

# Heruka Teachings Geshe Sonam Ngodrup

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So first of all, Tashi Delek greeting to all Dharma friends, Geshela hopes that you are all well and hopes that you are all happy. So we are very fortunate to study this complete path, the path through which can, we when we complete it achieve the complete welfare of ourselves and also achieve the perfect welfare of others. So it is important to reflect on our good fortune at having encountered such a path. Our human rebirth is the perfect basis for accomplishing this and also to remember since we are connected to all sentient beings there is nothing more valuable that we can do with this basis of a human rebirth then work for their benefit.

With this awareness of our good fortune, then let us begin the session.

Just putting your body and mind in a comfortable but stable posture we are going to try to create that space of calm and stillness.

### *Meditation*

*Because my mind is ultimately in the nature of clear light, my mind is able to reflect and to cognize any object of knowledge.*

*Whether we think of ourselves, others, or phenomena such as forests, such as mountains, although they appear to be truly existent, they have not any inherent existence at all, they do not exist in the way they appear.*

*Think that from this space, from this sphere of emptiness there appears beautiful jeweled ground, even to the touch*

*And think that this beautiful jeweled ground that I visualized is the perfect place to invite all of the lamas, the gurus, the yiddams, the meditational deities, the whole assembly of buddhas and bodhisattvas.*

*You can imagine that upon this jeweled ground is a sort of platform, which is made of 3 beautiful cushions, of lotus, moon and sun seat.*

*So we imagine that we invite to take his place on this cushion the being who is in essence our kind teacher Buddha Shakyamuni, but who in aspect is the deity Heruka Chakrasamvara, father and mother. And we imagine that gazing up towards Heruka father and mother, together with us are on either side, our father, our mother and behind them all of the 6 types of beings of samsara but in the aspect of human form.*

*So, think: until I am able to actualize the state of Buddhahood, to bring maximum benefit to all 6 types of beings in samsara, I will continuously go for refuge with confidence, to glorious Heruka Chakrasamvara father and mother.*

*Then bring forth the mind thinking: I must achieve the state of resultant Heruka through which I can completely clear away the suffering and the problems of all beings and establish them in the state of happiness. Bring forth special bodhicitta.*

*May all of my study and practice of the teachings become a cause to achieve that state of resultant Heruka.*

*Think: I will make the request with single-pointed concentration and devotion that this will come to pass.*

Geshela said that the chime is not very loud, but I am pretty sure you guys can't hear the chime anyway, can you hear it? Oh you can? OK, that's good news.

Let us begin the recitation, we start with the praise to the Buddha. We won't begin with a visualization because since prior to the prayers we already did the visualization of the deity connected with refuge and bodhicitta.

If you remember how Geshela described the visualization, he said that the deity is in essence our teacher Buddha Shakyamuni, who turned the wheel of the Dharma in this world. You can also think as well as the other teachers of the gurus, but in aspect it is glorious Heruka Chakrasamvara father and mother.

So the reason to have this awareness is because when we recollect that the nature or the essence of the deity is Buddha Shakyamuni, and all of the lamas who propound his Dharma it is said that this brings close blessings. Because it is Buddha Shakyamuni who began the wheel of dispensation in our world.

And then, when we visualize the actual form as the form of the deity glorious Heruka, in essence all yiddams it is said that the blessings are more powerful. So swifter blessings recollecting Buddha Shakyamuni and the lamas, more powerful blessings with the nature of the yiddam.

And so, we touched on this during the Vajrayogini commentary last week, but it applies here as well, so before dissolving the field of accumulation into ourselves, we imagine that at our heart is a lotus seat, so visualize a lotus seat at your heart and upon that we take into mind the indestructible drop of the red and white components and then we have the awareness that abiding within that indestructible drop is the extremely subtle wind and mind.

So then, we imagine that because of the practices of refuge, bodhicitta, wishing for the welfare of all beings etc. then the principle deity and the field of accumulation becomes pleased with us, and then the principal deity, in particular the glorious Heruka that these dissolve into lights and nectar that first comes to our crown.

Geshela said that actually he wants to break down the visualization even more, so we imagine that from the principal Heruka father and mother in the field of accumulation that their lotus disks emanate another lotus disk that comes to our crown, dissolves down our central channel and dissolves into a lotus disc at our heart. Then we imagine that the sun disc that Heruka father and mother are upon emanates another sun disc which comes to the crown of our head, dissolves into us, and then dissolves into the red component of the indestructible drop. Then we imagine that the moon disc of Heruka father and mother, once again a replica comes descends and the dissolves into the white component of the indestructible drop at our heart.

