

# Vajrayogini Teachings with Geshe Sonam

## Ngodrup

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### **Third Vajrayogini teaching – 11.11.2023**

Tashi delek, greeting to all Dharma friends, wherever you are in the world, Geshela hopes that you are well and hopes that you are all happy.

And remember Lama Tsong Khapa's exhortation, that having encountered the teachings of Vajrayana, of secret mantra and being able to study and practice them one should recognize that this is something extremely fortunate.

So generally it is said that even to be able to enter the path of the Buddha's teachings is something that is extremely rare and difficult to find. But even more difficult than entering the teachings of the sutra path is being able to encounter and study the teachings of the tantra path, so in this way we are doubly fortunate and we should be aware of that.

So, then within the 1.000 Buddhas of this fortunate eon then, it is said there are only 3 or 4 who will propound the teachings of secret mantra, that gives you an idea of the rarity of these teachings. And one of the dispensations that has these teachings of tantra is the dispensation of Buddha Shakyamuni which is like the sun that is shining in our world.

And so, to be able to use this human rebirth and this human body and mind or intelligence and to direct ourselves on this swift path towards the final object of attainment, towards the final goal is something that is indeed very special.

With this methods we have the opportunity to use every aspect of our wisdom and this is something that is really extraordinary.

So, if we think about Buddha Shakyamuni as a tenth bhumi, as a 10th level bodhisattva, we know that he was meditating in Bodhgaya and then as he reached that tenth ground he was in a state of uninterrupted meditative equipoise on emptiness.

However, there came a point where the Buddhas and the holy beings roused Buddha Shakyamuni from his state of meditative equipoise upon emptiness because they realized that there was one thing he needed to do to be able to reach the state of complete enlightenment.

So, we understand that he was roused from that meditative equipoise and he was granted an empowerment into the vajrayana path, and because of the amazing accumulation of all of the causes and conditions he had done previously, it is said that over the course of one night from having entered into tantra he achieved the state of [Tibetan?] unequalled perfect and complete enlightenment.

So to be able to enter now, as we are in the same path that he entered on that occasion is something supremely fortunate and that is something that we should be mindful of.

We should as much as possible not be satisfied merely with entering this path, but having done that put a lot of effort into our study and practice to make it most worthwhile.

And in the context of the teachings here, Geshela's request to you would be you listen with intention and then we try to have the general sequence of the self-generation practice in our mind. And then once we have a firm knowledge of the sequence of that self-generation practice in our mind, then accordingly we gradually enhance all aspects of the practice, we get better and better.

Like once we have that sort of knowledge in place then, as we see from the examples of the previous practitioners definitely on the basis of that knowledge we can improve and improve, we can get better and better.

And so, for those of you who are perhaps beginners into this path, Geshela would just encourage you to know that the first time you hear this and try to put it into practice it might seem a little bit foreign, a little bit difficult, but as you reflect again a second time, reflect again the third time, the way to to engage in the practice will become more and more clear to you.

And so, for those of you with the time and the interest also to enhance your practice of Vajrayogini here, what Geshela would say is that the teachings of Chakrasamvara, participating in those or listening to the recordings, even if you haven't received the Chakrasamvara empowerment – that means you cannot practice the sadhana – but you can listen to the commentary and that commentary will also give you many points that will help to bolster your practice of Vajrayogini.

And so, the other thing that we would note here, is that for those of you who are following the Chakrasamvara and also listening to this, some aspects of the two practices are the same, so you might hear some repetition in the context of this Vajrayogini commentary. So what Geshela would ask then, for those of you who are already familiar, maybe a little bit advanced is that you just have a little patience with hearing some similar instructions again and just have the mindset that it's like a review to help you improve your practice.

In this way, in order for us to be able to amass all of the perfect causes and conditions to be successful in our practice, we will begin with the preliminary prayers.

Originally we had planned to lead a chanting of OM MANI PADME HUM for the people who passed in wars now, but Geshela said we will actually do that at 11 o'clock. So, what we will do is start with the preliminary prayers, get to commentary and then pause at 11 o'clock.

