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## The Condensed Lam Rim

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We can meditate for a little bit as usual. Seat yourself in a good posture. Meditation is training one's mind single-pointedly on an internal focus, which is another way of say that meditation is all about training the mind in virtuous mental states, and the importance of that is that the virtuous mental states facilitate happiness, while the harmful mental states induce suffering.

When one analyses one's mind throughout the day one finds that even though at certain times the mind is happy, one hour later the mind can be unhappy. If one analyses the causes for that change one finds that harmful mental states have arisen in the mind and have disturbed the happiness of the mind. Virtuous mental states make the mind stable, happy and joyful. Harmful mental states do exactly the opposite. That is why one needs to meditate, why one needs to focus the mind on a virtuous object, and train the mind in virtuous mental states. If, instead of letting one's mind be distracted by external objects, one turns the mind inwards and focuses it on a virtuous mental state one can avoid this experience of the happy mind changing into a suffering mind.

One needs to use one's discriminating awareness that can recognise the different mental states and generate virtuous mental states which are really beneficial for oneself. Instead of letting the mind degenerate further and further until one breaks out in tears, it is better to use one's discriminating wisdom and generate virtuous mental states. Through continual practice, slowly, slowly one can turn the mind around.

Once sitting in a good meditation posture place the mind internally, collect the mind internally, stop engaging external objects, bring the mind back home and focus it inwards. Then, from within that space, after having focused the mind completely inwards, place it single-pointedly on the coming and going of the breath. Let the mind enter the breathing and we can meditate in this way for a few minutes. Becoming familiar with this meditation helps one to overcome being very easily agitated by small external conditions. Sometimes small external conditions can induce a sequence of a multitude of thoughts that disturb the mind. By practising this meditation one can learn not to be disturbed in such a manner. We can meditate like that for a few minutes.  
*Pause for meditation.*

It is very important that one is able to pacify the mind because an unpacified mind finds it very difficult to experience happiness. For example, while there is nothing wrong with thinking about the future one quite often starts to think negatively about the future and starts to worry about all the disasters just waiting to happen in

the future. This makes one very upset to the point where one becomes physically very tense and fearful. The actual situation is that one does not know what is going to happen. One does not know whether some problem is going to happen but somehow the mind looks at the future from the point of view that something terrible is going to happen and that makes one unhappy and disturbs the mind needlessly.

### 4.2.2 The way in which one takes the essence

#### 4.2.2.2. The actual Way of taking the Essence of the Precious Human Life

##### 4.2.2.2.2. The Reason for leading the Students along the Path of the three Beings

###### 4.2.2.2.2. The Actual Reason

The last time we were talking about how the meditations of the small and medium capable beings are needed at the time when bodhicitta is generated and during the time when one actually takes the bodhisattva vows. As we said, all the meditations of the Lam Rim are approached either from the point of view of wanting to generate bodhicitta or, for those who have already generated bodhicitta, to complete the path and attain complete enlightenment. It is for this purpose that one meditates on the meditations common to the small capable being and the meditations common to the medium capable being. For the small capable being these are the meditations on death and impermanence, the lower realms, the law of cause and effect and refuge. For the medium capable being these are the meditations on the four noble truths and practising the three higher trainings. This is all done with the aim of wanting to generate bodhicitta and attain complete enlightenment. As such, these meditations common to the small and medium capable being are regarded as the essential teachings for the generation of bodhicitta.

The meditations common to the beings of small and medium capacity are preparations for the generation of bodhicitta. The more one meditates on the meditations common to the small capable being the closer one gets to bodhicitta and the more one meditates on the meditations common to the medium capable being the closer one gets to bodhicitta. One has to look at these meditations as essential preparation for the generation of bodhicitta. Without engaging in these meditations one will not be able to generate bodhicitta. That's the way one should approach the Lam Rim.

Initially one generates effortful bodhicitta. Effortful bodhicitta is a bodhicitta that is generated by actively engaging in the different analytical meditations while effortless bodhicitta is the bodhicitta that arises naturally in the mind as a result of the effortful bodhicitta. To stabilise both the effortful bodhicitta and the spontaneously arising bodhicitta one engages in a ritual of bodhicitta. This can be very brief, such as reciting the refuge and bodhicitta prayer. One engages in an active confirmation to stabilise the effortful and effortless bodhicitta that has already generated.

Then one trains in the precepts of bodhicitta and in the

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wish to practise six perfections and the four means of subduing disciples. When one naturally generates the wish to engage further in the practice of the six perfections, one takes the engaging bodhisattva vows.