Finally imagine the field dissolving into Heruka father and mother. Then Heruka father and mother dissolving into lights and nectars that comes to our crown then descend through our central channel dissolving into the place at our heart, but specifically we imagine that father and mother Heruka dissolve into the extremely subtle wind and mind abiding at that indestructible drop.

And then we think that our extremely subtle wind and mind have become inseparable with that of the guru yiddam and in this way we experience a feeling of great bliss and subsequently joy.

And from that joy and bliss arising within us, **this bliss then acts as a factor for our mind to apprehend and to remain single-pointedly in meditation upon emptiness** and one achieves the union of bliss and emptiness.

So when we have time it's really good to kind of break this down and do this and then at this particular moment, we imagine that really we have actually achieved this inseparable great bliss wisdom realizing

emptiness. And we imagine that that great bliss wisdom becomes the cause for the emergence of the resultant time Dharmakaya truth body of Heruka Chakrasamvara.

So because the instantaneous self-generation is that important component that really always appears near the beginning of the practice, if we have the time to reflect in this way, this is very beneficial.

So in terms of what we've covered, we have covered visualizing the field of accumulation or the field of refuge, and the going for refuge, and then accordingly dissolving that field into oneself etc.

Then another thing that is very important when we want to discuss the sadhana or the method of accomplishment of the deity, this has 3 essential parts.

First is to bring forth the common causes into the mind, which are the 3 principal aspects of the path of renunciation, definite emergence, bodhicitta and wisdom realizing emptiness.

And so that is really kind the first thing that we need to have in place, this definite emergence, bodhicitta and correct view of emptiness because without these as a foundation, then one's tantric practice will not be able to have much benefit.

The next point is having received the empowerment, the initiation into the practice, and having received the initiation, guarding the vows and commitment as one would guard one's very eyeballs.

So our eyes, we really have this kind of awareness it's one of the most important components of our body and we have this natural instinct to always try to protect them from damage.

And because we are speaking in the context of anuttara yoga, or highest yoga tantra these vows and commitments vows are the bodhisattva precepts as well as the vows of secret mantra.

And the third point for success in this practice is we need to have a clear understanding of the progression of the self-generation sadhana. A clear understanding of how the self-generation sadhana unfolds.

These are the three essential points as for success in the practice as a common presentation.

And then, in terms of being able to achieve the resultant deity Heruka father and mother, the way to achieve this is expressed in two stages, the stage of generation and the stage of completion.

The generation stage is really known as that which ripens one's continuum or mind.

And so, if one is already a highly attained yogi or yogini, perhaps one doesn't need to pay attention to that, but for most of us, engaging in one's practice to ripen one's continuum the practice of generation stage is very important.

But in terms of the practice which helps us to really clear away the final objects of abandonment that we need to clear away, it is the practice of completion stage. It is that which actualizes the abandonment of these objects of abandonment.

And so, what do we need to accomplish abandonment of? We need to accomplish abandonment of these things which are considered the principal obstacles of those of us who abide within samsara and this is ordinary death, ordinary bardo or intermediate state and ordinary rebirth.

That's why the actualizing practice is really the completion stage because it is the completion stage which really allows us to accomplish the final abandonment of ordinary death, intermediate state and rebirth.

But because to really be able to accomplish that well we first need to be able to accomplish concentration and various visualization etc. the preliminary of training in the generation stage is extremely important.

Then, in addition to that for success in the generation stage we need to accumulate the collections etc. and in order to enable us to accumulate the collections there are also many other auxiliary practices that are presented.

Geshela said, for the first sort of portion that we have of the remaining time, we are going to proceed as normally, and then for the perhaps 20 to 30 minutes of this session, Geshela is going to explain some essential I guess we could say philosophical points that are really important to understand if we want to have this practice of the 3 bringings, of death, intermediate state and rebirth into the 3 bodies of a Buddha.

Today we are actually really beginning our discussion of the essential practice which is actually the 3 bringings.

And so, normally actually what you'll find is that the lamas they kind of first present a very brief thing and then they give a very, very, very extensive commentary -this is how it is traditionally done. But what Geshela feels will help understand people's minds is to connect everything. So to connect everything that he is teaching with an outline of the practice. That's why he is proceeding in the way he is proceeding.