### *Prayers*

So today we will begin with the preliminary meditation which is a visualization and this visualization is from the 5th section of the sadhana, known as the yoga of the guru.

We know that to reach the state of enlightenment on a tantric path, we must enter the practices of both generation stage and completion stage. But we know that in order to enter the completion stage we must first gain experience and realization of the generation stage, and so that why it is important to practice the generation stage in the context of the [Tibetan?] the sadhana, the method of accomplishment.

And so then in terms of how the various sadhanas are arranged, in the case of Vajrayogini the sadhana is built upon the 11 yogas.

In terms of where we are in the commentary currently, we are in the 4th of these yogas which is the yoga of the immeasurables, but Geshela wanted to give you a taste of a commentary of the guru yoga as well, so probably after 11 o'clock we will do half an hour of the teaching on the yoga of the guru. Before 11 o'clock and our pause of silence, Geshela will focus mainly on teaching the yoga of immeasurables section of the sadhana.

We know that as we begin the practice, we go for refuge, not just any refuge, but the uncommon Mahayana refuge, and here the practice of refuge is also enriched by aspects of tantra. And then we know that after going for refuge there is the practice of bringing forth bodhicitta. And so then when we engage in the practice we want to take some time which we will do now, to really establish, to meditate upon and establish refuge and bodhicitta within our mind. So we will put our body and our mind in a relaxed state. In terms of the physical posture, whatever the best approximation you can do of the 7 point Vairochana posture, the best approximation.

### *Meditation*

*Think: the 3 doors of my body, speech and mind are subdued and peaceful.*

*Think: self, others, forest, mountains all of these are empty. If I try to pinpoint them I would not be able to find them. They are empty of inherent existence.*

*Think then, in the space in front of me appears a beautiful jeweled ground and on that on a platform upon which is a four walled, a 4 sided celestial palace*

*And within that four sided palace is a beautiful ornamented throne which is held up by 8 snow lions*

*And upon that throne a beautiful lotus, moon and sun seats*

*And think, upon this seat is my own root teacher in the aspect of Buddha Vajradharma with all of the signs and ornaments*

*He has at his heart, one hand hold a vajra and one hand holds a bell*

*And think that surrounding him on this principal seat are all the assembly of other guru and lineage guru, and they are in the form of hero Vajradharma, with a katvanga etc.*

*And we can imagine that surrounding this assembly of root and lineage gurus is a vast field of accumulation of other holy beings, Buddhas, heroes, heroines, bodhisattvas etc.*

*And then we imagine that on our level, on either side of us are our mother, our father and behind them all six types of beings of samsara but with a human form or aspect.*

*And think that this vast assembly of sentient beings assisted with the minds of fear and faith or confidence, bring forth a pure mind of refuge.*

*And then bring forth the extraordinary intention or mind thinking, all of these six types of beings within samsara remain with this suffering, I myself alone must do something to free them from their suffering.*

*In order to do that, I must definitely accomplish the practice and achieve the state of Venerable Vajrayogini, through which I can lead all beings to her enlightenment. Bring forth this specific bodhicitta intention.*

*And think that at the heart of ourselves, and also, if you like, at the heart of the assembled sentient beings you imagine that there is an 8 petalled lotus at their heart chakra.*

*And then we can imagine that within this lotus is the indestructible drop made out of the white and red substances and separately joined[?]*

*And have this awareness that this extremely subtle wind and mind abiding within this drop, these are the subtlest levels of designation of that that we call the self or that that we call the "I", the subtle basis of designation.*

*And think that because of the extraordinary minds of refuge and bodhicitta that myself and the assembled sentient beings have brought forth, that the red color of Buddha Vajradharma visualized in the space in front of us, this red color which represents his compassion for the disciples, that this red color becomes even more vibrant.*

*So imagine that being pleased with us and with the condition of his unbearable compassion for the assembled sentient beings that Buddha Vajradharma replicates many, many of the white moon disks at the heart of this lotus and that these white moon disks descends to the lotus at our heart and the lotus at the hearts of all the sentient beings.*

*And then think that in the same way, countless replicas of the sun seat of Buddha Vajradharma descend to ourselves and all sentient beings and they melt into the red constituent of the indestructible drop at our heart.*

