that benefit and bring happiness to other people as a result of momentary introspection are not the same as acts performed in a very natural manner after penetratingly viewing one’s original nature. One must be able to distinguish between true and false compassion. True compassion is not necessarily expressed very openly. One with true compassion views all sentient beings as if they were one’s own children, always putting other living beings first and oneself second. One must develop roots of kindness or goodness. This refers to one’s natural capacity to realize enlightenment through learning Buddhism. These “roots” can deepen over many lives and eons.

17. *The Gem of Maintaining the Four Limitless States of Mind:* The Four Limitless States of Mind are limitless loving-kindness toward all beings, limitless compassion toward all beings who are suffering, limitless sympathetic joy over the success and happiness of others and limitless equanimity toward friend and foe. One must practice the four limitless states of mind in one’s treatment of others, friend and foe alike, and not commit evil deeds. Cultivators must practice loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity toward all living beings in the six realms of existence. One must transform the four limitless states of mind into enlightenment. Genuine practitioners practice the four limitless states of mind and do good deeds, thus increasing their Buddhist resources and merit. Those who continue to scold, insult and argue with people or are unable to control their emotions and behavior are not in accordance with this principle. Everything in the world is a test to see how well one has cultivated oneself and whether one is truly able to give rise to loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity toward all living beings. They are also known as the four boundless states of mind, the four immeasurable states of mind, or simply the four immeasurables.

18. *The Gem of Arousing Bodhicitta:* It is futile to arouse bodhicitta when one does not give up harming sentient beings. One must truly maintain a Mahayana awakened heart of compassion. How one treats other living beings is the most fundamental factor influencing one's ability to attain liberation. Arousing bodhicitta must be closely combined with cultivation. Being kind to all living beings is not unrelated to arousing bodhicitta. Treating living beings kindly is a true manifestation of arousing bodhicitta. Development of the four limitless states of mind is the foundation of bodhicitta. Although both the four limitless states of mind and bodhicitta are concerned with benefiting others, there is a difference: in the first, one holds on to the notion of self, while in the second, one cuts off the notion of self. Benefiting sentient beings out of bodhicitta is an unconditional state. When the beneficial acts are done, one lets go of them. One is not moved in any way by having benefited others. One acts to benefit others simply because one feels that it is what one ought to do and that it is what is natural to do. It is futile to benefit sentient beings when one does not act out of bodhicitta. Literally, Bodhicitta means mind of enlightenment or an altruistic determination or intention on the part of the practitioner, or vow made by the practitioner, to realize enlightenment. The term *arouse bodhicitta* has several levels of meaning. For the unenlightened, it is the determination to become enlightened in order to liberate all living beings from samsara. However, in a deeper sense, bodhicitta means the enlightened mind, Buddha-nature, non-dual wisdom, or primal awareness.

II. ONE'S MASTER

19. *The Gem of Selecting and Following a True Master:* One must be careful to follow only those Vajra Masters who are reincarnations of true Buddhas or Bodhisattvas. One should only follow a true Master with virtue who is enlightened. One should not decide on a Master based upon his spiritual lineage but rather whether the Master has the power to perform true Inner-Tantric Initiations.¹⁰ One can tell if a Master has learned the highest Dharma by whether or not the Master is able to successfully invoke the Buddhas to bestow true nectar. Transmission of the greatest Dharma requires initiations with true nectar. This is to prevent false teachers from deceiving people. Selecting the right Master is also most important in perfecting one's merit. The Vajra Master is also considered the total embodiment of the seven treasures or jewels.¹¹

20. *The Gem of the Use of One's Spiritual Lineage:* One's spiritual lineage cannot represent one's state of realization, Dharma powers or qualifications to be a Master. There are many masters who have a real spiritual lineage yet who have not attained the corresponding level of accomplishment. A person's spiritual lineage can be used for reference only, since it is a source for receiving empowerment. The true Buddha Dharma state of realization of the Master is what should be relied upon to attain liberation.

21. *The Gem of the Position of Dharma King:* There are two viewpoints from which one can distinguish a true Great Dharma King from a false one. The first is based on man-made conditions

¹⁰ The five Inner-Tantric Initiations include the Auspicious Selection Initiation, Buddhas Bestowing Nectar Initiation, Dharma Wheel Communicates with the Holy Ones Initiation, Picking Slips from a Golden Vase Initiation, and the Vajra Samadhi Initiation.

¹¹ Seven Jewels or Treasures are gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, agate, red pearl, and carnelian. They represent the seven powers of faith, perseverance, sense of shame, avoidance of wrongdoing, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom.

such as hierarchy and traditional lineages. The second is based on recognition by the Buddhas including bestowing of nectar by the Buddhas from the heavenly realms. One should read *Know the True Doctrines*¹² to determine who is a real Dharma King. Only one who has mastered both exoteric and esoteric Dharma, who is thoroughly conversant in the Five Sciences¹³, who is successor of a true Dharma lineage, who teaches and transforms living beings and who can perform all five Inner-Tantric Initiations can be called a Dharma King. The Dharma King must also possess a Dharma Wheel that has great supernormal powers. The position of Dharma King is not subject to succession. The Dharma King himself comes to the world again to assume the position. Among Nopu Pamu is considered as a Female Dharma King and not as a Dharma Queen.