And so we know that the practice of the sadhana is divided into various sections and the vastest division is onto the activities at the beginning, the activities at the middle and the activities at the end. And so that brings us then to the discussion of the next two outlines, at the beginning and those are the common, general preliminaries and the uncommon, extraordinary preliminaries.

So the common, general preliminaries, Geshela said, one explanation for why we use the word common here, is because the various outlines of the practices here appear in similar sequence in all 3 systems of Heruka Chakrasamvara. So the Krishnacharya, the Luipapadda and the Ghantapada.

Another is because they appear in similar form common to all of the yiddams or deities within anuttara yoga highest yoga tantra.

And so in terms of these 7 common general preliminaries, you really want to be breathing them is not enough, you really want to have an idea of this sequence within your mind.

Don't be impressed by saying Geshela because he has everything in here. I have the security of a piece of paper, he doesn't have that, it's all in his mind:

- 1) supplication to the lineage lamas
- 2) the instantaneous self-generation
- 3) the blessing of the vajra and bell
- 4) the blessing of the inner offering
- 5) the way of offering the preliminary tormas
- 6) the blessing of the offering to the self-generation
- 7) the meditation/recitation of Vajrasattva

We have covered all of these, and so what you want to do is try to engage in the practice but also have the awareness, which of these points is still not clear in my mind and revisit those points until they are clarified.

Now we come to the second outline which is the uncommon, extraordinary preliminaries. The uncommon, extraordinary preliminaries, as they are presented particular to this Luipapada system of Chakrasamvara, there are 4 points.

The first, Geshela said, this is quite uncommon to the system:

- 1) through purifying the 3 doors, meditation on the 4 immeasurables

Geshela said that purifying the 3 doors, this is common, but then with the meditation on the 4 immeasurables, as he remembers off the top of his head, this is not included in the outlines of the Ghantapada system, whether body mandala or 5 deity of Chakrasamvara.

The next one is also particular to this Luipapada tradition of Chakrasamvara, you don't see it in the Krishnacharya and Ghantapada systems:

2) **this is the blessing of the aggregates, constituents, and the sense bases.** Geshela said we covered that very briefly, so this is something as we continue with the teachings, we'll have to go back and cover that. We only did a very little bit. And actually, the advice is although these only appear, the blessing of the aggregates, constituents and sense basis only appears explicitly in the Luipa system, for

those of you who are practicing Ghantapada 5 deity or body mandala, you should actually incorporate this. It's very good to add this into one's practice.

Because blessing the aggregates, constituents and sense basis is something that is really going to improve one's practice and going through this process is also very beneficial for those of who whose principal practice is Vajrabhairava or Vajrayogini etc. This is also very useful for you. It's useful for Guhyasamaja, Chakrasamvara and Yamantaka.

And so the next one is the practice through which we dispel hindrances etc.

So nr. 3) is meditating on the protection wheel. In terms of the meditation on the protection wheel there are different ones that we can do, in terms of what we covered in class so far, we just covered the simpler one of that protection wheel meditation.

The protection wheel is common to the systems to Luipapada and also Ghantapa 5 deity and body mandala and actually Geshela has explained the essential components as they relate to all of those. However, there is uncommon enhancements to the meditation on the protection wheel that are particular to the Luipa system and thus far Geshela has not commented much on that.

And also Geshela said, in terms of the protection wheel practice, you find this in the vastest form within the system of Vajrabhairava/Yamantaka, so ideally, the very rich form of protection wheel practice of Yamantaka you would take some aspects of that into your practice of Chakrasamvara.

The 4th one as it appears in the Luipa practice, the 4th of these uncommon, extraordinary preliminaries is establishing conditions accumulating the collections. That's the collection of merit / wisdom. Just as we have the bodies of the Rupakaya, the form body and the Dharmakaya the 2 bodies of a Buddhas so too we must accumulate the causes, the collection of merit and wisdom.

We are within this accumulation, in terms of where we are in the sadhana at this point, we are in the accumulation of merit. And specifically, we covered the practice of the purities, which as you remember is similar to the 7 limbs. And so, within those 7 purities we have the practice of offering prostration and also the practice of making like the outer offerings, the various substances of offerings, we covered those more or less.