*Sorry, the first visualization was the lotus coming down, I think I erred. So, the final visualization then is the white moon disk of Vajradharma: countless replicas of this descend and absorb into the white element of the indestructible drop at our heart and at the heart of all sentient beings.*

*And after this we imagine that the assembly of gurus and lineage gurus, as well as all of the other holy beings, these melt into lights and nectar and they dissolve into the central figure of Buddha Vajradharma inseparable from our guru.*

*And then as we contemplate this enriched form of Buddha Vajradharma, we recollect that he is inseparable in essence from our root guru and recollecting in this way, ensures swift blessing and realizations.*

*Because Buddha Vajradharma encompassed the blessing and realization of all the yiddams or meditational deities for this reason the blessings and the realizations are more powerful.*

*And think with the condition of the great minds of faith and refuge that we have brought forth Buddha Vajradharma extremely pleased with us, melts into light and nectar descends through our crown down the central channel and absorbs into the extremely subtle wind and mind at our heart.*

*Think that my mind has become inseparable in essence with the holy mind of the guru and the yiddam, and from this inseparability a feeling of great bliss arises.*

*And think similarly from all sentient beings receiving the blessing of holy body, speech and mind of guru Vajradharma their obscurations and their imprints are completely purified and they achieve the state of enlightenment.*

*And we imagine that ourselves and all the assembled sentient beings from receiving these blessings and inseparability that they achieve the state of Vajrayogini and abide in pure dakini's land.*

*And bring forth the feeling of joy, thinking that myself and all beings have been able to achieve the state of freedom.*

So we will pause there.

Geshela hopes that the meditation on the guru yoga was not too long, but actually this meditation is something that is really important in the practice.

So, also this isn't something that Geshela made up on his own, these visualizations and mindfulnesses that we bring forth in the context of guru yoga these are in accordance with the essential instructions of holy beings.

So, actually when we go through the words of the sadhana, and we imagine absorbing the guru etc. we don't mention all of these individual things, because for experienced folks know these things, but for those of you who may be beginners, Geshela thought just to point at these essential points of the indestructible drop, the extremely subtle wind and mind, and how the guru is actually absorbed into those, kind of doing it in a series of steps.

And also when we engage in the meditation on all of the assembled sentient beings receiving the blessings and purifying the minds and achieving the state of Vajrayogini and going to pure dakini land we shouldn't think like "this isn't really happening" or "this is false." At that moment we really want to have complete confidence that this is happening. Otherwise, it can be an obstacle to the visualization and the realization that's trying to bring forth.

And we could have confidence in the efficacy of these practices because those great beings who practiced these systems and who achieved realizations before us, it was through these visualizations that they accomplished the vast amount of merits necessary for realization.

So, as we come to 5th outline, which is the yoga of the guru, you already know a little bit about the yoga of the guru because Geshela has just led you through the quintessential meditation of that. He's saying maybe you don't need the rest of the class – he is kidding. This is the essential meditation.

But Geshela thought, some of you maybe doing this when we do the practice, some of you may already be familiar with the meditation, but perhaps for people who lack clarity about the functions of this meditation of the guru yoga, he thought it might be good to go over it.

And so then, as we turn to the sadhana, we understand that within the practice of the 11 yogas, the first 3 of sleeping, rising and experiencing nectar, they aren't included within the actual words of the sadhana.

And so, of course it makes sense how it goes through, if we are going to have the yoga of sleeping we also need to arise from sleep, so we'll have a yoga of rising. And so, when one practices the yoga of sleeping mainly from the points of view of the completion stage, one meditates on emptiness and the absorptions, the various stages of dissolution.

And so, also even from – if one has done the yoga of sleeping from the perspective of the completion stage - the yoga of rising is one arises from that state of emptiness in the form of the deity venerable Vajrayogini. So then, in the generation stage practice, the yoga of sleeping is different, one imagines one's head in the lap of the guru and falling asleep in this way. And then, when the time for waking up happens, one imagines that one hears the songs of the dakinis and one arises in the form of the deity. And so, the yoga of experiencing nectar, if we want to practice this properly, we need to prepare like an inner offering to be able to use when we wake up. And so, the easy way to practice the yoga of experiencing nectar is simply to dip one's finger into the inner offering substance and place it on one's tongue and meditate on bliss.

