Praises and Requests to the Twenty-one Taras

COMPILED from traditional sources by Ani Thubten Chodron
***ADAPTED** by Lama Jigme Gyatso*
27feb22a

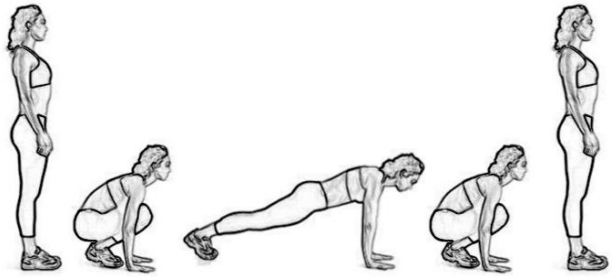
The Four Immeasurables

*M**á**y everyone be free from misery.* *compassion/ hating*
*May everyone be h**á**ppy.* *love/ craving*
*M**á**y NO one be separated* *joy/ clinging*
*from their happ**í**ness.*

*M**á**y everyone be liberated from* *balance*
*the tyranny of hating, craving, & cl**í**nging.*

Eternally I rely
on Bud-dha, Dhar-ma and Sang-ha.
M**á**y my practice of Green Tara
liberate **á**ll beings.

4, 8, 12, or 16 repetitions



Centering Meditation

I am in my ordinary form.
At *my* heart *manifests* a white
(*syllable*) Ah, made of light.
This transforms into a white moon disc.

At its center manifests
a green syllable **Tam**,

Tam

the essence of the blissful omniscient mind of wisdom and compassion of Ta-ra (*the archetype of Centered spontaneity's Enlightened action*).

Essence-mahamudra – Centering meditation – Bliss and release

Observant inhalation: *Heart mind* **Tam**

***Relaxing** exhalation:* *relaxing!*

*Count sixteen rounds upon the LEFT **little, ring, middle, & index** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's lower sets of creases.*

Observant inhalation: *Heart mind* **Tam**

***Relaxing** exhalation:* *relaxing!*

*Count sixteen rounds upon the LEFT **little, ring, middle, & index** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's middle set of creases.*

<u>Observant</u> inhalation: *Heart mind* **Tam**

***Relaxing** exhalation:* *relaxing!*

*Count sixteen rounds upon the LEFT **little, ring, middle, & index** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's <u>higher</u> set of creases.*

<u>Observant</u> inhalation: *Heart mind* **Tam**

***Relaxing** exhalation:* *relaxing!*

*Count sixteen rounds upon the LEFT **little, ring, middle, & index** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's <u>tip</u>.*

Standing clockwise
around the edge of the moon

manifests the *syllables* of the mantra
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha,
made of green light.

Contemplating the Iconography of the Archetype of Enlightened Activity

From the (*syllable*) **Tam**, rainbow-colored
light radiates in all directions
and invokes Ta-ra
to manifest in the space in front of *me*.

She is seated on a lotus
(*reminiscent of purifying wisdom*)
and moon disc
(*reminiscent of cooling compassion*).

H**é**r body is made of emerald-green light,

(*reminiscent of the speed and power of the wind el**é**ment*
*f**ó**r the Enlightened activity of Centered spontaneity*

*is quick t**ó** act*)

youthful, and exquisitely beautiful (*her body reminds us that love beautifies*).

Her right hand on her right knee is in the gesture of giving;

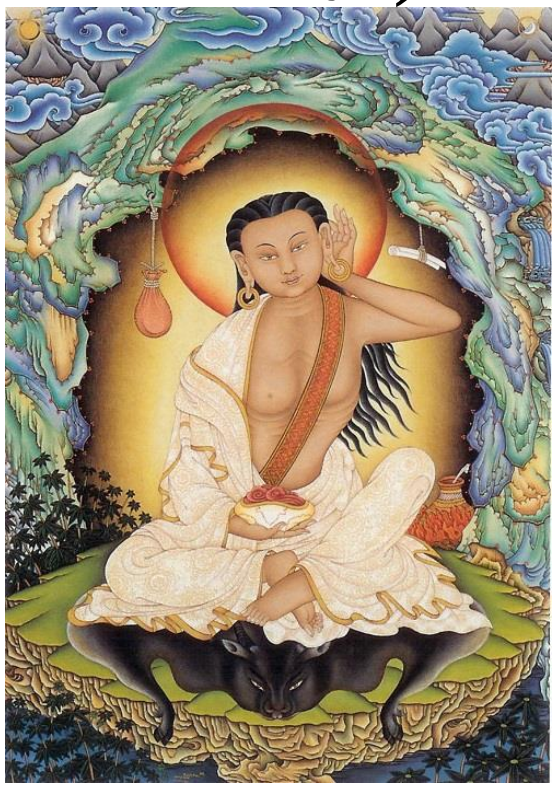
her left hand at her heart

(*thumb touching ring finger, in*) the gesture of refuge

and holds the stem
of a blue Ut-pa-la flower
that blooms by her ear

(reminiscent of Mila harkening

to the whispers of the Dhar-ma-ka-ya).

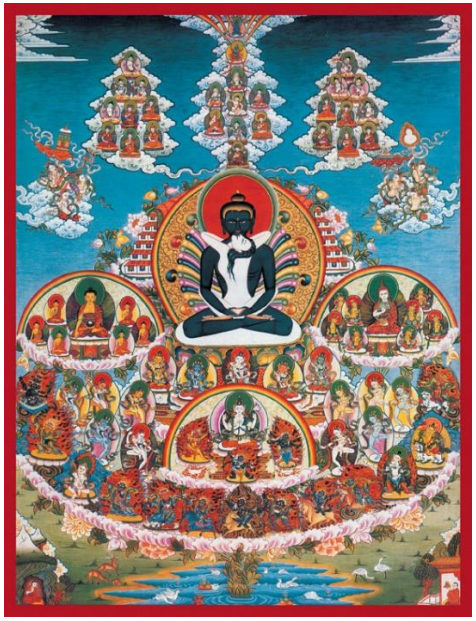


Her left leg is drawn *in*
(*reminiscent of Wishing-love*)
and her right leg is slightly extended
(*reminiscent of KIND: communication, conduct, and commerce*).

her face is very beautiful
and she smiles with loving-kindness
to all sentient beings.

Surrounding her in space
manifest twenty-one other Ta-ras,

as well as all the Buddhas
and Bo-dhi-sat-tvas.



Surrounding *us*
are ALL sentient beings.
we lead them in *practicing*
the (*meditations,*) contemplations and requests.

Loving Contemplation & Mantra Recitation

Tantra Mahamudra's – Mantra Meditation

Streams of radiant and blissful green light
from the **Tam** and mantra *syllables*
at Ta-ra's heart

flow into *me*
and into *ALL* sentient beings
surrounding *me*.

This light purifies
the imprints of all negative actions,
and dispels all sickness and interferences.

In addition, it brings inspiration
and blessings from Ta-ra,
thus enabling *all* to quickly *master*
the *eight-fold* path *of* enlightenment.

Thus (*passively*) *contemplating,*
(mindfulness, wishing love, and the wisdom of letting-go)
I (relax into the whispered recitation of)
Ta-ra's *ten-syllable* mantra.

The Mantra's Meaning

Om to the transcendent subduer,
Ar-ya Ta-ra, I bow.
Homage to the glorious one
who frees with **Ta-re**;

with **Tu-ta-re** you calm all *dangers*;
you bestow all success with **Tu-re**;
with the sound of **Sö-ha** *may it be so!*

Tantra-mahamudra's leap-over our clinging to jealousy: which is an obstruction to omniscience
Contemplating – Love and release

Máy each mind (*or Chit-ta*) be as wise
as a Buddha's real or imagined mind,
symbolized by a seed (*or Bi-ja*) mántra!

Tam

Observant inhalation: *Bi-ja wise*
for each mind…

***Relaxingly** whisper:*

Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!

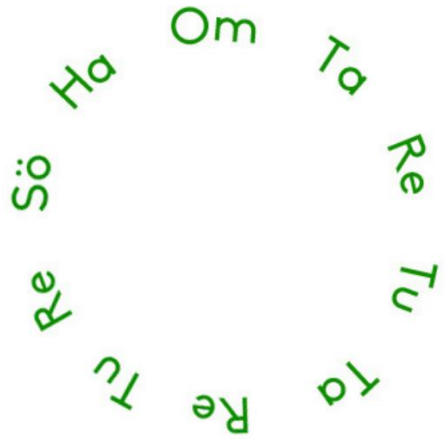
Three mantras per breath.
*Count twelve mantras upon the LEFT **index, middle, ring, & little** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's lower sets of creases.*

<u>Observant</u> inhalation: *Bi-ja wise…*

***Relaxing** exhalation:* *for each mind!*

Tam

M**á**y all communication (*or speech*)
be as loving as a Buddha's voice symbolized
by a real or imagined full (*or Ma-ha*) m**á**ntra!



Observant inhalation: *Mantra love*
for all speech…

***Relaxingly** whisper:*

Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!

Three mantras per breath.
*Count twelve mantras upon the LEFT **index, middle, ring, & little** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
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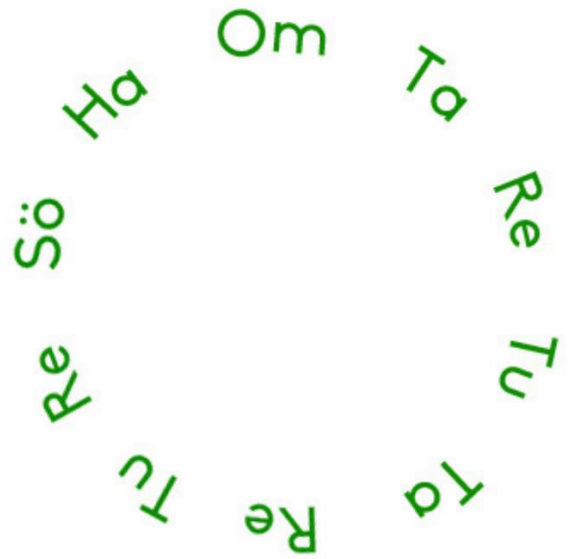
<u>Observant</u> inhalation: *Mantra love…*

***Relaxing** exhalation:* *for all speech!*



M**á**y each <u>body</u> (*or form*) be as <u>healthy</u> as an enlightened archetype's (*or Yi-dam's*) real or imagined form (*or K**á**-ya*)!