And also, in terms of this field of accumulation we talked a lot about the visualization of that, that is a particularly important thing, try to remember some of that.

One thing that Geshela wanted to share about this verse of prostration is something that you can do to expand this practice and make it more meaningful: you imagine yourself offering prostration not just with your body, but you think of all of the countless bodies you had since beginning lifetimes in samsara and those numberless bodies of all of your previous rebirths, they are also prostrating in human form. They are also prostrating together with you, so that's a way to expand the practice.

Also, don't forget that along with all of those previous bodies from those previous rebirths there is also negative karma that was collected with those bodies in those previous rebirths. When we visualize like this it is also a very powerful purification.

And then we come next to the practice of the offerings: there are the outer offerings, the inner offerings, the secret offerings and the suchness offering.

So the 2 waters, the 5 main objects of offering, in other words, all of the offerings we make to please the six sense bases of the holy beings, these are the outer offerings.

And also, remember as we follow the words of the sadhana that as these various offerings are being made, they are being made by the offering goddesses and these offering goddesses are emanated from our out heart as the self-generation of the deity Heruka.

So then, in terms of the inner offering, once again from the HUM at one's heart as Heruka there are 4 special goddesses of the inner offering who assemble the inner offering substances together and then we imagine purifying etc. and presenting the inner offering, that is the practice of the inner offering. So then, the next one is the secret offering: and for the secret offering one way of doing this is we can imagine all of the holy couples fathers and mothers of the 24 holy places of Heruka, we can imagine these in the form of the deity. We can imagine that they enter into union with each other and as each couple enters into union this gives rise to spontaneously great bliss and this is the making of the secret offering.

And then, from having given rise to that great bliss of the secret offering, one is able to all of these beings enter into single-pointed meditative equipoise upon emptiness and that is the expression of the 4th type of offering which is the offering of suchness.

Geshela said that after we have these offerings that are presented by the 16 goddesses and these have a lot of mudras connected with them. Geshela said he will present those mudras to demonstrate them for you maybe at later time, but I have also included a link to a video that Geshela has checked with a lama doing those mudras, so you can check on the page where the recording of these teachings are and Dave has posted that link there.

And actually, Geshela said, although they are 16 they are quite easy to perform, so there is nothing to get nervous about.

And so this brings us to the discussion of the sadhana, so let us turn to this discussion of the sadhana, so we are on page 30 of the Berzin translation of the Luipa sadhana and we are in the 8th line praise section.

Some of the holy beings have said that these 8 line praises to the father and mother and so blessed and powerful that one doesn't need a practice of Heruka or Vajrayogini other than this.

So, the benefits are incredible, the blessing and power are inconceivable and because of their power also we recite these every day as part of the 6 session guru yoga practice.

And it is said that actually in order to make offerings to the guru deity whenever we approach a place of pilgrimage, the first thing we should do is recite these 8 line of praise to the father and mother.

And so it's the 8 line praise – I think in Tibet is actually the kangye[?] which is actually the 8 leg, the 8 leg praise, so there is actually 2 sets of them, one for the father and one for the mother and in the sadhana we have the father's first.

## ***Offering Praise***

### ***Eight-Line Praise to the Father***

*OM – Vanquishing Master Surpassing All, with the majestic command of the heroic viras, I prostrate before you – HUM HUM PHAT.*

Remember that within OM there are actually 3 letters A-U-MA, so it's important to remember that. An accessible way to think about this is that the A-U-MA, which are components of OM, the first represents the body of all of the holy beings, the Buddhas etc. the second is the speech of all the Buddhas and the third is the holy mind of all the Buddhas.

Because they are all contained in one letter, this letter OM contains the essence of the holy body, speech and mind of all the enlightened beings. It's very powerful.

It is said to express all of these as one taste. The OM mantra is the one taste mantra.

We want the 3 secrets of body, speech and mind to become of one taste or essence. this is one of the important kind of things we need to accomplish in tantra. So the OM letter is representing that.

And so that's why you see the OM appearing at the beginning of so many important mantras.

The other thing is that in sutra we don't have this practice that can actualize the union of body, speech and mind, this is only found within the presentation of tantra and that's another reason why the practice of tantra or secret mantra is so essential.

In terms of the vanquishing master that Berzin gives, this is actually his way of expressing Bhagavan. And Bhagavan in Tibetan is Chom Den Dä. Chom means to destroy or to overcome and we can think of destroying a set of two things, a set of three things and a set of four things.