And one imagines that from tasting this nectar then the chakras, the energy channels, the prana or the winds moving withing those channels, and that all of these are purified and bliss arises.

And so, then if one does this more elaborately, one takes a drop of nectar and on the palm of one's hand one draws the phenomena source, which is like that 6 pointed star, one draws the phenomena source and then one imagines OM AH HUM on three sides of it and then taste the nectar.

And so, then think that by experiencing the nectar I am experiencing the essence of this meaning.

So these are the three numbers one to three of these 11 yogas, these are the preliminary yogas to the sadhana.

And then we come to number 4, which is the yoga of the immeasurable, an important yoga that also has quite a few points within it.

Then, in terms of the practices that one is engaging with in the context of the yoga of the immeasurables, it is visualizing the field of refuge, going for refuge, bringing forth bodhicitta, meditation on the 4 immeasurables, then imagining - combining the assembly of the field of refuge. And then with single-pointed focus makes supplication to the visualized field of refuge and then one imagines the visualized field of refuge melting into light and entering oneself.

Then one imagines that from this field of refuge, after the supplication, representing the lama's holy body, white lights and nectars emanate and enter oneself.

And then the lama and yiddam's speech representing speech, red nectars emanate and enter oneself. Also one can think of the white blessing of body as being connected to the white deity of Vairochana and one can think of the red color of the blessings of speech being connected to the red deity Amitabha.

And then, one imagines that blue lights, representing the Buddha Jewel that these then enter and descend into oneself and that these are in the nature of Akshobhya.

So, in this way we can think about how the lama and the deity, we receive the blessing, and also in this way recollecting that they are the embodiment of all 3 jewels of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

One imagines that having received all these blessings of the guru yidam that one then is able to meditate upon emptiness, that from meditating upon this emptiness then great bliss arises and from this experience of inseparable great bliss emptiness one achieves the resultant time truth body or Dharmakaya.

Geshela said that this is really important to do after we imagine the dissolution and receiving the blessing of the field of refuge because right after that we have the instantaneous self-generation, and to do that correctly we want to do a brief meditation on bringing the 3 bodies into the path. So this is the bringing the death into the path of the Dharmakaya.

And at the time when we imagine receiving the blessings of the field of refuge and the guru then we imagine that our mind and the guru deity's holy mind are of inseparable nature. Then at that moment meditating on great bliss is extremely important.

And through that arising of the great bliss in one's mind, that allows one to carry over this realization of emptiness and brings forth a realization that oneself as well as beings and phenomena are empty of inherent existence.

And actually that arising of that great bliss and that awareness of the emptiness of inherent existence of all phenomena when one is holding this in one's mind this is very similar to the experience of the Dzogchen and Mahamudra meditation.

That is why the great yogi Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen said that the practitioners of all systems are coming to this same final point, it was in that respect.

So we can come to [more?] explanation of that later.

When we are kind of meditating on this, we really want to have the feeling that we are really experiencing the resultant time Dharmakaya of our own enlightenment, we think this is really the Dharmakaya, this is important.

And then, we bring forth an awareness that if I abide in that state of Dharmakaya it benefits myself but sentient beings, even bodhisattvas are not able to perceive the Dharmakaya, so I must bring forth the Sambhogakaya, the enjoyment body.

This is working on the level of imagination, so it's like we are talking to ourselves right? Can't stay in the Dharmakaya, sentient beings even bodhisattvas can't see me, have to go to the next step, the Sambhogakaya, the enjoyment body.

And at the moment when we have that awareness - must bring forth the Sambhogakaya - we imagine that this mind meditating on emptiness it takes a very subtle physical manifestation and that subtle manifestation is kind of like a rectangle, almost like a pillar shape of beautiful red light.

And so think this is very, very most subtle aspect of the Sambhogakaya, and this is the resultant time Sambhogakaya that I myself will achieve. So we meditate like that.