Observant inhalation: *Yi-dam health*
for each form…

***Relaxingly** whisper:*

Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!

Three mantras per breath.
*Count twelve mantras upon the LEFT **index, middle, ring, & little** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's higher sets of creases.*

<u>Observant</u> inhalation: *Yi-dam health…*

***Relaxing** exhalation:* *for each form!*

Má**á**y each <u>circumstance</u> (*or lot*)
be as full of good fortune (***ó**r boon*)
ás a Buddha's real or imagined
paradise (*or p**ú**re land*)!

Observant inhalation: *Pure land boon*
for each lot…

***Relaxingly** whisper:*

Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!

Three mantras per breath.
*Count twelve mantras upon the LEFT **index, middle, ring, & little** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's tip.*

<u>Observant</u> inhalation: *Pure land boon…*

***Relaxing** exhalation:* *for each lot!*

Tantra-mahamudra's leap-over our clinging to pride: which is an obstruction to omniscience
Contemplating – Letting-go

How could each circumstance (*or lot*)
look as NON-graspable (***ór** void*)
ás a Buddha's real or imagined
pure land (*or Va-ti*) comprised only **ó**f light?

Observant inhalation: *How lots seen yet…*
***void** like Va-ti?*

***Relaxingly** whisper:*

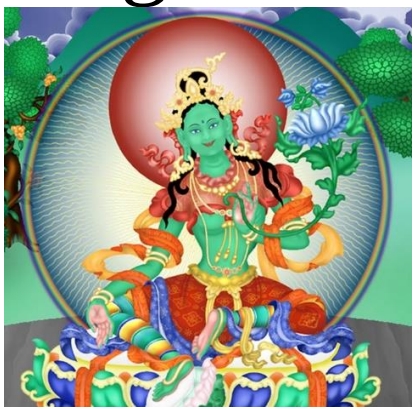
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!

Three mantras per breath.
*Count twelve mantras upon the LEFT **index, middle, ring, & little** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's lower sets of creases.*

<u>Observant</u> inhalation: *How lots <u>seen</u> yet…*

***Relaxing** exhalation:* ***void** like Va-ti?*

How could each body (*or form*)
<u>feel</u> as NON-graspable (***ó**r void*)
ás a real or imagined archetype (*or Yi-dam*)
comprised only **ó**f light?



Observant inhalation: *How forms felt yet…*
***void** like Yi-dam?*

***Relaxingly** whisper:*

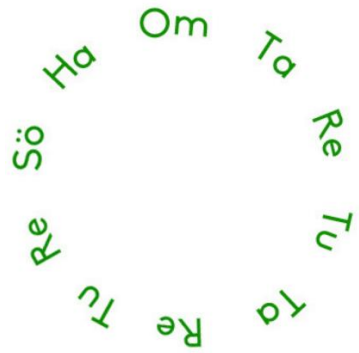
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!

Three mantras per breath.
*Count twelve mantras upon the LEFT **index, middle, ring, & little** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's middle sets of creases.*

<u>Observant</u> inhalation: *How forms <u>felt</u> yet*

***Relaxing** exhalation:* ***void** like Yi-dam?*

How could all communication (*or speech*)
<u>sound</u> as NON-graspable (***ór** void*)
ás a Buddha's real or imagined
full (*or Ma-ha*) mantra comprised only **ó**f light?



Observant inhalation: *How speech heard yet…*
***void** like Mantra?*

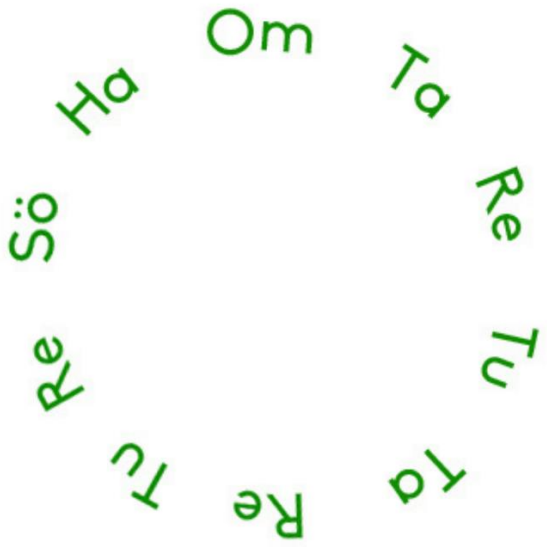
***Relaxingly** whisper:*

Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!

Three mantras per breath.
*Count twelve mantras upon the LEFT **index, middle, ring, & little** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's higher sets of creases.*

<u>Observant</u> inhalation: *How speech <u>heard</u> yet*

***Relaxing** exhalation:* ***void** like Mantra?*



How could each mind (*or Chit-ta*)
<u>seem</u> as NON-graspable (***ó**r void*)

ás a Buddha's real or imagined
seed (*or Bi-ja*) mantra
comprised only **ó**f light?

Tam

Observant inhalation: *How minds clear yet…*
***void** like Bi-ja?*

***Relaxingly** whisper:*

Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!
Om Ta-re Tu-ta-re Tu-re Sö-ha!

Three mantras per breath.
*Count twelve mantras upon the LEFT **index, middle, ring, & little** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's tips.*

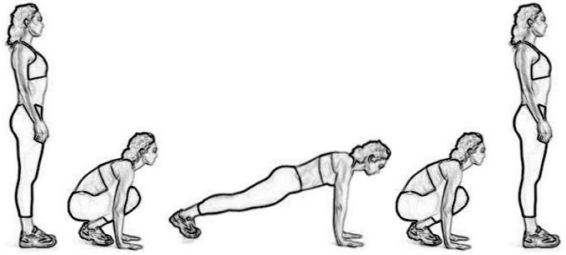
Observant inhalation: *How minds clear yet*

***Relaxing** exhalation:* ***void** like Bi-ja?*

Tam

Homage to the Twenty-one Taras

Om I bow
to the noble
transcendent
liberator.



One

Homage to Ta-ra swift and fearless
with eyes like a flash of lightning
lotus-born in an ocean of tears
of Chen-re-zik, three world's protector.

Two

Homage to you whose face is like
one hundred autumn moons gathered
and blazes with the dazzling light
of a thousand constellations.

Three

Homage to you born from a gold-blue lotus
hand adorned with a lotus flower
essence of giving, *NON-violence*, *patience*,
zeal, *mindfulness*, and wisdom.

Four

Homage to you who crown all Buddhas
whose actions subdues without limit
attained to every perfection
on you the Bo-dhi-sat-tvas rely.

Five

(Homage to you
(whose **Tu-ta-ra** and **Hum**
fill the realms of desire, form, and space

you crush seven worlds beneath your feet
and have power to call all forces.

Six

Homage to you adored by In-dra,
Ag-ni, Bra-ma, Va-yu and Ish-va-ra
praised in song by hosts of spirits,
zombies, scent-eaters and Yak-shas.

Seven

Homage to you whose **Trey** and **Pey**
destroy external wheels of magic
right leg drawn in and left extended
you blaze within a raging fire.

Eight

Homage to you whose **Tu-re** destroys
the great fears, the mighty demons
with a wrathful frown on your lotus face
you slay all foes without exception.

Nine

Homage to you beautifully adorned
by the Three Jewels' gesture at your heart
your wheel shines in all directions
with a whirling mass of light.

Ten

Homage to you, radiant and joyful
whose crown emits a garland of light
you, by the laughter of **Tu-ta-ra**
conquer demons and lords of the world.

Eleven

Homage to you with power to invoke
the assembly of local protectors
with your fierce frown and vibrating **Hum**
you bring freedom from ALL poverty.

Twelve

Homage to you with crescent moon crown
all your adornments dazzling bright
from your hair-knot A-mi-ta-bha
shines eternal with great beams of light.

Thirteen

(Homage to you
(who dwell in a blazing wreath
like the fire at the end of this age

your right leg outstretched and left drawn in
joy surrounds you who defeat hosts of foes.

Fourteen

Homage to you whose foot stamps the earth
(and whose palm strikes
(the ground by your side

with a wrathful glace and the *syllable* **Hum**
you subdue all in the seven stages.

Fifteen

(Homage to the blissful,
(virtuous, peaceful one
object of practice, Nir-va-na's peace

perfectly endowed with **Sö-ha** and **Om**
overcoming all the great evils.

Sixteen

Homage to you with joyous retinue
you subdue fully all enemies' forms
the ten-*syllable* mantra adorns your heart
and your knowledge-**Hum** gives liberation.

Seventeen

Homage to **Tu-re** with stamping feet
whose essence is the seed-*syllable* **Hum**

you cause Me-ru, Man-da-ra, and Vin-dya
(and all the three worlds
(to tremble and shake.

Eighteen

Homage to you who hold in your hand
a moon like a celestial lake
saying **Ta-ra** twice and the syllable **Pey**
you dispel all poisons without exception.

Nineteen

Homage to you on whom the kings of gods
the gods themselves and all spirits rely
your armor radiates joy to all
you soothe conflicts and nightmares as well.

Twenty

(Homage to you whose eyes,
(*like* the sun and moon,
radiate with pure brilliant light

uttering **Ha-ra** twice and **Tu-ta-ra**
dispels extremely fear*some* plagues.

Twenty-one

Homage to you, adorned with three natures
perfectly endowed with peaceful strength

(you destroy demons,
(zombies, and Yak-shas
oh **Tu-re**, most exalted and sublime!

Colophon

Thus the root mantra is praised
and the twenty-one homages offered.

Benefits of Reciting the Homage

optional

Those endowed with perfect and pure
respect for these deities
the intelligent who recite these praises
with utmost *zeal*

both in the evening
and upon waking at dawn
will have *safety* bestowed on them
by this remembrance.

After being purified of all evils completely,
they will attain the destruction
of all lower realms

and the seven million conquering Buddhas
will quickly grant them every
empowerment.

Thus they will attain greatness
and go forth
to the ultimate state
of supreme Buddhahood.

As a result, all violent poisons
whether abiding within
or spreading to others

that they have eaten or dunk
by this remembrance
will be completely removed

and they will eliminate completely afflictions by spirts, epidemics, poisons and all various sufferings.