We can say the Bhagavans, the Chom Den Dä they are destroyers, what they have they destroyed, the set of 2. What is the set of 2? The wisdom and knowledge obscurations, along with their imprints. They have destroyed these 2 obscurations.

And so the set of 3 is a set of 3 afflictions, it's not the 3 poisons like you might think, Geshela said, there's something else there but he hasn't shared it with me so we have to share that with you in the future.

He said it's complex terminology, which means Khedrup probably won't understand, so we will come back to that.

And so the 4, this one is easy, because we have discussed it so many times, it's overcoming the 4 maras and so that's the set of 4 that are overcome.

So out of Bhagavan the first word is Chom, the next one is Den. Den has a connotation of possessing or endowed with. So here we would say possessing 6 fortunes or possessing 6 glories.

What are these 6 fortunes?

- 1) Mastery
- 2) The fortune of body – a body possessing all the marks and signs
- 3) The fortune of perfect fame
- 4) The fortune of perfect glory
- 5) The fortune of wisdom
- 6) The fortune of joyous effort

So, mastery, Geshela said, the first one here, mastery has this connotation of all of the power, all of the capacities, so complete power mastery, control.

Body - body possessing all the marks and signs – these are the 32 marks and the 80 signs that we see in the scriptures that a Buddha's body possesses.

And so these marks and signs they are expressed in every sort of complete way within the 4th chapter of the Abhisamayalankara or Ornament of Clear Realization. Geshela hopes to have the occasion to talk about these more in the future.

Perfect fame means fame or renowned know by beings of all 3 realm, the desire realm, the form realm and the formless realm.

So perfect Glory there is different ways to explain this, but one can be the glory of perfect abandonment, they have the glory of having abandoned everything that needs to be abandoned or set aside.

A wisdom says the wisdom comprehending the ultimate nature of all phenomena and being able to understand how all objects of knowledge really are just like one could stare and could see clearly a flower within one's hand.

Joyous effort here means that the deity is untiring without any sort of difficulty or tiredness always working towards the benefit of beings.

These are the 6 fortunes.

So that's the second syllable, we are still at the second syllable of Bhagavan, so Chom is destroy and Den is possessing.

And so we are really offering prostration to the being who has destroyed those 4, accomplished those 6, and has that kind of quality of majestic commands. That's the first line.

As we he say Chak tsäl [?]which is prostrate in the Tibetan etymology the tsäl has almost a connotation of seeking something, so it's kind of thinking: Wow I am offering homage to this holy being who possesses these qualities, but I myself really need to achieve those qualities for my own development. So it has that kind of connotation.

And so it's a striving towards those perfected qualities that the deity possesses in the same way that we would be striving if we were very hungry to be able to find some food to nourish ourselves.

Geshela would like now to turn to our discussion of the three bringings. So then, take a look at the sadhana, if you have it, so we are on page 31 and we are talking about taking death as a pathway to Dharmakaya.

At this point, we are imagining ourselves, if you look towards the bottom of page 31, we are imagining ourselves in the form of Heruka and at the crown of the head is a white HE, at the throat a red RU and at the heart a dark blue KA.

He actually comes from the Sanskrit Hetu and Hetu can be understood to mean cause. So we might say the He from Hetu means cause. So what causes are we talking about? We could say the causes of all phenomena container and contents of samsara, of cyclic existence.

And so, ultimately who is the creator or accumulator of these causes? The agent is the mind, it is primarily the mind that accumulates these causes.

The doer in the sense of the one that is ultimately accumulating what is good or bad, wholesome and unwholesome – and also ultimately the one that is experiencing the result of those wholesome and unwholesome causes, happiness and suffering, this is the mind.

So it's important to understand that this mind which is the creator and the experiencer, if we were to say it is naturally existent, does it exist inherently, there is not even an atom of inherent existence at all. But this appearance of it being truly existent is the force which keeps myself and all beings circling within samsara, within cyclic existence.

As for the meanings they are: the voidness of phenomena as the void of the mind being their self-established cause.

And so, Geshela said that these are understood to be working on the – this is related to conceptions. Any sort of phenomena that we talk about, any sort of pointable thing that we talk about, it is conceptually designated on the basis of its name etc.