And so the red color of this kind of pillar of red light is said to be related to – of course we understand that it's bringing the bardo into the path of the Sambhogakaya and we know that one comes into the bardo due to one's strong attachment for the wheel of existence and rebirth - so the red color in this context is said to represent the transformation of that attachment.

And also, another way to understand this red color of kind this pillar of light is to understand it as a manifestation of great compassion for beings which is going to compel us to go beyond the Sambhogakaya and bring forth the Nirmanakaya or the emanation body.

Why do we need to bring forth that Nirmanakaya, that emanation body? Because we understand that sentient beings, that I fact no beings can perceive the Dharmakaya, and in terms of the Sambhogakaya it is only realized bodhisattvas who can perceive the Sambhogakaya so our field of benefit is limited and we need to take a form which all beings can connect with.

And so we think, in order to be able to purify and benefit sentient beings in the most immediate way, I must arise as the Nirmanakaya; so for the benefit of sentient beings I arise in the form of the holy body of venerable Vajrayogini.

And it's an instantaneous self-generation, so at that moment, although there has been some contemplation, at that moment when you come as Vajrayogini it's like a fish jumping out the water. And when we do this instantaneous self-generation this becomes powerful, then it's infused by our previous meditations on refuge and bodhicitta. In fact, without these in place then the practice of deity yoga isn't really that meaningful at all.

So whether one is an accomplished meditator of this system, really depends upon one's ability to put in these preliminary pieces well. It's not just about arising nicely in the form of the deity and maintaining the concentration.

And then also, to understand the purpose of this instantaneous self-generation right at the beginning of the sadhana this is to enable us the ease of making vast offerings. And blessing the so they become nectar etc. All of this becomes possible and much easier when we are ourselves in the form of the deity.

And in fact, it is said, if one is not arisen in the form of the deity, then the practices of meditating and blessing the inner offering, and blessing and making the outer offerings that these lack real tangible benefit actually.

And so then, having arisen in this form, we come to the generation and blessing of the inner offering.

As we engage in the practice of the inner offering, we want to have the steps clear within our mind. And the steps are:

1. Cleansing
2. Purifying
3. Generating
4. Blessing

[We'll take just one minute of silence to honor all of those who have passed away in conflict and to generate minds of love and compassion. We will recite the OM MANI PEDME HUM mantra for the pacification of conflict. We'll recite about one minute.]

When we come to the practice of the inner offering it's important to remember the four main components, the outlines of cleansing, purifying, generating and blessing.

Cleansing is really dispelling hindrances. So, if we think about this on the coarser level, this could be like unseen beings etc. that may be hindering the offering.

From the BAM at one's heart as one's hart, as one cleanses, one imagines that from the BAM at one's heart as Vajrayogini countless light rays emanate and at the end of this are countless Kandarohi goddesses, and they go in all directions, just like a flock of crows takes flight when disturbed and they scare away all the hindrances. And think, from this meditation, anything that could possibly be a

hindrance, be an obstacle to the blessing and making of this inner offering, that this has been completely dispelled.

This is the dispelling of the hindrances on the coarser level or the interpretable level.

And to dispel the subtle level of hindrances and obstacles, we recollect that ultimately the essence of Kandarohi is great bliss wisdom.

So the great bliss wisdom realizing emptiness, it is that essence. So, the form pacifies the coarser obstacles and the essence pacifies the more subtle obstacles.

Recollecting this helps us also to understand that although there may be outer obstacles and hindrances of unseen being etc. these are not the main obstacles. The main obstacles are the internal one of the three poisons and the branch afflictions etc.

So, we think, through this cleansing ritual that all of the manifestation of these afflictions have also been cleared from the mind and any obstacles that they can present to us meditating and making this offering is also cleared away.

So the mantra connected with the cleansing one is

*OM KHANDAROHI HUM HUM PHAT*

and the mantra connected with the next one, which is the purifying is the:

*OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHAH SARVA DHARMAH SVABHAVA SHUDDHO HAM*

everything becomes emptiness.

As one recites this one imagine that one purifies within emptiness ordinary appearance and the clinging at ordinary appearance, and one also imagines that one is able to purify the appearance, one is able to purify the ordinary appearance that things exist inherently.