If for oneself or for the sake of others,
these praises are read sincerely
two, **three**, or seven times,

those wishing a child will have one
and those wishing wealth
will attain this as well.

Without obstruction
ALL their wishes will be granted
and every single hindrance
will be destroyed as it arises.

Sutra-mahamudra's slice-through the obscuring emotions of hatred & craving
Spontaneous Meditation – Awareness & release

Observant inhalation: *Notice this…*

***Relaxing** exhalation:* *relaxing!*

*Count sixteen rounds upon the LEFT **little, ring, middle, & index** fingers' lower, middle, & higher creases and tips.*
*Count four sets upon RIGHT **little, ring, middle, & index** finger's lower sets of creases.*

Observant inhalation: *Notice this…*

***Relaxing** exhalation:* *relaxing!*

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Observant inhalation: *Notice this…*

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Jetsün Drakpa Gyatsen's

Requesting Prayer

Oh compassionate and venerable subduer
may infinite beings, including myself,
soon purify the two obscurations
(*of jealousy and pride*)

and complete both *trainings*
(*of love and wisdom*)
so that we may attain full enlightenment.

For all of my lives, until I reach this stage,
may I know the sublime happiness
of humans and gods.

So that I may become fully omniscient please PACIFY quickly all obstacles, interferences, obstructions, epidemics, diseases and so forth,

the various causes of untimely death,
bad dreams and (*ill*) omens,
the eight fear*some thing*s & other afflictions,
that they (*may*) NO longer exit.

1 a) floods b) attachments
2 a) fire b) anger
3 a) elephants b) ignorance
4 a) snakes b) jealousy

5 a) lions b) pride
6 a) iron chains b) greed
7 a) thieves b) wrong views
8 a) carnivorous demons b) doubt

May the mundane
and supra-mundane collections
of ALL excellent and auspicious
qualities and happiness increase and develop

and may ALL (*beneficial*) wishes be fulfilled
naturally and effortlessly,
with OUT exception.

May I strive to realize
and increase the sacred Dhar-ma
accomplishing your stage (*oh Ta-ra*)
and beholding your sublime face,

may my understanding
of (*the*) emptiness, (*that aids in letting-go,*)
and the precious altruistic intention
increase like the moon waxing full.

May I be reborn from
an extremely beautiful and holy lotus
in the joyous and noble
Man-da-la of the conqueror

may I attain whatever prophecy I receive
in the presence of A-mi-ta-bha,
Buddha of (*Limitless*) Light.

Oh deity, whom I have accomplished
from previous lives
the enlightening influence
of the three-time Buddhas,

blue-green, one face and two arms,
the swift pacifier,
oh mother holding an Ut-pa-la flower,
may you be auspicious!

Whatever your body,
oh Mother of Conquerors,
whatever your retinue, lifespan,
and pure land,

whatever your name,
most noble and holy,
may I and all others
attain only these.

By the force of these praises
and requests made to you,
may ALL disease, poverty, fighting,
and quarrels be calmed,

may the precious Dhar-ma
and everything auspicious increase
throughout the world and directions
where I and all others dwell.

Shantideva's

Dedication Prayers

from the 10th chapter of the Bodhicharyavatara

M**á**y all beings everywhere
plagued by sufferings of body **á**nd mind,
óbtain an ocean of happiness and joy
by virtue of my m**é**rits.

M**á**y NO living creature suffer,
commit evil or ever f**á**ll ill.
M**á**y NO one be afraid or belittled,
with a mind weighed down by depr**é**ssion.

M**á**y the blind see forms
and the deaf h**é**ar sounds.
M**á**y those whose bodies are worn with toil,
be restored on finding r**é**pose.

M**á**y the naked find clothing
the hungry f**í**nd food
m**á**y the thirsty find water
and delicio**ú**s drinks.

M**á**y the poor find wealth,
those weak with sorrow f**í**nd joy;

m**á**y the hopeless find:
(1) hope,
(2) constant happiness,
(3) and prosper**í**ty.

M**á**y there be timely rains
and bountiful h**á**rvests;
m**á**y all the medicines be effective
and wholesome prayers b**é**ar fruit.

M**á**y all who are sick and ill
quickly be freed from their a**í**lments.
Wh**á**tever diseases there are in the world,
may they never occur **á**gain.

M**á**y the frightened cease to be afraid
and those bound b**é** freed;

m**á**y the powerless find power
and the people think
of benefiting each **ó**ther.

F**ó**r as long as space remains,
for as long as sentient beings r**é**main,
úntil then may I too remain
to dispel the miseries of th**é** world.

Traditional Dedications

F**ó**r the sake of ALL living beings
may I quickly accomplish Green T**á**ra
ánd then lead EVERY living being,
to Green Tara's supr**é**me state.

Thro**ú**gh the virtues I have collected
through meditation and recit**á**tion
m**á**y EVERY living being,
be born in the Pure Land **ó**f Bliss.

Thro**ú**gh this merit
may ALL suffering quickl**ý** cease,
ÁLL happiness and joy be fulfilled,
and may Dhar-ma flourish EVER**Ý** where.

M**á**y the precious, supreme Bo-dhi-chit-ta
grow where it has N**Ó**T grown
ánd where it has grown
may it flourish FOREV**É**R more. ☺

V. Appendix

Tara Quotes

Acharya Zasep Tulku

The benefits of mantra recitation
are limitless, we will:

(1) become closer to the Buddhas,
(2) receive blessings,

(3) purify negative Karma,
(4) remove all kinds
of mental and physical obstacles,

(5) and accomplish
the four kinds of enlightened activities

[a] pacifying,
[b] increasing,
[c] powerful, and
[d] wrathful actions.

Mantra recitation will bless
our breath (Pra-na) and speech
and make it more effective
for purifying and healing;

it potentially transforms our speech
into the Vaj-ra speech of a Buddha.

The more mantas we recite,
the less afflictive emotions arise,
and the stronger and clearer
our minds become.

Dorje Chopa

A. Padawan Training

1. Parable of the Movie Concessions

It was 1971 and I was in first, or second grade.
A class mate's mother had taken many of us
to see "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory"
for his birthday.

My family did not often go to movies
so this was very exciting for me.

Timid, and uncertain, and polite,
I did what I was told,
and gratefully accepted what I was offered.

I was offered hot buttered popcorn
and what seemed like a huge vessel
of Dr. Pepper,
a soda I had heretofore never tasted.

So there I sat,
in the darkened theater,
with my class mates
and several hundred strangers;

eating my popcorn,
and sipping my Dr. Pepper,
and all the while enjoying the movie,
which I still remember, to this day.

Upon first consideration
one could understandably assume
that the movie could distract me…

from my snacking and sipping
and thus undermine
my enjoyment of them.

But I experienced the opposite
to be true:
that the movie enhanced my enjoyment
of the popcorn and the soda…

and the popcorn and the soda
enhanced my enjoyment
of the movie.

And this could be very much
like our practice of meditation…

where during our inhalation
we silently, and mentally recite,
"*Notice <u>this</u>*…"

and during our exhalation
we silently, and mentally recite,
"***relaxing!***"…

while actually physically relaxing
as best we can.

For just as I was able to observe the movie
while snacking and sipping
we can watch our mind
while noticing and relaxing.

We could notice sensations,
and flavors, and scents,
and sounds, and sights…

as well as our emotions,
and intentions, and reasonings,
and recollections, and imaginings.

And we could notice
all those things
passively and non-conceptually.

And as we physically relax
into each exhalation,
for that is what our bodies
have evolved to do,

all that we noticed as we breathed in
could feel a little less graspable
and a little easier to mentally release
as we relax into our out breath.

And just as the snacking
and the sipping
did not undermine

my enjoyment
of the movie
but rather enhanced it…

likewise our silent and mental
recitations of "Notice this…" and "**relaxing**!"
in harmony with our breathing…

does NOT undermine our ability
to watch the play of mind
or relax into its non-graspable nature
but rather facilitates it.

More than two millennia ago
a Jewish carpenter
is said to have explained…

that man was not made
for the Sabbath,
but Sabbath for man.

Likewise, I tell you
that we do not sit in meditation
that we might more efficiently
recite "Notice *this*…" and "**relaxing**!"

but rather
that we silently and mentally recite
"Notice <u>this</u>…" and "**relaxing**!"
that we might more efficiently meditate

so that our passive and non-conceptual
observation of the play of mind

and our physical, and visceral,
and mental relaxation
into its non-graspable nature….

might be more easy,
and effective,
and transformative.

Recall Darth Bane's rule of two,
wherein there must be a master
to have power,
and a student to crave it.

This is a form of elitism
and manipulation.

And over the millennia
many so-called spiritual teachers
have used cryptic meditation
instructions, and techniques…

to reinforce a rule-of-two-like
elitism and coercion.

Some deliberately chose
obfuscation and coercion
because they embraced elitism
and power, and prestige…

others chose the same obfuscation and coercion
because they lacked the mental acuity
to know any better.

But I am here to tell you
that something does NOT
have to be difficult
to be effective.

I'm telling you the opposite.
I'm telling you that
something must be easy
and intuitive….

if it is to be sustainable,
no less effective.

But do not take
my word for it;
put it to the test.

Play with these techniques
every morning and every evening
that you,
like Rey Skywalker…

might meditate
like a Jedi.

2. Karezza Tantra's Mental Panacea

One can not gaze at an image of Dröl-ma Mar-mo Yab Yum
without noticing that she is sporting in Tantric union.

Just as the Baskin Robins franchise of ice cream parlors
claims to offer thirty-one flavors
likewise there are many flavors of sexual tantra.

As with all things, there are also patriarchal as well as matriarchal takes
on what the Buddhist Tantrikas refer to as Karma Mudra in Sanskrit,
or Yab Yum if you prefer Tibetan.

In the book “Cupid’s Poisoned Arrow”
the author Marnia Robinson does an outstanding job
explaining the flavor of sexual tantra that could be described as:
matriarchal, or valley, or yin, or bonding , or oxytocin-oriented,

through the lenses of anthropology, and genetics,
and neuroscience, and trenchant pragmatism.

Oh how I wish that her text was required reading
in every junior high school Sexual Education class
for the way we choose to make love or masturbate,
and our choices in pornography, and erotica, and even fantasy

have a profound effect upon each of our midbrain's
dopamine pathways, and oxytocin pathways,
and our mental health, and our physical health,
all our relationships,
as well as our educational and vocational well-being.