And together with that conceptuality there is an element of grasping at true existence which is connected which is connected with the ignorance grasping at the self.

So, this ignorance grasping at the self of persons is this grasping at the true existence of the "I". And so this ignorance grasping at the self of a person is that person who is looking out and seeing oneself and all things as truly existent, or inherent existent.

And so, this sort of mistaken vision, this appearance of true existence of oneself and the things that one is perceiving, this is one of the forces that keeps us circling within samsara, within cyclic existence.

We see that there are two selflessness here, two lacks of true existence that we need to pay attention to: the first the selflessness of persons, the "I", the doer and the selflessness of all phenomena.

So both the object – what is perceived – and the object perceiver, in other words, the subject, they do not have even one tiny bit of inherent or true existence at all.

All sentient beings who are going to be able to ascend, to achieved the Dharmakaya, the truth body, they first need to understand, to realize these two emptinesses, these two selflessnesses of persons and phenomena.

Connected with this, there are actually two types of meditations, and this is really kind of explicitly stated especially in the Chakrasamvara teachings. The first is meditation on the emptiness of appearances. Meditation on the emptiness of appearances, and the second one is meditation on emptiness devoid of appearance. Meditation on emptiness devoid of appearance.

And so these two meditations on the emptiness of the appearance and on the emptiness devoid of appearance, they are not easy to understand or realize, but in fact our final realization these are the linchpin for all of that.

Here you can see that in terms of where we are in the sadhana, we are talking about :



*As for the meanings of these three, they are:  
 (The voidness of phenomena, as they are devoid of  
 the mind being their) self-established cause;  
 (The voidness of persons, as they are) parted from  
 (true existence established by their) being spoken of (as a "soul");  
 And the nature (of mind and its objects) as non-abiding  
 (as two separate, discordant things).*

So clearly, as we look at page 31 in the top of 32 we have to pay attention to the two selflessnesses. Geshela is giving a quote from the Glorious Chandrakirti as why we need to do this.

*Selflessness is taught divided into the categories of phenomena and persons, in order to liberate beings.*

This way of separating emptiness into the two selflessnesses of persons and phenomena, this was propounded as these two categories for the specific purpose of liberating beings from samsara. But in terms of the object of abandonment, of these two selflessnesses of persons and phenomena: is there a difference in the object of negation? Here is the paradox: no there is not, it is the same object of negation.

So there is no difference in the object of abandonment of the selflessness of persons and phenomena in the Prasangika system. This is a very special feature of the Madhyamika Prasangika system and it makes it differ from the Madhyamaka Sautrantrika, the Cittamatra etc.

How can we understand this division into the selflessness of persons and the selflessness of phenomena? We can understand it as a division into two bases of emptiness.

These two bases are the basis of persons and the basis of phenomena other than persons. We can understand it like that.

Then together with that emptiness as we proceed in the meditation, to bring forth this Dharmakaya, we also need to reflect upon compassion.

*Limited beings roam in uncontrollably recurring  
 samsaric existence  
 Because they don't know the manner of existence  
 of phenomena to be like this.  
 That being so, then after bringing myself  
 to manifest the topmost state of a Heruka  
 And then bringing limited beings, devoid of truly existent  
 objects taken and minds that take them,  
 To a stable realization of this manner of existence,  
 I shall liberate them all from the sufferings  
 of their recurring samsara.*

We understand all sentient beings it is due to their lack of knowledge of these two selflessnesses of persons and phenomena, this is what keeps them within samsara so if I want to help them, what I must do is realize these two selflessnesses myself, achieve the state of Heruka and then also lead them to liberation based on that understanding.

And so Geshela said that actually in this long verse that starts "limited beings" and ends with "recurring samsara" it's really a reflection to bring forth compassion, compassion is what you are trying to bring forth here. So by thinking in this way we want to produce this mindset where any being that we see within samsara, we have this unbearable compassion, to want to reduce their suffering.

Then, the mantra

*OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHAH SARVA DHARMAH SVABHAVA SHUDDHO 'HAM*  
*The three planes of samsaric existence,*  
*Devoid of self-establishing natures,*  
*Dissolve into voidness.*

remember Geshela talked about those two meditations, this is the first meditation, meditation on the emptiness of appearances.