22. The Gem of Not Misusing One's Master: One cannot use the Master as a Dharma Treasure to be free from worry while continuing to do as one pleases. It is futile to follow the Master when one continues to engage in wrongdoing. The Master will not or cannot bear the negative karma of one's offenses. One must still cultivate oneself by following the words and imitating the actions of the Master. No matter how great the abilities may be of the Master whom one follows, if one's three karmas do not correspond with the teachings of the Master, then one will not be able to solve the basic problem of ending the cycle of birth and death! The abilities of the Master belong to that Master. Such abilities do not belong to others. The Master transmits to the practitioner the method by which to cultivate oneself and become accomplished. It is the practitioner who must practice the Dharma. One must be careful not to secretly slander the Master or the Master's wife. One must not hide either small or big matters from the Master if one wants to attain liberation. One will not receive any supernormal powers, receive empowerment or have good fortune in worldly matters if one speaks falsely to the Master.

23. The Gem of Having a Respectful Heart: One must treat one's Master with the same respect as one has for Sakyamuni Buddha. Developing a respectful heart is essential to attaining liberation. True respect must be free of conjecture, comparison, and doubt concerning either the Master or the Dharma.

24. The Gem of Being Near One's Master: One of the Samaya Precepts concerns staying near the side of one's Master. Disciples who have been initiated by a Master should strive to be by that Master's side whenever and wherever possible. As soon as they have spare time, they should come in contact with their Master. Under the "Close Accomplishment Empowerment Force" the disciple will receive extraordinary benefits if the disciple sits close to the Master, facing the Master when the Master is sitting in meditation. Everything that is close to the Master falls within his empowerment. "The Vajra Seeds Empowerment Force" is a type of empowerment that causes the seeds that are planted by the Master in the practitioner during initiation to grow into the fruit of enlightenment more quickly. If at the time the Master emits these seeds the disciple is at the side of the Master, then the disciple's blessings and wisdom will naturally increase immeasurably.

¹² One should also read *How to Determine Who is a True Dharma King*.

¹³ Also known as the Five Vidyas, Five Studies, Five Brightnesses or Five Knowledges. They are mastery of (1) speech, grammar and composition; (2) the arts, mathematics, science and technology; (3) medicine; (4) logic; and (5) inner special philosophy, which in this context means knowledge of the ultimate truths of the universe as taught by the Buddhas.

25. *The Gem of Not Following a False Master:* Having blind faith in false masters will cause one to descend into one of the three lower realms of existence! False masters who also accept offerings from their followers and are worshipped and respected by their followers will suffer a great loss of good fortune.

26. *The Gem of Respecting Ordinary Masters:* One must also be respectful to ordinary masters who may not have perfected all of the Five Sciences (Vidyas) or who are not as proficient in exoteric and esoteric Dharma as a true master or Dharma King, but who nevertheless carefully uphold the precepts, cultivate themselves according to the Dharma and spread the Dharma according to Buddhist tenets. One can learn from their good qualities.

III. VOWS AND EMPOWERMENT

27. *The Gem of Receiving Precepts:* It is futile to receive any precepts if one has not resolved to strictly abide by them. The Master will transmit different precepts to his disciples based upon the karmic destiny of each disciple. The Master must also abide by strict rules in transmitting appropriate precepts and not be overly lenient, act carelessly, or misjudge the disciple based on affection or fear of hurting the disciple's feelings, resulting in the premature transmission of precepts. Those who cultivate themselves and learn Buddhism cannot violate the precepts received. Minor violations will result in negative karmic retribution. Major violations will cause one to descend into hell. It is futile to be initiated into any of the five Inner-Tantric initiations when one does not abide by the Samaya Precepts. No matter how great the merit and supernormal powers of the Master conferring the initiation or the communications established with the Buddhas, yidams, Dharma Protectors, etc. during the initiation, if one does not abide by these rules it will all be in vain. If one violates the Samaya Precepts, one must sincerely and deeply repent. Otherwise, one will degenerate. Once these precepts are violated, it will be impossible to attain any accomplishment. Whoever violates such precepts must bear the karmic responsibility. Unless one repents and sincerely correct one's errors, no matter how energetically one practices, one's practice will be futile.