There one makes a commitment to engaging in the practice of the six perfections and the four means for subduing disciples. The previous affirmation of bodhicitta by ritual was more at an aspirational level. This time it is a stronger commitment to bodhicitta and one actually pledges to engage in the practice of the six perfections and the four means of subduing disciples. After having taken the bodhisattva vows one needs to protect the root vows and secondary vows, and one needs to engage in purification and restoration of the infractions and downfalls that have been committed.

So, initially one generates effortful and then effortless bodhicitta. Then one affirms the generation of these bodhicittas with a bodhicitta ritual and then trains in the wish to practice of the six perfections and four means to subdue disciples. When one generates from the heart the wish to practise them one takes the bodhisattva vows.

One engages in the practice of the six perfections in general, and in particular one engages in the practice of the perfection of mental stabilisation and the perfection of wisdom. The perfection of mental stabilisation is in the nature of calm abiding and the perfection of wisdom is in the nature of wisdom realising emptiness.

Without the practice of calm abiding it would be very difficult to engage in the practice of the path in an effective manner. The mind needs to be able to remain single-pointedly on a virtuous object and for that one needs to have strong calm abiding. The stronger one's calm abiding the stronger one can practise the path. Initially one generates calm abiding where the mind can abide unwaveringly on an internal object. Then, on the basis of calm abiding, one generates superior insight by engaging in analytical meditation while in calm abiding. The purpose of attaining calm abiding is specifically to be able to generate the union of calm abiding and special insight.

In this way the practice of the six perfections is contained in the three higher trainings. One's practice of the root and secondary bodhisattva vows is the higher training of morality, the practice of calm abiding is the higher training of concentration and the generation of superior insight is the higher training of wisdom.

*The first five perfections* are regarded as the method aspect of the path. They are regarded as the path that one practises relative to conventional illusory truth. Out of the accumulation of merit and wisdom these perfections are the accumulation of merit. Out of the extensive and profound paths these perfections are the extensive path. The first five perfections are the method aspect of the path, the accumulation of merit, the extensive path and the path practised relative to conventional truth.

*The perfection of wisdom* refers specifically to the three distinguished types of wisdom, which are the wisdom realising emptiness arising respectively from listening, contemplation and meditation, which are held by

bodhicitta. The perfection of wisdom is the path that is practised relative to ultimate truth, and is regarded as the wisdom aspect of the path. With regard to the accumulation of merit and wisdom this perfection is the accumulation of wisdom. Out of the extensive and profound paths this perfection relates to the profound path.

Bodhisattvas will always practise method and wisdom in unison. Without the practice of both method and wisdom one will not be able to attain the two Buddha bodies, the form body and the truth body. Looked at from the point of view of basis, path and result, one has as the *basis* the four noble truths which contain both ultimate truth and conventional illusory truth. On the basis of the four noble truths one practises method and wisdom in unison, which is the *path* and as result one attains the two Buddha bodies, the form body and the truth body. Method is the primary cause for the form body of the Buddha and wisdom is the primary cause of the truth body of Buddha. Without practising method and wisdom one cannot attain the two bodies of a Buddha.

Out of the practitioners that have generated bodhicitta, taken the bodhisattva vows and engage in the practice of the six perfections, the bodhisattvas of sharper mental capacity recognise the need to complete the accumulation of merits quickly because they see that it is unacceptable to take a very long time for the accumulation of merits to be completed.

They want to engage in a more extensive and vast practice. To achieve this they engage in the practice of tantra. Initially they take a valid tantric teacher and then, after receiving full initiations and keeping the tantric vows and pledges as the foundation of their practice, they engage in the practice of the different stages of tantra. In the lower tantras there are the paths with characteristic and without characteristic. In the highest yoga tantra it would be the generation and completion stages. The purpose for the practitioner to enter the tantric path is attaining enlightenment quicker. This practitioner has the mental capacity to see that it is necessary to attain enlightenment quicker, has greater compassion and therefore wants to complete the path quicker and wants to engage in the practice more elaborately and in a more expansive manner. That's why there is a need for greater compassion in tantric practice.

That's how the Mahayana path contains both the sutra path as well as the tantric path. Within the Mahayana, with regard to view one has two tenets, the Mind Only tenet and the Middle Way tenet, and with regard to path one has the Sutra Mahayana path and the Tantric path.

*Question: Can one attain calm abiding with the meditation of the coming and going of the breathing?*

Yes. The Abhidharma explains how one attains calm abiding by meditating on the coming and going of the breath. There are not specific objects upon which one has to meditate in order to attain calm abiding. For example there is the pervasive object, where one focuses on the entirety of certain objects. Those who have a problem of strong over-conceptualisation meditate on the coming

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and going of the breath to purify their mind and those who have too much attachment meditate on the impurity of the body and so forth.

We can finish here. As was said at the beginning, bring the mind back home, focus it inwards, and place it on the mantra.

*TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA*

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*Edited Version*

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