The endocrino-neurological, and emotional, and intellectual,
and romantic, and social, and educational, and vocational,
and developmental healing made available

by the subtle and often G-rated techniques of Karezza tantra
are a virtual panacea.

Purchase this book from Amazon dot com tonight
either as a paper back or read it through the FREE kindle app
on the digital device of our choosing.

Read it with your partner aloud before bed.
Apply its teachings, for no less then twenty-eight consecutive days,
and watch your life change.

FULL DISCLOSURE: the Buddha Joy Mediation School
makes NO money from your purchase
of Marnia Robinson's "Cupid's Poisoned Arrow."

3. Parable of the Movie Patron

Let us revisit our friend
the movie patron.
He has purchased his ticket,
and his snack, and his beverage,

and has taken his seat
in the air conditioned comfort
of the movie theater.

After a handful of trailers,
how many?
Just enough to make him forget
what movie he came to see.

And after those trailers
the movie begins.
And whether it is adventure, or horror,
or comedy, or drama

our friend the patron sits back
and enjoys the ride
as he knows he has little other choice.

For he does not confuse himself
for the screenwriter, nor editor,
nor director, nor producer
and knows completely

that what occurs upon the screen
is utterly out of his control.

So he nibbles his snack
and sips his beverage
and enjoys the show.

Likewise, when the wise sit down,
cross-legged to meditate
they know it is NOT their job to select

the sensations, or flavors, or scents, or sounds, or sights,
or emotions, or intentions, or reasonings, or recollections, or imaginings
that cartwheel across the metaphoric stage of their mind.

What then is their job?
To notice: vulnerable, and passive,
withOUT bothering to analyze or label
and to physically relax that we might mentally let go.

And to do all this
in harmony with the tightening tendencies of each inhalation
and with the relaxing propensities of each exhalation.

For, in our very good fortune,
that is how evolutionary biology
selected for our bodies and minds to best operate.

And if we put this advice into action,
every morning and every evening,
then we could very much be like a child, with a video game:
difficult, and frustrating, and seemingly impossible to prevail against;

who at long last receives the manufacturer's cheat-codes
and is at last able to transform
their time spent with the video game
from an ordeal, into a delight.

4. Whole-food Veganism's Physical Panacea

Buddhist tantra is the path of love and letting-go.
Love is more than just a feeling.

Compassion is an intention that effects our choices,
and our behaviors, and the ripples that we generate
that, in turn, effect the world around us.

Choosing a cruelty-free diet
is one of the easiest ways
to diminish the suffering created
by our consumer choices.

The benefits generated
by embracing a whole-food vegan diet
are not limited to non-human animals
with whom we share this planet,

nor even this planet itself,
the only place in the known universe
that we are certain sustains life (for the time being).

The physical, and en-dro-crin-o-lo-gi-cal,
and neurological, and psychological benefits
that we could savor on a whole-food vegan diet
have been observed in peer reviewed scientific journals.

In the parody song "White and Nerdy"
Weird Al Yankovic sings of a fellow
who "…does calculous just for fun…".

Which reminds me of Dr. Michael Greger, M.D.
whose full time job is to analyze
EVERY peer-reviewed, nutrition-oriented study
published in English, every year.

This man is no ideologue,
content to twist the facts
in order to support his world view.

For his top priority is to discover the dietary interventions
that could prevent disease, reverse disease,
and increase quality of life as well as longevity.

And towards that end
he uses meta analysis to follow the facts
wherever they lead;
like a contemporary, medical Sherlock Holmes…

if Sherlock was so geeky
as to name his book
after a Monty Python skit.

"How NOT to Die"
first explores the top fifteen causes of premature death in America,
secondly shares a dozen things we could do
to prevent and reverse these disorders,

and thirdly contains hundreds of citations
to peer-reviewed studies.

This book is a virtual panacea of all medical disorders.
It is available on Amazon dot com
and the Buddha Joy Meditation School
receives NO remuneration for your purchase of this life-saving book.

5. Two Paths

In the Tao Te Ching we read of two paths in any endeavor,
Lao Tzu warned against the former and encouraged the latter:

the path of yang or the path of yin,
the path of patriarchy or the path of matriarchy,
the path of rigidity or the path of flexibility,
the path of elitism, or the path of egalitarianism,

the path of control or the path of permissiveness,
the path that craves certitude or the path that is comfortable ambiguity,
the path with authority as the source of truth
or the path with truth as the source of authority,

the direct path or the circuitous path,
the active path or the passive path,
the path of competition or the path of cooperation,

the path or cruelty or the path of compassion
the path of pride or the path of love,
the path of ego or the path of NO-self (aka NOT-self),

the path of scattered-ness or the path of centeredness,
the path of contrivance or the path of spontaneity,
the path of effort or the path of ease.

6. Essence of the Four Sets of Vows

Karma Chakme Rinpoche was a brave soul
who received sky treasures, or Ter-ma in Tibetan, from Chen-re-zik,
the archetype of enlightened compassion,
guiding him to begin the journey out of sectarianism and fundamentalism.

In his effort to transcend sectarianism
he embraced the teachings and practices
of both the Kagyu as well as Nyingma sects as best he could.

*In his effort to transcend **fundamentalism***
he strove to simplify Highest Yoga Tantra or Ut-ta-ra Tan-tra in Sanskrit,
as well as essentialize the hundreds of Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana vows.

Towards the latter: he taught that the essence of all the Refuge vows
was to simply trust in the Bud-dha, Dhar-ma and Sang-ha,
he taught that the essence of all the Pratimoksha vows of morality
is NON-violence,

he taught that the essence of all the Bodhisattva vows of compassion
was to share all our good karma with all beings,

and he taught that the essence of the Tantric Samaya of wisdom
was to see ourselves as Chen-re-zik
and see our teacher as Chen-re-zik's teacher, A-mi-ta-bha.

Many centuries later Lama: Jigme Gyatso
received sky treasures, or Ter-ma in Tibetan, from Chen-re-zik,
guiding him to journey further out of sectarianism, fundamentalism, and patriarchy.

In terms of sectarianism he was led to explore the teachings and practices
of each sect of Buddhism
and in terms of transcending fundamentalism,
which is one of patriarchy's symptoms,

he was taught further simplify the four sets of vows thusly:
*the essence of the Refuge vows is to simply **rely** upon the example of Buddha's life story,*
***apply** the instructions of the Dharma,*

*and humbly **rely** upon the support offered by fellow Sangha members,*
(those who are striving to master the Buddha's teachings)
as well as lovingly support Sangha members with our skill set as best we can;

the essence of the Pratimoksha vows of morality
is still NON-violence which includes a whole-food, vegan diet
which practices NON-violence toward the planet, NON-human animals,
as well as our own lucidity and longevity;

the essence of the Bodhichitta vows of compassion
is to blend our practice of the four bases of mindfulness
with compassionate and loving intentions
for each being of each world or each galaxy real or imagined;

the essence of the Tantric Samaya of wisdom
is to enthusiastically apply our teacher's instructions
and follow his example as best we can.

7. Good night and Wake up Channels

In Buddhist Tantra it is often taught
that within our bodies of flesh, blood and bone,
lay energy channels

that fundamentalists squander inordinate amounts of time and energy
visualizing as tubes comprised of light.

It is said we have a blue central channel,
the width of an arrow shaft,
that begins in the lower abdomen,
ascends about a thumb's width before the spine,

piercing the horizontal bladder wheel
(or chakra if you prefer Sanskrit),
navel wheel, heart wheel, and throat wheel

as it ascends into the skull
where it arches forward brushing against
the crown wheel at the fontanel
before terminating between, and just above the eyebrows.

There are two side channels.
The moon, or left, side-channel is red,
the width of hay or straw
and begins at our urethra,

brushes past the most sensitive part
of either our citreous or our penis,
climbs up the left of our central channel,

looping once around the central channel
just below the bladder wheel
and then just below the navel wheel,

looping thrice around the central channel
just below the heart wheel,

looping once again just below the throat wheel,
and then just below the crown wheel
before terminating in the left nostril.

The sun, or right, side channel is white,
also the width of hay or straw
and begins in our rectum,

brushes past either our G-spot or prostate,
climbs up the right of our central channel,

looping once around the central channel
just above the bladder wheel
and then just above the navel wheel,

looping thrice around the central channel
just above the heart wheel,

looping once around the central channel
just above the throat wheel
and then once again just above the crown wheel
prior to terminating in the left nostril.

As liberals upon the path of matriarchy
none of this needs to be memorized or even visualized.

Our right channel could be stimulating,
so we imped it when its time to go to sleep,
by closing our right eye and reading through our left
and by sleeping on our right side.

Conversely, our left channel could be sedating,
so we imped it is time to start our day,
by rolling over to our left side

and laying in the fetal position for a few moments
as thoughts of the day's tasks begin to clarify
like friends emerging from a fog bank.

Upon rising, we could also close our left eye,
and read though our right
as we sit upon the toilet
to further wake our bodies.

8. Walking Meditation

After fifteen weeks of twice daily livestream practice
you should have automatically memorized the 24 contemplations
of Tantra's: mindfulness, compassion, insight, love, and letting-go.

Which should come in handy,
as this week you could begin training
in brisk, walking meditation.

Its simple, just perform the 24 contemplations you've already grown accustomed to
while briskly walking through your neighborhood.
This is especially useful during times of emotional upset or even PTSD episode.

Of course if you're so upset as to experience disorientation
then please limit your walking course to just going around your block,
that way you won't get lost, or walk into traffic.

Blending the 24 contemplation techniques you've already learned
with brisk walking
allows us to bilaterally stimulate our hippocampus and amygdala
which aids in the processing of difficult events and emotions.

REMEMBER: upon this path
we do not practice rigid concentration which stimulates our sympathetic nervous system,
but rather relaxed mindfulness which accesses our parasympathetic nervous system;
the quick path to the light side, or eager youngling.

9. Sky Gazing

In "Red Tare's Treasure" the phrase "queen of the sky" could remind us literally of the practice of sky-gazing,

where we perform the contemplation, compassion, and meditation that we are taught in the sixteen week series of meditation classes while gazing into the sky.

Any time of day we could gaze into the sky while meditating, but it could be especially poignant to gaze at the sun, doing so only during the first hour of sunrise, or the last hour of sunset.