28. *The Gem of Receiving Tantric Initiations:* This is a ceremony within Vajrayana Buddhism whereby Dharma is transmitted according to Tantra by means of the Master's limitless merit and power. During the ceremony, the Master visualizes that he becomes one with a Buddha or Bodhisattva. During this ceremony the disciple is empowered by the Master to carry out specific meditation practices. The Sanskrit term is *abbisheka* which literally means sprinkling or anointing. The Chinese term is *guan ding*. The student is ritually entered into a Mandala of a particular Tantric deity by his Vajra Master. He is thus empowered to practice the *sadhana*¹⁴ or associated mantras and visualization of that deity. There are three classes of initiation: Outer-Tantric Initiations, Inner-Tantric Initiations and Secret-Tantric Initiations. Each of these three classes is further divided into various Dharma methods. During the highest and greatest Inner-Tantric and Secret-Tantric Initiations there must be supernormal states that are manifested in front of the disciple at the Buddhist altar area. These miraculous states must be in accordance with the Tibetan Tantra laid down by the Buddhas. The disciple is actually turned over to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas during these initiations. Transmission of the greatest Dharma requires true nectar during the initiation. In

¹⁴ A *sadhana* is a Tantric meditation practice involving visualization of a deity and the recitation of the associated mantra. Performing this type of practice requires initiation by the Master.

the highest Dharma within Vajrayana Buddhism, the initiation of Ati Yoga,¹⁵ Great Perfection of the Vajra division, requires nectar as an indispensable holy element for cleansing one's negative karma and is the resource for planting the "Seeds of Vajra." Disciples can deeply penetrate into the Dharma through Inner-Tantric Initiations. There are altogether five divisions of Inter-Tantric Initiation. One can read more in *Entering the Door of the Dharma*.

29. *The Gem of Empowerment:* No matter how great the Master or how high the level of empowerment, the empowerment will be of no use unless one's three karmas correspond with the teachings of the Master.

30. *The Gem of True Nectar:* During Nectar Dharma Assemblies certain Buddhas exhibit supernormal states, transform into light and manifest their solemn and holy appearance. The Buddhas come and bestow true nectar from the sky. These assemblies are rare and seldom held. Those who are able to attend increase their Dharma powers several-fold. Only when certain conditions mature and all of the disciples present are of model virtue will the Dharma realms respond. This nectar is produced out of nothingness and does not exist in the human realm. It is a precious, lustrous substance that resembles liquid. It constantly changes inside the golden bowl. It is incomparably wonderful!

31. *The Gem Concerning Obtaining Supernormal Powers:* Every disciple who has received initiation has the potential to quickly obtain supernormal Dharma powers through practice. One has the potential to easily assume an infinite variety of forms and obtain good worldly fortune. However, if one violates the precept of lying to one's Master, even a minor lie, one will not be able to obtain any supernormal powers or good fortune unless one immediately repents and resolves never to violate this rule again. The five great supernormal powers are 1) the ability to fly through the air; 2) the ability to hear sounds that normally cannot be heard, such as the sounds of ants walking or sounds emanating from a far away place, even in another realm of existence (called "the divine ear"); 3) the ability to read the minds of other beings; 4) the ability to recollect previous existences; and 5) the ability to see things that occur outside one's presence, such as things happening at a far away place, even in another realm of existence (called "the divine eye"). The sixth supernormal power is knowing that your defilements are extinguished and that you have attained liberation from the cycle of reincarnation. It can be proper to desire such powers, depending upon one's motivation. It is not proper to desire such powers primarily for one's own use, to appear impressive or show off, subdue people, reap fame and gain, cheat people out of money, hoodwink people into sexual misconduct, or further one's worldly selfish and evil intentions. It is not blameworthy to desire miraculous powers to enlighten oneself and others. The Dharma Protecting Deities guard the use of these powers very closely. They will block the chakras¹⁶ of those unworthy to obtain these powers. Likewise, they will untie the knots in the chakras of those cultivators who are worthy of such powers, causing the supernormal Dharma powers of the Buddhas and

¹⁵ Ati-yoga is also known as the Great Perfection. It is considered by its adherents as the definitive and most secret teaching of Sakyamuni Buddha. The Great Perfection consists of meditative practices closely associated with the Nyigma school. Within it are methods to realize the rainbow body. The rainbow body is a subtle body composed of pure light. Reference is also made in this book to the Great Perfection Rainbow Body Accomplishment Dharma Initiation.

¹⁶ Literally, wheel or circle. It is a term for the centers of subtle or refined energy in the human body. These centers of energy are considered to be sources for psychic or spiritual powers. They can be manipulated by the "Dharma Protectors" to allow for development of "Supernormal Powers."

Bodhisattvas to suddenly turn into light and enter the chakras. At that time, the Mandala in each practitioner's body will respond and will accept the powers. When one's three karmas unite into one body and correspond with the teachings, supernormal Dharma powers will come into being. When one's state of realization and state of virtue have reached the level where it is appropriate to obtain supernormal Dharma powers, then as soon as one practices according to the Dharma, supernormal Dharma powers will appear. One cannot attain supernormal powers without proper moral discipline, concentration and wisdom. One must be able to master the Dharma.