Geshela is just giving the meaning of the mantra: OM, we talked about that already; Svabhava means nature; Shuddhah means pure; Sarva means all; Dharmah means phenomena; Svabhava means nature; Shuddho means pure; and Ham you can think to mean the self or the "I". So just to give that in a capsule, when you recite this mantra, you can think "The nature of all phenomena is pure".

Geshela said, there's another – because the OM has this connotation of body, speech and mind, we can apply to ourself this to better understand this mantra, so OM refers to the body, speech and mind that are the basis of the designation of the "I" or the self and these are all by nature pure, which means free from any inherent existence.

Sarva dharmah svabhava this is saying that all phenomena – so we've done the selflessness of persons, this is now the selflessness of phenomena – they are pure, in other words, they are in their nature pure from any even atom of true existence.

When we are doing this meditation on the emptiness of appearances, this is actually very similar to the sutra style of meditation, so what we want to do is bring forth a conception of the object but then identify that object of negation, which is the lack of inherent existence – so to establish the appearance of the object and then identify what needs to be negated, then meditating upon that negation – this is the meditation on the emptiness of appearances.

Now we come to the next part of the sadhana:

*The three syllables (HE RU KA) transform*  
*(dissolving into light and mixing into one),*  
*And then, through the power of my prayers,*  
*Arise as a white OM, a red AH, and a blue HUM,*  
*stacked one above the other,*  
*(In the nature of) my (subtlest) mind (and energy-wind).*

Geshela said, this is really through the power, we imagine through the merit, the power of the prayers and all the meditations that we have done, there is this dissolution and then the OM, AH and HUM. So Geshela said, this OM, AH and HUM these are not just ordinary letters. They are in the nature of the inseparable great bliss wisdom of the deity. That's important to understand.

Then, from the white OM at the crown countless white light rays etc. emanate. And it's not just any normal radiance, the white light rays are the essence of inseparable great bliss wisdom. These call upon all of the deities of the body wheel. Geshela said these deities of the body wheel, this actually also relates to a moment in the initiation, which some of you might remember it, where you kind of hold the truth stick above a slate and then drop it to see which lineage one has affinity with.

And so, within those we have the lineage of Vairochana, so the deities of the body wheel are said to be of the nature of Vairochana.

And so one can visualize here, that having called upon all of these deities of the body wheel, who are in aspect Vairochana, that these go and liberate and transform into the deity all the deities abiding below the earth. So Geshela said you can understand that not only is the unfortunate realms, there are also nagas etc. liberating all of these different types of beings.

Sorry - you imagine doing this as Vairochana, but ultimately you are leading all of those beings to the state of Herukahood – my apologies. So all of the male beings you can imagine they take the form of

the father, Chakrasamvara, and all of the male [probably female] they take the form of the mother, Vajravarahi.

You have invited all of those beings, Vairochanas came and invited all of those beings from below the earth, nagas etc. these are transformed into Heruka father and mother; from Heruka father and mother entering into union and great bliss wisdom, they once again melt into light and absorb, dissolve back into the OM. So they have all dissolved back into that white letter OM. And actually this is really important, because when we visualize this it acts as an assisting factor to really help refine and strengthen our experience of great bliss and emptiness. And also we can feel happy, because we liberate those beings dwelling under the earth, we can think in particular the nagas and from visualizing in this way we have liberated them and accumulated a great collection of merit.

In connection with the AH, it's a very similar visualization except we imagine that from the AH it calls upon the deities of the speech wheel who are in essence Amitabha and these Amitabhas come and liberate all of those beings dwelling upon the earth, so for example humans, animals etc. Transform them into the deities Heruka father and mother and then from there meditation they all dissolve back into the red letter AH. Geshela said we mentioned here the humans and the animals; some masters also say we can consider that the pretas, the hungry ghosts, are also dwelling upon the earth. So if you like, you can think of those as well.

So from entering into union, they achieve the state of meditative equipoise of great bliss wisdom, they dissolve into a red light, which then dissolves back and all of the power and blessing into the letter AH. And we have to think our experience of great bliss emptiness is kind of empowered, strengthened through this visualization. So we have the OM at the crown, the AH at the throat, now we come to the HUM at the heart, so we focus on the HUM at the heart. So we imagine that from the HUM letter lights radiate emanating countless Akshobhya deities. The Akshobhya deities they ascend to the deva realms, the realms of the gods and demigods, they lead them all to liberation, they attain the state of Heruka father and mother, they join that assembly and through their meditative equipoise they then dissolve into blue light and into the HUM letter reinforcing and enriching [?].