In Sanskrit this practice is sometimes referred to as Surya Chaku.

Common sense prevails:

1 – remove your corrective lenses or contact lenses,
gaze with the left eye for four breaths,
then with the right eye for four breaths,
alternating back and forth;

2 – only do this for as long as it feels comfortable,
giving yourself permission to progress gradually
such as adding seven seconds per day,
or seven minutes, or more every day.

3 – relax the tissues of your face, especially around the eyes,
allowing the eyelids to close somewhat,
viewing the sun through one's eyelashes
thus occasionally giving rise to the illusion of subtle rainbows encircling the sun;

4 – don't wander into traffic,
for your vison will be dazzled after completing this exercise,
thus while it is fine to practice this during opening verbal contemplation & compassion,
as well as the silent meditation…

I recommend turning away from the sun
during the practice of the closing silent contemplation and compassion
thus allowing one's eyes to recalibrate
to the ambient lighting.

5 – I recommend the lion posture Simha asana,
feet flat on earth or floor,
resting one's tuchus upon one's calves,
forearms resting upon knees.

Neither mysterious nor occult
this practice could act as a subtle tonic to your body.

B. Jedi Knight Training

1. Four Levels of Practice

Browsers – come to class but do NO homework
and see NO transformation.
Students – come to class AND do their homework every morning AND every evening;
they evolve.

Yogis – students who perform one-day retreats
every quarter, month or week,
practicing four times that day (i.e.: 6am, 10am, 2pm & 6pm).

Monastics – students who live as if on permanent retreat,
practicing four times every day (i.e.: 6am, 10am, 2pm & 6pm).

Twenty *minutes of formal silent meditation*
for First Level Students – those who are seeking a "life lubricant"

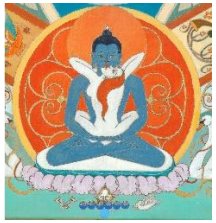
Forty *minutes of formal silent meditation*
for Second Level Students – those who desire a "profound evolution"
such as healing PTSD, overcoming a tragic past,
or transcending a disempowering and oft repeated pattern

Sixty *minutes of formal silent meditation*
for Third Level Students – those who yearn to rapidly master
enlightenment's Blissful-mindfulness, Peaceful-insight and Spontaneous-compassion.

2. The Path of Mastery

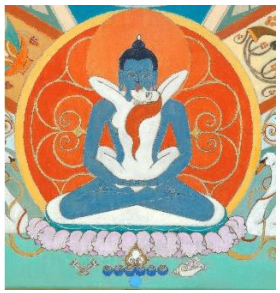
Unconscious Incompetence
Conscious Incompetence
Conscious Competence
Unconscious Competence

When have we mastered the archetypical Dakini's
vulnerability, non-grasping,
compassion and centered spontaneity?



When we practice their techniques:
spontaneously, habitually, easily and effectively;
and their practice has so defined us
that we no longer chase a goal…

but are so content to practice the path
that we no longer even feel the need
to ask whether or not
we have mastered it.



3. The Means of Mastery

Ten thousand hours of regular, lucid, strategic practice
is often the minimum required to accomplish mastery needed to teach others.
Any student who enthusiastically practices their homework every morning
AND every evening for sixteen consecutive weeks could be considered an apprentice.

A Journeyman is an apprentice who has accumulated
5,000 hours of study and 5,000 hours meditation;
ideally for eight hours daily
over the course of three and a half years…

and has demonstrated intellectual comprehension
and emotional ***evolution****.*

A <u>Master</u> is a journeyman who has accumulated
an additional 5,000 hours of study
and an additional 5,000 hours of meditation;
ideally for eight hours daily…

over the course of an additional three and a half years
*<u>and</u> has demonstrated intellectual and emotional **mastery**.*
The 10,000 hours is a minimum, for some folks require 20,000 hours,
30,000 hours or more to demonstrate intellectual and emotional mastery.

Although this path of mastery can be long,
it is neither mysterious nor occult.

4. The Origin of Mindfulness Meditation

A tale is told of a north Indian prince
of the Shakya clan
who forsook his life of privilege and debauchery
to become a homeless wandering monk;

and who studied with not one
but two prominent teachers
who taught him the path of deep concentration.

After time and effort
each of these teachers were so impressed
with he who some called Siddhartha
but who called himself Gautama

that they proclaimed
that he had mastered their teachings,
had become their equals,

and invited him to share the leadership
of their respective monastic communities.

However, each time
Gautama politely refused
explaining that he had still not found
what he was looking for

(which of course sounds very much
like a U2 lyric, doesn't it?).

Again choosing to leave
(in this case a modicum)
of prestige and comfort

Gautama retired to the forest
where for the next five years
he practiced austerities
in the company of five ascetics

until at last he saw
that enduring physical austerities
was as ineffective at generating peace
as was indulging in the debaucheries of the palace.

It was at that time
that he discovered the middle way
between all extremes.

It seems he applied that epiphany
not only to his physical practices
but to his spiritual ones as well

for from that point
he no longer practiced concentration
(arbitrarily setting the mind upon one object
and shoving everything else away).

He saw that concentration was based in effort
and in control
and as such was unsustainable
and so he chose to practice the opposite.

He forsook the path of controlling
and embraced the path of allowing.

He allowed his body and mind
to experience whatever they experienced
without any modification or contrivance.

He relaxed into inhalation
and found it ideal for perception.

He relaxed into his exhalation
and found it ideal for release:
spontaneous and uncontrived.

After years of squeezing tight
his mind in concentration
he was now relaxing it
in vulnerable mindfulness

and as such
his doors of perception
swung open
wide upon their hinges

flooding his body and mind
with a wealth of information.

To keep from drowning
in such a deluge
he took to organizing all experience
in terms of the four bases of mindfulness

which he often described of as
phenomena (or circumstance),
body, interpersonal-feelings, and mind.

Gautama also found it helpful to coordinate
contemplations of compassion, love, and impermanence
with these four bases of mindfulness

and so he developed this system
that slowly swings from active contemplation
to passive meditation

like a pendulum's gentle motion
within a grandfather clock.

This method proved so effective
that in time people took to calling him
the awakened one or Buddha.

5. The Texts upon which this Practice is Based

This set of two practices
"From Petulance to Peace"
and "Mindfulness, Love and Letting-go"
are based on four texts:

#1 the "Mindfulness with Breathing Discourse"
or A-na-pa-na-sa-ti Sut-ta,
#2 the "Loving Kindness Discourse"
or Met-ta Sut-ta,

#3 the "Failings of the World Discourse"
or Lo-ka-vi-pat-ti Sut-ta, and
#4 the "Book of the Beneficial Way"
or Tao Te Ching.

In the "Mindfulness with Breathing Discourse"
we learn of:
the four bases of mindfulness,
the seven enlightenment factors,

the two fruits of practice
and to correlate all those contemplations
with our breathing:
spontaneous and uncontrived.

In the "Loving-kindness Discourse"
we learn to lovingly wish
safety, health, peace, and joy
to all beings everywhere

as well as to compassionately wish
that all would be free of sufferings.

In the "Failings of the World Discourse"
we learn to first view the four bases of mindfulness
circumstance, body, relationships, and mind
through the lens of dread
and thus contemplate loss, pain, scorn, and shame.

We are also taught to view the four bases
through the lens of desire
and so consider gain, bliss, praise, and fame.

Then we are taught to let-go of all eight worldly failings
through contemplation of impermanence:
the universal panacea.

In the "Book of the Beneficial Way"
we explore the dichotomy of the two paths
and are encouraged to abandon the path of the reptilian brain
and embrace the path of the mid-brain.

6. How Long does the Journey Take?

Fundamentalism is a symptom of patriarchy
it delights in self-aggrandizement
and the disempowerment of its minions.

So it is not surprising when
when fundamentalists insist
that one must practice for eons
to master the Buddha's path.

The only people who say that
are those who know
that their techniques
are impotent, flaccid, worthless, and weak.

The Buddha never taught
that one must practice for great oceans of time
in order to accomplish mindfulness' true knowledge
or wisdom's liberation.

To the contrary,
he taught that one could master his path

of mindfulness, compassion, contemplation,
love, and letting-go
in as little as:

seven years…
or seven quarters,
or seven months,

or seven fortnights,
or seven weeks,
or even seven days.

When have we mastered
the Buddha's techniques?

When we practice them:
spontaneously, habitually,
easily, and effectively.

So attend a livestream every morning
and every evening:
for five minuets per session the first week,
and ten minutes per session the second week.

Each week lengthening
the duration of your participation
by five minutes.

Until within fifteen weeks
you're meditating like a Jedi.

Make use of this opportunity
of working with a live master
by typing your questions in the chat window
and applying his advice.

7. Eleven Benefits of Loving-kindness

In the Numerical Discourses of Buddha, Elevens – set 16
(or A-ngut-ta-ra Ni-ka-ya E-ka-da-sa Ni-pa-ta 16 if you prefer Pali)
it is written that the Buddha enumerated eleven benefits
to be had from the contemplation of loving-kindness.

The Buddha begins this discourse by explaining
that training the mind in loving-kindness
is integral to our liberation
from the tyranny of craving and clinging.

He then explained
how it is not sufficient to only contemplate loving-kindness
rather it must be applied
to our communication, behavior, and commerce.

He enumerated the benefits thusly:

1. *sleeping in comfort,*
2. *awaking in comfort,*
3. *freedom from (the tyranny of) evil dreams,*

4. *being dear to humans,*
5. *being dear to non-humans,*
6. *being protected by the De-vas (gods and goddesses),*
7. *being safe from fire, poison, and sword (weapon),*

8. *one's mind easily meditates,*
9. *one's demeanor is serene,*
10. *one's death is peaceful, and*

11. *if one fails to accomplish enlightenment in THIS life*
    one will take rebirth in a celestial realm
    where one will continue one's training in comfort.

As a vegan feminist I am comfortable
with either a literal or figurative interpretation
of this discourse.

The skillful contemplation
of both compassion and love
have been of great benefit to me

and I hope they will a great boon
to you as well.

8. The Hedonism of our Brainstem
and the Pettiness of our Midbrain

Let us begin with a bit of context.
In the "Failings of the World Discourse"
(or Lo-ka-vi-pat-ti Sut-ta if you prefer Pali)

we learn, what my Tibetan teachers referred to as,
the eight worldly concerns.