32. *The Gem of the Yidam:* The yidam is a deity representing enlightenment in a male or female, peaceful or wrathful form, who corresponds to the individual psychological makeup of the practitioner. Yidams are manifestations of the Sambhogakaya. They are visualized during meditative practice and are regarded as being inseparable from the mind of the meditator. In short, a yidam is the practitioner's personal or main deity for Tantric practice, i.e., the deity with which the practitioner has the strongest connection. The yidam is sometimes referred to as one's meditational deity or one's tutelary deity. One only practices the rules and rituals of one's own yidam after learning exoteric Dharma and deeply penetrating Vajrayana Buddhism. Even after establishing contact with one's yidam, one must abide by the rules and Samaya precepts.

33. *The Gem of the Dharma Protectors:* The Sanskrit term is *Dharmapala* which literally means the guardian of the Dharma. For the protection of its teachings and institutions, the Vajrayana called upon this group of beings who can also be invoked by the individual practitioner. Dharma Protectors are sometimes emanations of Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, and sometimes spirits, celestial beings, or even demons who have been subjugated by a Great Master and bound under oath. Dakinis¹⁷ are also considered Dharma Protectors. When one has the desire to benefit and make happy all sentient beings and keeps one's precepts, the Dharma Protectors will come to protect and uphold one's practice, wipe out one's demonic obstructions and assist one in becoming accomplished. The Dharma Protectors will not allow nectar to be bestowed unless all of the recipients are qualified according to the Dharma. It is the Dharma Protectors who will open one's chakras to enable one to receive supernormal powers.

34. *The Gem of Practicing Mantras:* Mantras are syllables or formulas that are recited in conjunction with the practice of a particular meditational deity and that protect the mind of the practitioner. They are like keys that can open the gate leading out of the cycle of birth and death. One must correctly use the mantra following the instructions of the Buddhas and the Master. If for just one day one does not practice the mantra, one's Dharma power will diminish greatly and the Dharma Protectors will move far away. Not practicing even one day is no different from not practicing for ten days or one hundred days. If the Master transmits a mantra and if one does not apply it, then the transmission is futile and one will not attain liberation.

35. *The Gem on Attaining The Wisdom Vision:* There is a wonderful and mysterious aspect of Tantra whereby the Master will suddenly and without any prearranged design impart teachings to disciples, causing them to suddenly attain realization. This can include attaining the Wu Xiu Natural Vision of Wisdom, the Brightness Wisdom Vision, the Great Perfection Wisdom Vision, the Prajna Wisdom Vision, etc. Most of such Wisdom Visions will be suddenly attained by disciples sometime

¹⁷ A dakini is literally a "female sky-goer" that moves on the highest level of reality. They are usually depicted as wrathful or semi-wrathful deities. A dakini is a feminine personification of wisdom. They are particularly associated with transmission of secret teachings to Tantric practitioners. The male form is called "daka."

in the course of their being together with the Master on a daily basis. The Master must engage in observation and will occasionally determine that the underlying conditions are ripe, whereupon he will impart to the disciple certain Tantric teachings.

IV. BODHISATTVA PRACTICES

36. *The Gem of the Bodhisattva:* A Bodhisattva is literally an enlightenment being. In Mahayana Buddhism, a Bodhisattva is a being who seeks Buddhahood through the systematic practice of the perfect virtues (paramitas) but who renounces complete entry into nirvana¹⁸ until all beings are saved. A Bodhisattva is above the level of an Arhat¹⁹ and cannot be distinguished as being either male or female. Everything that Bodhisattvas do is for the benefit of sentient beings.

37. *The Gem on Becoming a Buddha:* A Buddha is literally an awakened one. It is one who has attained enlightenment and is thereby released from the cycle of reincarnation (samsara) or one who has attained complete liberation. Such a one has removed all obscurations veiling the mind and has developed all of the perfect virtues (paramitas) to perfection. According to the Mahayana perspective, there are innumerable Buddhas, with Sakyamuni Buddha being a single example.

38. *The Gem of Perfecting the Six Paramitas:* The Six Paramitas are also known as the six perfections, six perfect virtues or six transcendent perfections. They are generosity, moral discipline, patience, energy (diligence), concentration and wisdom. These represent the fundamental practices of Mahayana Buddhism. They are the virtues perfected by a Bodhisattva in the course of his or her development. No matter what particular school of Vajrayana Buddhism one may belong to, one must constantly practice the six Paramitas.