And so we talked about that already, and then in terms of generating we also talked about this already, so we will go over this very briefly.

So then in terms of generating in the previous class we talked about generating the container, which is the inner offering container – and the contents, which are the meats and nectars etc.

So these 5 meats and the 5 nectars they can also be referred to as the 5 hooks and the 5 lamps. And they are called the 5 lamps because they are said to be able to hook in the blessings of all the Buddhas and ripening them into blazing flame.

And also remember just really briefly that these 5 meats represent the illusory body which is the main object of attainment of father tantra and the 5 nectars represent the attainment of the clear light which is the main object of attainment of mother tantra.

Then we come, we have gone through cleansing, purifying, generating, this brings us to the 4th outline, which is blessing the inner offering, and this has some key points within.

So these 3 points connected with the final of the 4 blessing, we could state these briefly as:

1. purifying
2. attaining and
3. increasing

So purifying in this sense means to purify any faults in the offerings such as color and smell. The next one attain, means to attain the state of the inner offering as amrita, as nectar.

And so remember that when we speak about this nectar it is

- 1) nectar of freedom from illness
- 2) nectar of deathlessness
- 3) nectar of uncontaminated wisdom

it attains the essence of those three.

This nectar of uncontaminated wisdom this is able to completely purify any afflictions simply by being experienced.

**And we also know through this practice of the inner offering and also by incorporating other visualization, this can become a form of long life practice, it's very powerful.**

And so within the blessing we have the purifying, the attaining and the third one is – bard[?] actually means blazing but the meaning translation here is increasing so we imagine that this beautiful amrita or nectar becomes inexhaustible, able to benefit, to satisfy countless beings.

So when one is engaging in this practice of the inner offering, one of the things that one can do is imagine that just in the space above the inner offering are three, are the Sanskrit vowel and consonants. So, there are 3 kinds of garlands of the vowels and consonants of the Sanskrit alphabet, sort so right above this inner offering nectar.

Geshela said that in terms of how those letters are arranged, whether going backwards or forwards, he doesn't think that matters so much, you can visualize whatever is easier for you.

So then one imagines that from one's heart as the deity lights emanates and that these transform these three mantra garlands of the Sanskrit vowel and consonants into white, red and blue radiances.

And these lights transform into the three letters starting from the OM – so the white OM is at the bottom, the red AH is in the middle, and the blue HUM is at the top.

And then we imagine that these three letters they kind of emanate lights which connect the blessing of all of the buddhas and bodhisattvas in the form of these 3 radiant colors and nectars.

And so what one imagines is that after having done this, then OM AH HUM – having received all these blessing the letters OM AH and HUM they melt into the form of beautiful lights and nectars in the colors of red, white and blue and that these absorb into the inner offering underneath, blessing it.

And one thinks at this point, the increase, the blazing at this point, the nectar has become inexhaustible, completely able to be shared with every last sentient being.

Now we go to number 5, which is the yoga of the guru, so we are jumping ahead, so we are going to do the Vajrasattva later, we are jumping ahead, so we are at page 15 of the text, the one that has the image of Buddha Vajradharma at the top.

And Geshela said, also in terms of the points that we haven't covered, don't worry, we are going to go back, so by the time this finishes we will have covered everything.

So within these 11 yogas, the 5th yoga is the yoga of the guru. And so, in terms of how we divide the yoga of the guru, we can divide the yoga of the guru into 10 outlines.

And so the first of these is visualizing the field of accumulation, and actually we already did this at the beginning of our session so Geshela is just going to read through this quickly so you get the transmission.

*In the space before me, established from the self-appearance of the exalted wisdom of nondual purity and clarity, is an inestimable square mansion complete in all features with four doors, ornaments, and gateways.*

*In the center of this is a jeweled throne supported by eight great lions. On a cushion of a variegated lotus, moon, and sun is actually my kind root guru in the aspect of Buddha Vajradharma. His holy body is red in color with one face and two arms crossed at his heart, holding vajra and bell.*

*His hair is tied up in a crowning top knot. He sits with his legs crossed in the vajra posture. He is sixteen years old, in the prime of youth, and is adorned with silken garments and all the bone and jeweled ornaments.*

So the aspect, if you turn to page 16 you will see it mentions the aspect of being 16 years old. This aspect of being 16 years old is kind of representing that one is in one's prime and so one's kind energy channels, winds and drops are all relatively undegenerated at that point.