What are they?
Are they random?
Did the Buddha merely pull them out of dog's ear?

Just as Zacharias Jansen required a microscope
to first see the minute entities
dwelling in a drop of pond water

or Galileo Galilei needed a telescope
to view the moons of Jupiter,

likewise the eight worldly concerns are seen
when we view the four bases of mindfulness
through the two metaphoric lenses
of dread and desire.

Let's take a closer look.
In Tantra we often enumerate the four bases of mindfulness
as circumstance, body, communication, and mind.

When we view circumstance and body
through the lens of dread
we see circumstantial loss
and physical pain.

When we view circumstance and body,
also known as lot and form,

through the lens of desire
we see circumstantial wealth
and physical pleasure (or bliss).

These dreads of scarcity and pain,
as well as the desires
for wealth and pleasure
are the domain of our brainstem.

From the point of view
of natural selection
they were crucial to our
evolutionary biology.

Animals that did not feel dread
of scarcity and pain
nor desire for abundance and pleasure

did not live long enough
to pass on their genetic traits
or even have the desire to reproduce.

If we wish to grow and evolve
into happy, well-adjusted adults
we must neither indulge our every impulse
nor ignore and repress them.

The Buddha's solution is to use mindfulness
to notice our impulses
and then harness their raw energy
through the contemplations

of compassion, love, and non-graspability
as well as the meditation of awareness and acquiescence.

When we peer at communication and mind
through the lens dread
we see scorn and obscurity or shame.

In the context of desire
we perceive praise and fame.

Scorn, shame, praise, and fame
are the domain of our social midbrain.

Before we are quick
to write them off as petty and trivial
let us recall that our ancestors did not survive
because in comparison to other animals

we were swift of foot,
nor strong of limb,
nor sharp of claw,
nor long of fang.

On the contrary
our survival was largely due
to our big old brains
and our propensity to cooperate.

Ancient humans who did care
whether they received the support of their fellows or not
usually did not live long enough
to pass on that genetic trait.

Being esteemed and even favored by our fellows
is a biological imperative and an evolutionary need.

However if left unchecked
the hedonistic impulses of our survival brainstems
and the petty drives of our social midbrains
could make us neurotic and unfulfilled.

It is therefore imperative
that we exercise the courage
to vulnerably practice the mindfulness

that notices the cravings and clingings
of our body and mind
and also practice the contemplation that harnesses their energy
to drive the engines of our compassion, love, and wisdom

as well as the meditation
with which we are able to process our experience
and release it
in the most therapeutic manner.

In short
it can be uncomfortable
and down-right embarrassing
to practice the vulnerable mindfulness

that notices our hedonistic, petty,
and petulant impulses.

However our task upon the spiritual path
is to neither ignore, indulge,
excuse, deride, nor condemn them

but to notice them
and harness them
and release them
in the most wonderful way.

9. The Power of Rhetorical Questions

What is an affirmation?
It is a lie you tell yourself with enthusiasm
in the hopes that it will come true.

The act of composing,
no less applying
affirmations…

is a manifestation of patriarchy's tendencies
to strive and to strain
to bend reality to your will.

It is controlling,
and aggressive,
and exhausting at best.

A wealthy and well-known self-help guru
speaks in a voice: hoarse, and gravely, and strained, and injured
after a lifetime spent shouting affirmations
in the privacy of his car.

But the Buddha
did NOT find enlightenment
upon patriarchy's path
and neither will you.

Where then did he find liberation?
Upon the path of matriarchy,
the path of acquiescence, and vulnerability,
and centered spontaneity, and non-analysis.

I call it the path
of the vegan feminist.
It is easy, and gentle,
and profoundly transformative.

It swings gently
like the pendulum of a grandfather clock
from contemplation to meditation and back.

Half the contemplations
are compassionate
or loving

and the second half
rely upon
skillfully worded, questions;
that assume and are rhetorical.

By definition a rhetorical question
is one asked NOT to elicit an answer
BUT merely for effect.

The beauty of a rhetorical question
that is well worded
it that is drops its assumption
into the depths of our subconscious

the way a hungry vegan
might drop pieces of fruit
into a running Vita-mix
whilst making their morning smoothie.

Remember, remember, remember therefore
that the power of a rhetorical question
lies NOT in striving or straining

to solve its query
as if it were a great,
metaphysical rubric's cube.

No, the power
of a rhetorical question:
assumptive and well-worded

is only accessed
by the silent and mental recitation
of the question

from a place of vulnerability
and surrender
in harmony with the breathing
spontaneous and uncontrived

and in coordination
with the body's relaxation
that evolution has hard-wired
into every exhalation

and that turns the key
that opens the door
to the healing that comes
from mental release.

10. Concentration is NOT Mindfulness

The path of the reptile-brain
is the path of fear, aggression,
rigidity, and controlling tendencies.

And although it leads to many places,
enlightenment is NOT one of them.

Concentration is a function of the reptile brain
a tool of patriarchy;
it chooses its focus
to the exclusion of all else.

Upon concentration's path
there is NO room for spontaneity,
nor relaxation, no less release.

A tragedy of our time
is that so many
self-professed teachers of mindfulness

are not really teaching mindfulness
but are merely teaching concentration.

For whenever a teacher tells you
"…and when you notice
that your mind has wandered
gently bring it back…"

that individual is NOT teaching mindfulness
but really concentration
regardless of the labels
they bandy about.

Well what then
IS mindfulness?

A function of the mammalian mid-brain,
mindfulness vulnerably and passively notices
whatever seems to pass
through the sphere of its awareness

whether it is a sensation, or a flavor,
or a scent, or a sound or a sight,
or an emotion, or an intention,
or a thought, or a memory, or a fantasy.

Centered, and spontaneous,
and passive, and vulnerable
mindfulness merely notices

withOUT analyzing, or labeling,
of shoving some things away,
or clutching tightly at other things.

Mindfulness notices
and insight physically relaxes
thus setting space to mentally release.

Evolutionary biology has selected
for mindfulness to be wired into each inhalation
and for insight to be wired into each exhalation.

Although the Buddha's path
of mindfulness and insight is simple
it NOT easy

for few things require as much courage
as true vulnerability.

11. Evolution, Dopamine, and Orgasm

There is NO sentience driving evolution;
just two random mechanisms.
The first being genetic mutation
and the second being natural selection.

DNA is huge, and complex, and ungainly
and there are bound to be copying errors.

Whether those variations in replication
are subtle or profound
they really are bound to happen
during the vast ocean of time.

Natural selection is easy.
These mutations in an organism

either help its reproduction,
hinder its reproduction,
or are, for a time,
neither beneficial nor harmful.

Evolutionary biology selects
neither for peace, nor happiness,
nor fidelity, nor fulfillment.
It ONLY selects for reproduction.

Therefore it could come as little surprise
that some of our neurological mechanisms
could support our reproduction
AND undermine our happiness simultaneously.

In the final chapters
of the novelization of Carl Sagan's "Cosmos"
the triune brain is discussed.

All of us each
have three brains:
a very old brainstem
common to all reptiles,

a mid-brain
shared by all mammals
and a forebrain
common to all primates.

Deep within each
of our reptilian brainstems
is a Dopamine based reward system.

Its highs are high
its lows are low
it is dramatic, exciting,
easily bored,

wired to crash and burn
and prone to addiction.

In 1973 Theodosius Dobzhansky wrote:
"Nothing in biology makes sense
except in the light of evolution."

How could
the rock-star-like impulses
of our brainstem
remotely serve our genes?

Heterosexual relationships:
passionate, short-term, and numerous
go a long way
to guaranteeing a deep gene pool.

Animals born without the reward circuitry
to reinforce eating, don't eat.
Thus they die prior to passing on their genetic information
and that trait is lost.

Likewise, individuals born without reward circuity
to reinforce reproduction
do not mate
and that trait is lost.

We are the descents of gluttonous,
debaucherous horn dogs.
We have inherited their reward systems,
their impulses, and their consequences.

But we are not reptiles, are we.
We are mammals.

As such our mid-brains
have their own reward system
and it is oxytocin-based.

A mirror opposite of its predecessor
the mammalian reward system
is wired for long term fulfillment,
sustainability and pleasure.

Pleasure is the common denominator
shared by both the reptilian and mammalian
reward systems

but where the pleasures of the reptile brain
undermine vocational, intellectual,
creative, and interpersonal success

the delights of the mammalian brain
actually support them.

There is a reason
why many of India and Tibet's
greatest saints were not celibate monks

but rather yogis who savored
the subtle tantric arts.

But what has that to do with neurology?
Come, let us imagine a spectrum of pleasure
from zero to ten.

Imagine ten as orgasm
be it wet or dry
and seven or eight
as the point of no return.

The folly of contemporary edging practices
wherein the participants
race up to a seven, an eight, or even a nine
and then pull back;

is that in so doing
the are tapping into the mechanisms
of their brainstem

which reward orgasm
and punish its avoidance.

However by maintaining one's pleasure
at about the three level
one is accessing the gentle, oxytocin based reward system
of their mid-brain.

This, of course,
opens up quite the can of worms.

What about boredom?
After world war one
it was asked

"How are you going to keep them on the farm
after they have been to Paris?"

And so you could legitimately ask
how could one be content with an Oxytocin pleasure level of three,
no less delight in it,
after having sampled the brain melting pleasures of level ten Dopamine?

Internally one could practice the mental yoga
of awareness and acquiescence
whether you call it Mahamudra, or Ati-yoga, or Mahasandhi, or Trekchöd
the practice is the same.

When we and our partner notice our bodies inhaling
we could silently and mentally recite,
"Notice this…

and when we feel our bodies exhaling
we could silently and mentally recite,
*"**relaxing**!"*

while actively relaxing
as best we can.

Not only could this prevent a debaucherous frenzy
but it could open the door to subtle pleasures
heretofore unexperienced.

In fact,
merely being on the same metaphoric page
as your partner

and both practicing the same meditation
could be an extremely intimate experience.

Externally we could take two or three weeks
to have nightly g-rated pleasure fests
with our partner

enjoying such innocent delights
as hand holding, snuggling,
scalp rubs, back scratches, and foot rubs.

Ask any recovering addict
and they'll tell you
that when they first get off of heroine
all their senses seem dulled.