39. *The Gem Concerning Different Stages on the Bodhisattva Path:* One cannot fully understand what takes place on higher levels of the path. Those on the first Bodhisattva stage do not know about what takes place on the second Bodhisattva stage and so on up the path. Those on the second Bodhisattva stage see those on the first Bodhisattva stage as having impurities. Even those on the tenth Bodhisattva stage see those on the ninth Bodhisattva stage as having certain impurities. It is natural that the impurities and obscurations of those on the lower levels would be greater than those at the higher levels. Nevertheless, those who are kind and benefit others can guide and transform living beings no matter where they are on the path.

40. *The Gem of Cultivation:* One must penetrate and realize the Buddha Dharma in order to end the cycle of birth and death, attain supernormal powers, attain the power to assume different forms and lack nothing at all! There is only one method to accomplish this: taking refuge in the Three Jewels or the Four Jewels and cultivating oneself deeply. This refers to self-cultivation whereby the

¹⁸ Nirvana is the state of liberation from the suffering of cyclic existence, the goal of spiritual practice in all branches of Buddhism. However, the concept of nirvana differs in Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana Buddhism.

¹⁹ Literally an Arhat or Arahant is a “foe-destroyer.” It refers to one who has destroyed his mental defilements and thus become liberated from the cycle of reincarnation. An Arhat is one who follows the Hinayana Path or the “Lesser Vehicle” which is also known as Theravada Buddhism or Southern Buddhism. This form of practice is prevalent chiefly in countries in Southeast Asia, such as Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Kampuchea, and Laos. The Hinayana practitioners’ motivation for following the Dharma path is principally their intense wish for personal liberation from suffering and its causes. The goal of the Hinayana practitioner is the attainment of Arhatship. This path is also known as Sravaka-yana or the Small Vehicle which leads one to become an Arhat.

practitioner trains his mind and thereby corrects his erroneous ways. The cultivation one engages in must be in accordance with the Tripitaka²⁰ of the Buddha or the scriptures of the Vajrayana. No matter how many teachings one receives, one must put such teachings into practice for it to be called cultivation. Seeking the Buddha Dharma is futile if one does not apply it. Receiving mantras if one does not apply them is also futile. One's cultivation is futile if hearing the Dharma is of no benefit to how one thinks and acts or does not benefit one's heart. Cultivation is not just meditating, visualizing, reciting mantras, reading commentaries or studying the sutras. It is a richer concept and includes more than just these things. It includes the tiniest details of our actions, speech and thoughts. Greed, anger (hatred) and ignorance are the three great obstacles of cultivation. The most important aspect of cultivation is having one's three karmas correspond with the teachings of the Master and the Buddhas.

41. *The Gem of Having a Clear Goal in Seeking Enlightenment:* One must be clear in understanding what the goal of cultivation is and not take up Buddhism in a muddle-headed manner. One follows this path to realize enlightenment, become accomplished and end the cycle of birth and death. One does not follow Buddhism just to feel good or find worldly happiness in this life or the next. One cannot regard learning and practicing the Buddha Dharma as capital by which one can earn worldly material benefits. One cannot be attached to trifling profits of the moment or attracted to and bewitched by false illusions that easily vanish. One cannot allow one's view of the important to be overshadowed by the trivial!

42. *The Gem of Maintaining a Beginner's Mind:* One must continue to practice with intent on leaving the cycle of birth and death and with the enthusiasm one had when beginning practice. One cannot let worldly interests or activities cause one's practice to degenerate. One must continue to learn Buddhism as one does in the very beginning to realize great accomplishment. One must be careful that after accumulation of much merit one ceases to cultivate oneself and becomes a worldly being. One must continue to strive to make progress with one's practice and not degenerate. This is especially important for Vajra Masters and those recognized as having great achievement. One should not view the accumulation of merit and accomplishments as means to develop worldly good fortune. One must not think that just because one has a small amount of accomplishment, one is therefore amazing, can therefore seek pleasure and need not vigorously expend effort in one's cultivation.

43. *The Gem of Accomplishment:* Common accomplishments can be simply supernormal powers. However, in this context, the word *accomplishment* almost always refers to the supreme accomplishment, namely, liberation from the cycle of reincarnation and complete deliverance according to the Mahayana point of view. Reasons for not becoming accomplished: Knowing true Buddha Dharma principles, yet not following them; hearing true Buddha Dharma principles, yet not contemplating and internalizing them; understanding Buddha Dharma principles, yet not practicing them; coming into contact with the Buddha Dharma, yet not abiding by it; reading writings on the Buddha Dharma, yet not practicing the contents of such writings; and seeing what is good, yet not following the good, but rushing toward evil ways. When accomplishment is referred to as liberation, it may be stated as reaching "the other shore."

²⁰ The Tripitaka is literally, "three baskets." The first basket, the Vinaya-pitaka, contains accounts of the origins of the Buddhist order of monks and nuns as well as the rules of discipline regulating the lives of monks and nuns. The second, the Sutra-pitaka, is composed of the discourses of Sakyamuni Buddha and his eminent disciples. The third, the Abhidharma-pitaka, is a collection of commentaries and treatises on Buddhist psychology and philosophy.