Then having visualized Buddha Vajradharma and the lineage gurus as hero VajraDharma surrounding him, we now come to the point of blessings. So, we imagine at Buddha Vajradharma and all the hero Vajradharmas there is a white OM at the forehead, an AH at the throat and a HUM at the heart. We are at page 17.

And so these are receiving the blessings of the body, speech and mind, and out of the 10 outlines of the guru yoga this is the second outline, receiving the blessing of body, speech and mind. The 2nd one is sometimes not stated explicitly.

And then the next one is inviting the wisdom beings. At this point then, according one invites the wisdom beings:

*From the HUM at the heart, light rays radiate and invite from their natural abodes the gurus, yidams, assembly of mandala deities, buddhas, bodhisattvas, heroes, and dakinis, together with hosts of Dharma protectors and guardians.*

And then one recites:

*OM VAJRA SAMAJAH / JAH HUM BAM HOH*

And so, OM VAJRA SAMAJAH is actually the invitation of the wisdom beings to come to place. So, there's an important point here, which it says: invite from their natural abodes. Geshela said we can understand the natural abode as being like the Dharmakaya and so we can understand as that from that Dharmakaya then having been invited a Rupakaya of form body appears.

Another way to understand this, is we understand the natural abode as being like the pure land where the deity is in the Sambhogakaya form and when we invite them, they transform from the Sambhogakaya form and manifest as the Nirmanakaya form in front of us. You can think about it these two different ways.

Another way to think about the natural abode is to think about it as this kind of specific place which is the Akanishta pure land.

And if you want to be more specific you can think of Akanishta and then specifically you can think of the Dakpa Kachö which is the pure dakini land.

Then we recite JAH HUM BAM HOH, jah (dza) is summoning them to the center[?] of the crown, HUM asking them to enter, BAM binding or merging and then HOH being pleased.

And so, in this way, this takes us to number 4 of the 10 points related to the guru yoga, which is dissolving the commitment being.

And then having done that, and having kind of descended the beings, entered into one, merged with one and then the merging is stabilized with JAH HUM BAM HOH, then we engage in the practice of the 7 purities, accumulating the 7 purities.

And so remember that the 7 purities are really the tantra presentation of the 7 branches or the 7 limbs and that these are very similar.

In the context of tantra just to make the distinction clear, it's better not to talk about the 7 limbs or branches, we should refer to this practice as the 7 purities.

And so, there's the common one such as prostration, making offering etc. just like we find in sutra.

So what is the difference? It's that in the 7 purities we don't have the request to turn the Dharmam wheel and the request not to pass away into paranirvana.

So why don't we request in this context the turning of the Dharma wheel? It's because in this tantric practice we are visualizing the lama yidam in the form of the Sambhogakaya. Sambhogakaya is always teaching and manifesting dharma, you don't need to request the Sambhogakaya. However, there are some exceptional circumstances where you may see a verse requesting the Dharma wheel in the context of a tantric practice.

So prostration,

*I bow to the lotus feet of the vajra-holder,  
O guru, whose body is like a jewel,  
Through whose kindness  
The state of great bliss will be attained in an instant.*

And then we come to the next part which is making the offerings. So here we have outer offerings, inner offerings, secret offerings and suchness offerings. So four type: outer, inner, secret, suchness.

These are the 2 waters, the actual offerings then the songs etc. You can also, when they are expanded, they become 4 waters, the actual offerings, the singing, music etc.

And so you will find these kind of explicitly in a vast way stated within the Lama Chöpa or Guru Puja liturgy.

And what you'll notice is that if you look on page 18, you will see that the 2 waters – it just OM, it doesn't have OM VAJRA, so this means that these are extra or subsidiary offerings, they are not the main offerings, where "vajra" appears before.