However after a period of time
there is a hedonistic recalibration
not unlike returning a computer
to its factory installed settings.

As humans
our brains exhibit
neuroplasticity

and can adapt and change
surprisingly quickly.

However diligent we may be
our brainstems however are remarkably devious
and when we feel our pleasure ascending

to a three and a half,
a four,
or even a four and a half

it is most definitely time to sublimate
that sexual momentum.

However if we strive to do so violently
it will only pull us deeper down into our brainstem.

So we will use two methods:
one rooted in our mid-brain
and the other in our fore-brain.

Where the brainstem is focused on my pleasure
our mid-brain could lovingly concern itself
with the pleasure of all beings

of all worlds,
of all galaxies,
real or imagined.

In coordination with our breath
and with our partner

during our inhalation
we could silently and mentally recite,
"Profound bliss…

and during our exhalation
we could silently and mentally recite
"for all forms!"

Here we are using form
as a synonym for body.

Performing this for only four breaths
while simultaneously
drawing one's palms before one's torso

up one's centerline,
and over one's head in harmony with the inhalation

and articulating one's arms
out and down
in harmony with one's exhalation

could be an excellent adjunct
recruiting our subtle energies
in a manner known in Sanskrit as Anu-yoga.

While persisting with the arm movements
one could access one's primate fore brain
with the next contemplation.

As we inhale
we could silently and mentally recite,
"How this bliss…

and as we exhale
we could silently and mentally recite,
"always change?"

This rhetorical question
could be a profoundly empowered way

of letting-go
of the coarser drives
of our brainstem.

After four rounds of this exercise
one could return

to the savoring meditation of
"Notice this…
relaxing!"

while also returning
to the giving and receiving
of sexual flavors.

Is this as easy as falling off a log?
Of course not.
Like any new skill
it involves a learning curve.

A fool expects perfection
whereas the wise
are content to learn from their errors:

vulnerably, and passively,
and non-conceptually, and viscerally.

In fact the more centered spontaneity
one brings to the practice
the more rapid, delightful, and fun
one's journey could be.

12. “Should” is Poison

A good hearted fellow
asked for a contemplative solution
to, what he felt,
were the destructive urges

that he experienced
when in public.

“I should do this.”
“I shouldn’t do that.”

“Should” is poison
for it is the unctuous whisper
of contrivance;

a dark legacy
of our reptilian brain-stem.

On the other hand
centered spontaneity
is that which paves
enlightenment’s path.

One of the many benefits
of training in the Buddha's technique
of passive meditation

is that we are able to notice
even the most grotesque of impulses

without falling into the extremes
of indulging them
or repressing them
(*which would undermine our mindfulness*).

For it is so much more liberating
to find a way to release them:
easy and sustainable.

As we breathe IN
we could silently and mentally recite,
“Notice this…”

and as we breathe OUT
we could silently and mentally recite,
“relaxing!”

After twelve or so breaths
we could apply
one of the Buddha's contemplations
such as the following:

During the inhalation
we could actively contemplate love
by silently and mentally reciting:
"Health bliss for all for FORMS…"

(*"FORMS" being just a*
monosyllabic synonym for "BODIES")

and during the exhalation
we could active contemplate wisdom
by silently and mentally reciting:
“each felt, yet changing!”

After four repetitions
or rounds
we could return
to the passive meditation:

“Notice this…
relaxing!”

And back and forth we could swing
from passive meditation
to active contemplation
and back again,

like the ponderous motion
of the brass pendulum
of a grandfather clock.

There are some who fear
this technique to be too passive.

But I assure you
that although impulses may easily dominate us
when we are in a state of scatteredness
or contrivance

each of us
is neurologically incapable
of indulging a destructive impulse
from the place of centered spontaneity

that is the fringe benefit
of practicing
“Notice this…
relaxing!”

13. Buddha's Breathing Method

Spiritual technologies
taught from the perspective of patriarchy
are often about control;

controlling our circumstance,
controlling our bodies,
controlling our relationships, and
controlling our minds.

And as such
patriarchy is rather fond of techniques
that contrive, and strain, and strive

to bend those circumstances, bodies,
relationships, and minds
to their will.

But the Buddha did not teach
from the perspective of patriarchy,
he taught from that of matriarchy.

Oh sure,
he began his spiritual journey
upon the path of patriarchy,

but having surmounted its summit
he did not care much
for where it had led him.

So he started from scratch
upon matriarchy's path
and rapidly earned the nick name
by which he is known by us today.

Upon the path of matriarchy
Gautama,
who would someday be known as the Buddha,

surrendered all hopes of trying to control
his circumstance, body, relationships, or mind.

And instead merely observed them
and released them
in the most wonderful way.

Recognizing that labeling,
no less analyzing
that which we perceive

is just another,
more subtle form of control;
Gautama released those as well.

Hindu breath control
is some times called Prana Yama
but it is not unique to the Indian sub-continent.

Wherever minions of patriarchy
strive to control
their circumstances, bodies, relationships, and minds
you will find many who practice a form of breath control.

But the Buddha did NOT teach
the techniques and trappings of patriarchy,
he taught from the perspective of matriarchy
and as such did NOT teach any breath control.

He did NOT teach folks
to select the length, or depth, or rate of respiration
but to merely notice it:

passively, vulnerably, and non-conceptually
FREE from the habit of analysis and labeling.

He taught us to coordinate
our contemplations and meditations
with our breathing:
spontaneous and uncontrived.

As one who has enthusiastically tread the Buddha's path
for numerous decades
I have observed how all bodies tense during inhalation
and relax during exhalation;

and how, as such, inhalation is best suited for mindfulness
while exhalation is ideal for letting-go.

The minions of patriarchy
tend to be competitive,
and ambitious.

They tend to elbow their way
into to positions of leadership
and be the most prolific of teachers.

And although the techniques they espouse
are well known
and widely practiced
they are profoundly impotent.

And in their rigidity
and in their stubbornness
when they are confronted
with the ineffectuality of their methods

these minions of fundamentalism
turn to superstition

claiming that their techniques
had previously worked
in a golden age
far off in a mythical and distant past

but will not work during these days of darkness
when the quality of things and the
lifespan, emotions, views, and experiences beings
have so deeply degenerated.

These apologists of patriarchy bleat
that their so called powerful techniques
can NOT work in the absence of ceremony

although the Buddha taught
that an hour's worth of mindfulness
was far more effectual than a lifetime of ritual.

After a lifetime of study and practice
I can assure you
that patriarchy's path
leads to a dead end

whereas this path of Vegan Feminism
is the easy path
to great peace.

14. What is “Emptiness or Voidness”?

When reading books about Mahayana, or Tantric Buddhism
the terms empty, emptiness, void, and voidness
are bandied about quite abundantly.

However, upon closer reading
you could find that little satisfactory explanation is offered
and what is provided is either so shrouded
in pseudo-intellectualism, or blind superstition

as to be less than worthless,
and to actually undermine and distract one
from the journey upon the Buddha's path;
the way of letting go.

How has this happened to Buddhism?
How has a significant chuck of the Buddha's teachings
come to have been obfuscated by minions of fundamentalism:
elitist, deceitful, or dull witted?

To answer that we'll have to step back
for a bit of context.
A tale is told that in the Buddha's first discourse
he taught of four noble truths.

FIRST – there is stress.
There will always be something that we hate
that we must endure,

there will always be something that we crave
that we do not have,
there will always be something that we cling to
that will be torn away from us.

SECOND – although some causes of our stress
could seem to be out of our control
we have the unpleasant talent of taking whatever stress we've been handed
and making it much worse:

for the intensity of the stress we endure
is directly proportional to the intensity
of the hatred, craving, and clinging we experience.

THIRD – just as there is stress,
there is also a state wherein we are free
from the tyranny of our stress.

FOURTH – just as there are things that create and intensify stress
likewise there are things that can undermine our stress, its causes
and that which exacerbate them,
namely our hatred, craving, and clinging.

This is the Buddha's eight-fold path,
which is easier to think about in terms of
contemplation, action, and meditation.

<u>Contemplation</u>'s first fold is the wisdom of letting-go,
and it's second fold is compassion and love.

<u>Action</u>'s third, fourth, and fifth folds
are merely compassion, love, and letting-go
skillfully applied to our
communication, behavior, and commerce.

<u>Meditation</u>'s sixth, seventh, and eighth folds
are simply the enthusiasm we bring to the two fold process
of mindful awareness as well as
insightful relaxation and release.

Now that we've survived the overview
let's return to the first noble truth:
right-view's contemplation of the wisdom of letting-go.

Just as biology only makes sense in light of evolution
likewise voidness or emptiness only make sense
in the light of letting-go.

Let's return to the task of letting go
and dig a little deeper.

Did the Buddha's method of letting-go
consist of faith: blind, and grasping, and rigid?
No, it did not.

Was the Buddha's method of letting-go
comprised of pseudo-intellectual skullduggery?
No, not at all.

The Buddha's method of letting-go
was predicated upon marrying the two truths
with the two breaths.

The conventional truth is mindfulness:
vulnerable, spontaneous, and non-analytical.

The ultimate truth is the wisdom of letting go:
that comes from physical relaxation,
which sets space for mental release.

Let us take our bodies for example,
and begin with a literal approach.
As we breathe IN
our body could FEEL permanent, independent, and rather solid.

However, as we physically relax into our exhalation
this exact same body

could FEEL less permanent,
and less independent,
and less solid.

Now we could introduce a bit of simile.
In fact as we relax into our exhalation
our body could feel as if it was as non-graspable
as a vast, empty void.

And now we wade yet deeper
into the waters of figurative communication.

What could be an example of a vast, empty void?
How about the infinite azure sky,
on a bright and beautiful cloudless morn

which although is tantalizing to the eyes
cannot be grasped by our hands?

Consider an umbrella
on a rainy day.

When we return home
we might give our wet umbrella a shake
and then hang it from a hook, in the mud room
that its moisture might better evaporate.

Once it has dried out
we close it completely, and tightly
so that the snaps on its storage ribbon may meet,
and then we return it to the closet.

Likewise, having explored
the experience of our body's non-graspability
both from the literal perspective,
as well as the figurative

we now convert the elaborate simile
to the compact metaphor
and wind-up with the concise yet cryptic statement
our body is "felt yet void."

Lets contrast the use
of literal statements, similes and metaphors.