44. *The Gem of Correspondence:* One's three karmas (actions, speech and thoughts) must correspond with the teachings of one's Master to receive benefits and increase one's good fortune and merit. One must abide by the precepts transmitted to one and understand and correct one's errors. One must model one's behavior after Sakyamuni Buddha. As long as one's three karmas perfectly correspond with the teachings of the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and the Master and one relies on the Three Jewels, one will naturally attain liberation without meeting hindrances.

45. *The Gem on Communicating with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas:* One builds a bridge between oneself and the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas based on one's desire to benefit and make happy all sentient beings. Only then will the Dharma protectors, such as the Dakinis, come to protect and uphold one's practice, wipe out one's demonic obstructions and assist one in becoming accomplished. One's road to accomplishment is thereby further safeguarded.

46. *The Gem of Perfecting One's Preliminary Practices:* Only after one has perfected one's preliminary practices can one speak of being qualified to engage in one's main practices. Only then can one speak of attaining great accomplishment. One can begin to pursue learning Vajrayana Buddhism by practicing the preliminaries and becoming familiar with the Tripitaka. The Preliminary Practices are usually done 100,000 times each. The four main ones are recitation of the refuge formula, Mandala offerings, prostrations and Vajrasattva mantra recitation. There is also the aspect of practicing charity as a preliminary practice whereby one accumulates the Buddhist resources of good fortune and merit.

47. *The Gem of Treating All Beings As if They Were One's Mother:* Since in previous lifetimes, all sentient beings have been your mother or someone dear to you, it is futile to follow a Master or practice cultivation if one violates this principle and treats other sentient beings who are like one's mother in a malevolent manner. One must not be rude, arrogant or overbearing in the treatment of others. One must cultivate oneself and become accomplished for the sake of one's dear relatives, that is, for the sake of all living beings in the six realms. This is the path of saving oneself and benefiting others. Not seeing deeply and in a real way the type of karmic relationship one has with other living beings will not give rise to awareness!

48. *The Gem of the Equality of All Living Beings:* One must love all beings as if they were one's own family. One must not believe that human lives or the lives of one's own family are more important than the lives of other beings. You do not walk the Bodhisattva path to just protect the interest of a few people to whom you are close. One must not think that one's parents in this life are one's only true parents whom one must love and respect. One cannot be indifferent to one's parents in previous lives. One must inquire about and pay attention to other people.

49. *The Gem of Maintaining Proper Family Relations:* One must act according to the Dharma and not as others would wish including one's own family. One must not hide evil done by others including one's family members. Family members can become demonic obstructions.

50. *The Gem of Avoiding Demons and Demonic Obstacles:* The Samaya Precepts provide that one will definitely descend into the Vajra Hell realm if one drinks one cup of water together with a demon. Demons are those humans and non-humans who damage the Buddha Dharma and the great undertaking of spreading the Buddha Dharma, who do not practice according to the correct Dharma, who obstruct the cultivation of living beings, or who obstruct living beings from seeking

the Dharma, ending the cycle of birth and death, realizing enlightenment or attaining the fruits and stages of practice. There is no absolute dividing line between demons and people who walk the correct path. Sometimes, with just one correct thought, a demon can become a person who practices the correct Dharma! Also, one mistaken thought can cause a person who is walking the correct path to become a demonic obstacle!

51. *The Gem of Not Just Reading Buddhist Books and Listening to the Dharma:* It is futile to read Buddhist books or listen to the Dharma if one does not understand the meaning and principles or cannot put them into practice. Reading is not the same as remembering and remembering is not equal to practice. Likewise, listening is not the same as understanding and understanding is not equal to practice.

52. *The Gem of Eliminating Jealousy and the Five Poisons:* One cannot cultivate prajna if one does not eliminate jealousy and the five poisons of greed (selfish desire, avarice, craving, etc.), hatred (anger, ill-will, aversion, resentment, etc.), ignorance (delusion), pride (arrogance and conceit) and doubt (about the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha and the Master). These can be seen as a metaphor for all our negative karma that is defiled and based on delusion. Defiled acts that spring from a jealous heart and poisonous mind cover up one's original bright nature.

53. *The Gem of Maintaining the Correct State of Mind for Meditation:* Practicing meditation is futile if one often becomes drowsy or unfocused. These two erroneous states of mind are the great enemies of enlightenment and are the results of negative karma produced by delusion. To overcome these states, one must constantly give rise to a state of mind bent on leaving the cycle of reincarnation, bear in mind the impermanence of all conditioned things, ponder the suffering involved in descending into one of the lower realms of existence, consider the benefit in attaining an enlightened mind and remember the need for one's three karmas to correspond with the teachings of the Master. *Samadhi* is the Sanskrit word for concentration that could also be translated as meditation. Generally, Samadhi is the collectedness of the mind on a single object through the calming of mental activity. One must also read and rely upon *The Dharma of Concentration and Visualization Essential for Enlightenment*.