What happens here, if you have been following, through these meditations we have actually completely emptied out all of the realms of sentient beings, those dwelling below the earth, those dwelling on the earth and those beyond the earth in the form realms etc. And so, because of that then, there are no longer sentient beings abiding and there is no basis either for these realms, so we imagine that through the light rays of the letters OM, AH and HUM all of these realms where these various beings were abiding, these dissolve.

And so then, we imagine that all of these realms dissolve into the letters OM, AH and HUM and then we imagine that the mind of white appearance is achieved.

And so we imagine that what happens with this visualization is that this causes the white bodhicitta, that abides at the crown to drip down and that as that white bodhicitta drips down then we experience the mind of white increase [appearance].

Remember now that all of the container and contents – the sentient beings as well as the various realms – these have all dissolved and all that's remaining is these three letters of OM, AH and HUM. Then we imagine that the OM dissolves into the AH. When the OM dissolves into the AH, we imagine that the bodhicitta has ignited the tummo, the Chandali or inner fire and that as this arises, then the mind of red increase manifests.

And then, of course, this AH will then dissolve into the last remaining letter, which is HUM. So what happens at this point is that the red drops and the white drops then come together and then they start this process of dissolution and at that moment, one is experiencing the black near attainment.

Then what we imagine is the shabkyu, so that squiggle underneath the HUM dissolves into the HUM itself, dissolves into the half-moon shape, dissolves into the dot above that and that in this way, as this happens then the clear light of death manifests. And think, "I have now clearly experienced, clearly been pointed out this clear light of death". And then, from that clear light of death, we imagine we give rise to great bliss wisdom, and then we imagine that this great bliss wisdom we are experiencing is the nature of the deity, the nature of Heruka Chakrasamvara.

Geshela said that actually, if you want to make this meditation really meaningful, you want to go through all of the 8 stages of the death process, but you will notice that we only went through three: white appearance, red increase and black near attainment. What you want to do, is really do first the earth element dissolving into the water element, dissolving into the fire element dissolving into the wind element etc. So you have the mirage-like, smoke-like, fireflies, butter lamp appearance. These are important.

Geshela said the reason that you don't see all of the prior dissolutions in the presentation of Heruka, is because Heruka is a mother tantra, and it is focused on the development of clear light, where these three points are especially important. But actually, when we are really meditating on the 3 bringings as a preliminary to those minds of white, red and black we should be dissolving the earth, water, fire and wind element. So Geshela will, as we go through more classes, lead a meditation doing it that way. So, in this way we have covered a brief presentation of the first part of taking death into the path of Dharmakaya and we will move along further and do more detail in the next session.

When that great bliss is brought forth, and we are able to fuse that with the mind in equipoise upon emptiness, this is said to be like the mother meeting her long lost child.

So, actually, we can think that all of us, we possess clear light and will experience this clear light of death so this can be seen as the mother. But through our study and practice of the teachings, if we don't just have a path of experience of that clear light but we are able to use that clear light as a method of placing the mind single-pointedly on emptiness, it will be like the mother and the child meeting after having been parted for a long time.

Geshela said that in order – he doesn't want to have difficulties with the more tedious part of the practice, but he also wants to cover everything, so that's why you see we have split the session into one where we are proceeding and one where we are going in detail.

So in the next session, Geshela plans to continue with this presentation of the 3 bringings, so we started with taking death into the path of the truth body, and he will also look at how this is presented in other Heruka practices, for example the Ghantapada 5 deity and body mandala.

Geshela said that we didn't cover a whole bunch of new stuff but we did cover some new stuff, so we are moving through the sadhana, so we will end the session here.

So with a joyful mind let us just do a really brief dedication.

After the dedications: Geshela said our goal here, Geshela and myself from our side we will strive to continue to investigate these teachings and clarify our understanding, and also you when you listen to the commentary really with this intention to clarify your understanding and in this way, we all progress together. And so Geshela said, he does encourage everybody, to listen to these teachings live, because there is the experience of that flavor of transmission but also if you have to miss for some reason, don't worry because they are recorded and made available afterwards. Sometimes when we are busy, we are not able to make it to the actual class, so perfectly OK to listen to the recording. And definitely we can come to an understanding from following the recordings and listening, but there is an element of transmission that's really beneficial when we can do it in real time.