We'll start with a literal statement:
"John is tenacious."
Then we'll convert it to a simile:
"John is as tenacious as a dog with a bone;"

and then collapse it into a metaphor:
"John is a dog with a bone."

Is John literally a dog?
Does he prance about on all fours
striving to sniff the butts of strangers?

Of course not,
for such things are frowned upon
in polite society.

Those of us stuck in the aggression,
and rigidity or our reptilian brainstems
have trouble with figures of speech
and tend to view things literally

which can give birth
to some fairly absurd
and destructive doctrines.

Those who've acclimated
to the vulnerability and flexibility of their mammalian midbrains
have an easer time
delineating between the literal and the figurative.

Thus, in my practice text
I first introduce figurative statements as similes
before easing folks
into their metaphoric counterparts;

for it requires a very special degree of stupid
to confuse a simile with a literal statement.

But why muck about with figurative speech at all
if it is so prone to confuse the rigid and weak minded?
Because figurative terminology
is the language of the under-brain.

Neurologically, so much of our coarser
rage, and terror, and despair
are rooted in our brain stem.

And since it evolved prior to the midbrain,
no less the forebrain,
it is virtually deaf to words and reason.

What, then, is the language of our under-brain?
The five senses
of sensation, and flavor, and scent, and sound, and sight.

Out under-brain evolved to perceive, and think, and imagine,
in terms of the five senses.

That is why figurative language,
while coming with its own pitfalls,
could generate such a profound effect
upon our under brain.

Sadly, as I've mentioned elsewhere
the minions of patriarchy and fundamentalism:
those who are enslaved by ambition, and greed,
and aggression, and fear, and rigidity

are very good at elbowing their way
into positions of power
but very bad at comprehending, no less mastering,
the teachings they claim to represent.

And so we have today's
sorry state of affairs
where greedy politicians
ignore the counsel of scientists

and where religious leaders
ignore the teachings
of enlightened yogis.

Perhaps that is why Albert Einstein explained
"Great spirits
have always encountered violent opposition
from lesser minds."

15. A Guide to Chenrezig Practice

The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet
has written many forwards
to many books,

but in none was he as enthusiastic
as when he wrote the forward
to Dza Patrul Rinpoche's commentary
on Chenrezig practice.

If you acquire a copy of
“Heart Treasure of the Enlightened Ones”
(perhaps from Amazon.com)
you'll have what HHDL described

as a literal "complete path"
and figuratively as something very much
"like an elixir for reviving the dead."

As a very young man Patrul Rinpoche
wrote a Ngöndro commentary
from the fundamentalist point of view.

However, at the very end of his life
he wrote "Heart Treasure..."
from a profoundly liberal point of view.

Once you acquire the book,
skip the commentary
and go straight to the root text
in the back.

If you have any difficulties with the text
write me
for I am at your service.

May you and yours be happy and healthy,
-L. Jigme

16. What do we mean by “Bliss”?

17. Overview of Buddhist Sexual Tantra

Although there are many flavors of sexual tantra
such as Neo-Taoist and Hindu
I am only interested in practicing and teaching
Buddhist sexual tantra

which some people call Karezza
and is known as Kar-ma Mu-dra in Sanskrit
or Yab yum in Tibetan.

Why should we bother with Buddhist Tantra
when porno sex is so much fun?

This could best be answered
by viewing sex
through the metaphoric lens of Neuroscience.

For simplicity sake
we could think of our brain has possessing
two primary reward systems.

The reptilian Brain-stem's reward system
is Dopamine-oriented
whereas the mammalian Mid-brain's reward system
is Oxytocin-oriented.

These reward systems
are like two sides of the same coin.

Dopamine's highs are high
and its lows are low.
The Dopamine-oriented circuit
drives boredom as well as addiction

and although it could take us
on an exciting rollercoaster ride
its journeys typically end
in a crash and burn

causing nine out of ten relationships
to end in sexual frustration,
sexual betrayal, or both.

Why is that?
The evolutionary factors
driving the development of the Brain-stem
only selected for successful reproduction

and let's face it;
numerous, passionate, and short-lived romantic relationships
are great for the genepool
but actually undermine long term physical and emotional wellbeing.

On the other side of the coin,
the Oxytocin-oriented reward system
of our Mammalian mid-brain

is wired for subtle pleasures,
long-term relationships
and optimal intellectual
as well as emotional development;

for our mammalian brain is most certainly wired
for relationships.

In Buddhist sexual tantra
we avoid techniques that cause us
to step into the tiger trap
of the Dopamine oriented cycle

and embrace practices
that access and nurture
the Oxytocin oriented cycle.

Simply put,
the brain-stem is all about the lust
that screams "give me pleasure"

in contrast the mid-brain is all about the love
that whispers
"I love you"

to our partner,
to our neighbors,
to this world,
and to all worlds, real or imagined.

Many tantric fundamentalists
are very choosy
about which sexual favors they will partake in,
opting for that which is pretty vanilla.

But tantric progressives, such as myself,
like the idea
that any and every sexual favor

could be brought into the subtle path of tantra;
claiming that it all about
subtlety and timing.

Imagine a number-line of sexual pleasure
from zero to ten
wherein ten is orgasm and ejaculation
and eight and a half is the, so-called, point of no return.

The coarse pleasures of classic orgasm and ejaculation
are the domain of the Dopamine-oriented cycle
whereas the subtle pleasures at the three mark
are the domain of the Oxytocin-oriented cycle.

Where conventional reproductive sex
could be likened to a sprint
to the summit of mount orgasm

Buddhist sexual tantra is more like
a leisurely stroll around the base of the mountain
never venturing very high up its slope.

A good book on this subject "Cupid's Poisoned Arrow"
was written by Marnia Robinson
and is available on Amazon dot com.

Although her techniques of orgasmic sublimation
are more Taoist than Buddhist
I do appreciate her discussion of evolutionary biology
and the wealth of anecdotes she includes.

Simply put, many practitioners of Hindu sexual tantra
chase orgasm as a means of temporary liberation
from the presence of thoughts

and many practitioners of Neo-Taoist sexual tantra
sublimate orgasm
with the intention of enhancing longevity.

But Buddhist sexual tantra's
three primary techniques *we rely on*
to access the Oxytocin oriented cycle
and to keep from slipping into the Dopamine oriented cycle

multiply our mindfulness, love, and ability to let-go
in the most sustainable manner.

For, in Buddhist tantra
we do use neither contemplation nor meditation
to escape the present moment.

Oh contraire, we embrace whatever
sensation, flavor, scent, sound, sight,
emotion, intention, thought, recollection, imagining,
circumstance, activity, feeling, appraisal, or impulse

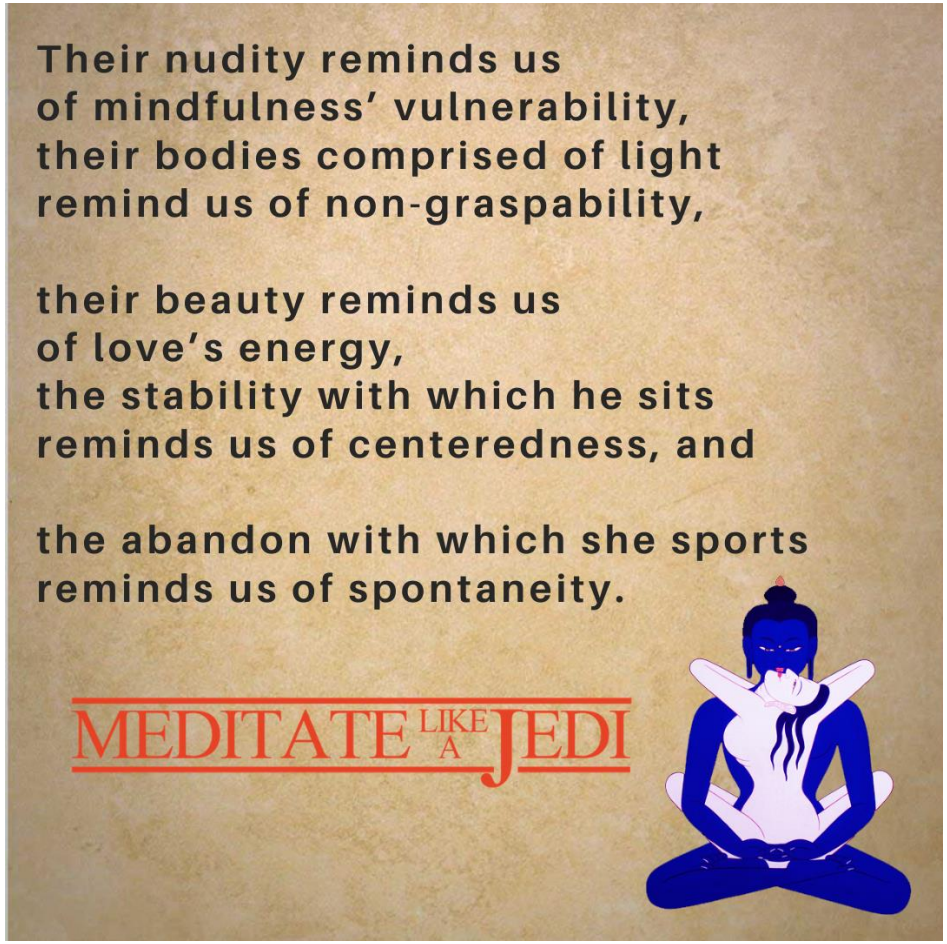
we are experiencing in the present moment
and actively contemplate them through the lenses of love and letting go

and then passively process them
through awareness and acquiescence.

*These **<u>three techniques</u>** are introduced*
in the final section of almost every one of my guided meditations;
a session of which we'll begin momentarily.

Why wait to the end?
Because the early portions of the guided meditation
lay the groundwork of concepts and techniques
upon which the three techniques depend.

C. End Notes


Their nudity reminds us
of mindfulness' vulnerability,
their bodies comprised of light
remind us of non-graspability,
their beauty reminds us
of love's energy,
the stability with which he sits
reminds us of centeredness, and
the abandon with which she sports
reminds us of spontaneity.
MEDITATE LIKE A JEDI

May love and insight
drive our veganism.
The love that yearns to minimize
our participation
in the exploitation of others;
and the insight the seeks
sustainability,
both ecological and medical.
MEDITATE LIKE A JEDI