54. *The Gem of Having Patience in Learning the Buddha Dharma:* One cannot completely understand the principles of the Dharma in a brief period of time. One must go through the sequence of hearing Dharma principles, understanding Dharma principles, gradually acting in accordance with these principles, gradually walking the correct path and so on. It is a process in which one advances step by step. One cannot expect that one's negative karmic obstructions that have formed over many past lives be purified in just one day.

55. *The Gem of Cultivating Peacefulness and Forbearance by Controlling Anger:* One must control one's anger if one wants to cultivate placidness and patience and become accomplished. Being peaceful and forbearing means enduring insults and being composed at all times. Sakyamuni Buddha said that enduring insults as an antidote to anger is the highest method of cultivation. One must remain unmoved and unconfused no matter what happens. Anger refers to a mentality of attachment whereby one gives rise to resentment, hatred or animosity toward other living beings. As a result, it is extremely easy for the mind to give rise to various kinds of thought, speech and actions that are filled with aggression, vengeance, disgust and hate. One must be able to control one's emotions. Because of thoughts of anger one speaks words that are biased, cruel, malicious, resentful and even slanderous. Cultivating placidness and patience requires persistent and arduous

practice along with constant self-examination and self-encouragement. One must do this actively and not be passive in this cultivation.

56. *The Gem of Letting Go of Attachments:* The two attachments are ; 1) attachment to the concept of self, i.e. the concept that there is a real, permanent ego entity; and 2) attachment to things of the world or to the concept that things of the world and worldly phenomena in general are real.

57. *The Gem of Maintaining Humility:* It is important to be humble and know the limitations of one's abilities and understanding. In cultivating oneself and learning Buddhism, the first thing one must understand is to be humble and cautious. If one is conceited and self-righteous, if one cannot correctly measure oneself, then one cannot face oneself with a clear mind. Only those who are not Great Bodhisattvas claim to be Great Bodhisattvas! One must cultivate with a heart of humility. All Great Rinpoches and Dharma Kings are cautious and humble. They are not boastful!

58. *The Gem of Outward Appearances:* There are many erroneous views concerning the outward appearance of cultivators. Bodhisattvas certainly adorn their bodies with precious jewels and fine silks to give a most dignified appearance. The Mahayana Dharma is intended to bring about both wisdom and good fortune. One should be evaluated by whether or not one holds the true Buddha Dharma and not what one wears or one's outward appearances in determining who is a true practitioner.

59. *The Gem of Acquiring Buddhist Resources and Receiving Worldly Blessings and Benefits:* One of the advantages of learning the Buddha Dharma is to increase one's wisdom and blessings. The prerequisite for experiencing these blessings is that one must act according to the Dharma. The Buddha Dharma advocates that one should have two types of Buddhist resources: invisible resources, such as merit and wisdom as well as visible good fortune and wealth. Of course, such wisdom and wealth should be used in furtherance of Buddhism and for the benefit of others. Hearing the teachings of the Master can enable one to accumulate Buddhist resources of good fortune and wisdom. If one does not have Buddhist resources it indicates that one is still unable to practice one's preliminary practices well, not to mention, of course, one's main practices.

60. *The Gem of Seeking Enlightenment in Worldly Affairs:* Those on the Mahayana path cannot separate the seeking of enlightenment and the handling of worldly affairs. For those who have already achieved a high level of realization, defilements are the same as enlightenment. In following the middle way there is no distinction between the mundane and the holy. True practitioners who have attained total awareness can practice anywhere at all without being moved or influenced by external conditions. This principle comes with a caveat that this is only to be followed by those who have already achieved a high level of realization. It is not giving license to improper conduct. Handling worldly matters is the same as walking on the spiritual path.

61. *The Gem of the Transfer of Consciousness:* Ordinary people do not have the power to use mantras to transfer the consciousness of the dead to higher realms. Only those who have the state of realization of an Accomplished One are able to successfully practice this Dharma. How can you save others, if you cannot save yourself? Powerful Masters are able to raise or deliver the consciousness of the dead or dying to higher realms through the practice of what is called "Phowa." Often, the consciousness of the deceased is raised to a Buddhafield, i.e. a paradise reigned over by a particular Buddha.

V. PRACTICES TO AVOID

62. *The Gem of Not Causing People to Quit Buddhism or Destroying the Foundation for the Realization of Enlightenment:* It is a most heinous offense to do anything that would cause people to even think of quitting Buddhism. Spreading untrue rumors out of jealousy is an example of this sort of action. Those who destroy the opportunity for people to realize their original nature and wisdom will descend into the hell realm of uninterrupted suffering. Teaching false Dharma that destroys a person's foundation for realizing their own original nature and enlightenment is likewise committing an offense that will definitely result in descending into the hell of uninterrupted suffering.