And there's also, when the offerings are blessed, we'll notice that often case OM AH will appear, and then the name of the offering, and HUM.

And so then we also understand that when we want to invite an important guest to our house, we have to kind of prepare everything, prepare food for them, so blessing the offering is like that.

When we are blessing, we can think of it like that, I am preparing the food and the place for my guest to sit, and everything, but s/he hasn't arrived here yet. So that's what the blessing is like. Then the actual offering is like actually presenting it.

So, on page 18 you see

*Offering goddesses emanate from my heart and perform the offerings.*

And so we will stop here on page 18. And we will continue where we left off in the next session.

We have one question that came in, which was about the deities that you see Vajrayogini trampling under her feet, which are known as Dutsema or Parvati and Jigje [?] or Bhairava. Someone asked about the meaning of these. So the question was - because often we talk about these deities maybe as even being emanations of Chakrasamvara or the dakinis or Paldem Lamo etc. so why do we see them under foot of Vajrayogini? And the answer that Geshela is giving to that is that because we know that these beings were worldly deities who were sometimes harming sentient beings, it was when Heruka Chakrasamvara came to the world and tamed them that they came to be seen as emanations, or at least subdued and able to help sentient beings. So in the aspect of being under Vajrayogini's feet this is the aspect that they were prior to being transformed by Chakrasamvara.

But Geshela said that we shouldn't seen the trampling under foot as being literal. We can also think of it from the perspective of these beings and how they transformed after the appearance of Heruka Chakrasamvara. In that context we can think that these beings are under foot representing that they have pledged their obedience and to help practitioners at the feet of the deity.

And this reminds us, as the practitioner that if we practice well, whatever we need to get rid of, whatever unwholesome thoughts, whatever afflicted minds, suffering etc. these can be completely overcome through the practice of the deity yoga.

And so Geshela also said, when you are interacting with your friends of various religious beliefs, please don't denigrate their beliefs, talk about the benefits of their practice and how their deity benefits from them, don't be kind of sectarian. Try to look at the good points of their religion and try to praise that, because they also have their own path. So, we have to be skillful in our interactions with others, don't we?

Geshela's looking – you can't see him in the screen – but a little bit down there is a tangka of most secret Hayagriva, so Geshela was pointed to the tangka saying, most secret Hayagriva was actually originally a rakshasa, a flesh-eating demon, who was kind of tamed by the buddhas and bodhisattvas and became a fully enlightened being that helps practitioners. That's another such transformation. And at the top of most secret Hayagriva's head he has a green horse head, and so we know the horse - if you listen to Geshela's commentary on the Sojong – we know that the white horse represent Avalokiteshvara, but the horse here is green in color, because it is said that when Avalokiteshvara had to enter and subdue the rakshasa demon and transform him into Hayagriva, the poison of the affliction was so strong that the color of the horse's fur took on a greenish hue rather than being completely white.

So although most secret Hayagriva, he appears scary externally, he's been completely tamed and has reached the state of enlightenment, therefore he is an object to which we can go for refuge completely, with full confidence.

So, because of this aspect of Chenrezig, we know that Hayagriva, despite his ferocious appearance, is the embodiment of perfect love and compassion. But also because of that particular aspect he takes, we know that the recitation of the Hayagriva mantra and the praise to Hayagriva is a very effective method for dealing with obstacles, like illnesses, spirit harms, conflicts etc. It's a very effective practice for obstacles. And also, in terms of a protector, because Hayagriva has achieved the state of Vajradharahood, is a completely enlightened being, we can go for refuge and request for help without having to worry that somehow we will be harmed if we don't kind of worship him like what happens with some other protectors.

In this way we have at least been able to cover a few of the further points, so let us end our session with a short dedication of merit.

Of course, we have to cover a lot of material so we are going at quite a pace, but in the context of one's own practice, one wants to save [?] or focus on developing different points.

So, Geshela found that in his own practice, when he was approaching the deity yoga, it seems kind of really vast, but what helped him to start make meaning of it was learning all of the various outlines. Once he had the outlines in his head, it greatly enriched the practice. So that's why we also mention the outlines in every session as we go along.

So, thank you very much, let us dedicate the merits.