63. *The Gem of Inhibiting One's Disciples:* Vajra Masters, once they have reached a certain level of realization, often become negligent and violate the Samaya Precepts, especially as it relates to inhibiting their disciples from following elder or other virtuous Masters.

64. *The Gem of Not Putting One's Own Matters Before Buddhist Matters:* One of the Samaya Precepts is that one must not view one's own matters or business as more important than Buddhist matters.

65. *The Gem of Not Giving Rise to Doubt:* When one begins to practice Buddhism, one may not understand the essence of the Dharma and thus cannot enter the true practice of the Dharma. Therefore, one cannot experience any beneficial effects from one's practice. One must be careful not to commit the offense of giving rise to doubt about the Master and the Dharma at this time since it will cause one to be even more unable to receive benefits and will cause karmic retribution. Patience is very important at this stage in one's practice. There are people who suffer karmic retribution during the period when they have just begun to learn Buddhism and cultivate themselves. This is due to the maturation of conditions and must not be blamed on the Buddha Dharma or the Master.

66. *The Gem of Not Fussing Over Things:* This is not the moral behavior of a cultivator. It is the lowly behavior of an ordinary person.

67. *The Gem of Not Gossiping about Fellow Disciples:* The thing to avoid most of all in the treatment of fellow disciples is gossiping about each other or maligning others.

68. *The Gem of Avoiding Superficial Practice:* One must not treat the practice of Buddhism as a mere formality or in a perfunctory way, treating the Master, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in a careless, insincere manner. Treating the teachings of the Master in a half-hearted manner, without real care or interest, is committing an offense against oneself and is acting irresponsibly toward oneself. This includes reciting passages from sutras without believing in them, practicing meditation when one often becomes drowsy or unfocused, receiving mantras if one does not apply them, practicing while not abiding by the appropriate precepts or properly cultivating oneself and other practices addressed elsewhere.

69. *The Gem of Not Having Biased Thoughts or Maligning Other Sects:* Some Dharma Teachers have biased thoughts and because of their confused views make irresponsible remarks slandering the Buddha Dharma and many of the different schools. It is not appropriate to malign certain Masters, founders or members of other sects. There is only one Dharma. The Buddha gave us 84,000 different ways of expressing that Dharma for people of different abilities. It is not correct to refer to one kind of Dharma being superior or better than another. Exoteric practitioners think of Vajrayana followers as mantra chanters. Esoteric practitioners refer to exoteric followers as low-level practitioners. If expressing these erroneous views results in delaying others from attaining accomplishment and wisdom, the karmic consequences will be most severe. This is not correct behavior. Biased viewpoints only obstruct the pursuit of enlightenment.

70. *The Gem of Not Holding Superstitious Beliefs:* This refers to those people who do not understand what the true Buddha Dharma is. They worship and revere worldly fortunetellers who pretend to communicate with ghosts and spirits and who fabricate wild stories. They worship and revere witches and spirit mediums. They consider spirits to be holy figures in the Buddha Dharma. They consider sorcery to be the Buddha Dharma. They do not truly understand the principle of cause and effect nor do they guide their practice by a clear belief in cause and effect.

71. *The Gem of Not Holding Extreme Views:* Two extreme viewpoints were rejected by the Buddha: eternalism and its opposite nihilism. Eternalists view things such as self or soul as being eternal. That is, they view things as being real in themselves rather than existing conditionally. The other extreme is nihilism. Nihilists view things—even the delusory manifestations of the world—as not existing in any sense. They also believe that nothing continues after death. Nihilists deny the doctrines of reincarnation and cause and effect.

VI. PROPAGATING THE DHARMA

72. *The Gem of Propagating the Correct Dharma:* The only way to increase one's good fortune and wisdom and end the cycle of birth and death is to propagate the correct Dharma of the Tathagata and create various conditions that make it easy for others to often hear the correct Dharma along with engaging in true and sincere cultivation!

73. *The Gem of Not Teaching if One Does Not Act in Accordance with the Dharma or When One is a Beginner:* One cannot ask someone to behave in a correct manner if one does not exhibit such behavior oneself. One's deeds must match one's words. It is impossible to help others if you cannot help yourself. One who is a teacher cannot be indulgent toward his own mistakes and bad habits. Not practicing the Dharma and committing evil deeds are two bad factors that play on each other and negatively influence those who cultivate themselves. It is futile to be a teacher when one does not practice the Dharma and one also does evil! Those who are not enlightened themselves will only misguide others. One must be cautious since teaching a false Buddha Dharma has serious karmic consequences.

74. *The Gem for Establishing New Sects:* The establishment of a new sect must be approved by the most esteemed Great Virtuous Ones. The master seeking to establish a new sect must have already realized the state of having ended the cycle of birth and death and must be thoroughly conversant with the *Tripitaka*.