

The Dharma Essentials for Cultivating Stopping and Contemplation

Taisho Tripitaka No : 1915

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Translated into English by Dharmamitra

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Master Chih-i's Introductory Discussion

First, the introductory section. (2) Part one: Citing a quatrain to indicate the grand design. To refrain from doing any manner of evil, To respectfully perform all varieties of good, To carry out the purification of one's own mind: This is what constitutes the teaching of all buddhas. Next, the introductory section proper, a delineation of the conditions occasioning the creation of this text. (5) First, a brief indication of the essential nature of stopping and contemplation. As for the dharma of nirvana, there are many paths of entry into it. However, if we discuss those which are crucially essential, they do not go beyond the two dharmas of stopping and contemplation. Next, a commendation of the marvelous functions of stopping and contemplation. How is this so? Stopping constitutes the initial method whereby one is able to suppress the fetters. Contemplation is the primary essential whereby one is able to cut off the delusions. Stopping then is the wholesome provision with which one kindly nourishes the mind and consciousness. Contemplation then is the marvelous technique which stimulates the development of spiritual understanding. Stopping is the supreme cause for the manifestation of dhyana absorption.(8) Contemplation is the origin of wisdom. Third, clarification of the supreme benefits of stopping and contemplation. (2) First, the clarification proper. If a person perfects the two dharmas of meditative absorption and wisdom, this then constitutes the complete fulfillment of the dharma of benefitting both oneself and others. Next, a scriptural citation. Hence The Dharma Blossom Sutra states, "The Buddha himself abides in the Great Vehicle. Such dharmas as he has realized are enhanced by the power of meditative absorption and wisdom. He employs these in the deliverance of beings." Fourth, explanation of the undesirable aspects of deficiencies produced through unequal [cultivation of] stopping and contemplation. (2) First, the explanation proper. One must realize that these two dharmas are like the two wheels of a cart and like the two wings of a bird. If the cultivation of them becomes one-sided one falls and is overturned by that deviation. Second, scriptural citation. Thus, one of the Sutras states, "If one is one-sided in the cultivation of dhyana absorption and merit and thus neglects the study of wisdom, this results in delusion. If one indulges in the one-sided study of wisdom and thus neglects the cultivation of

dhyana absorption and merit, this results in craziness. Although there are some minor differences in the faults inherent in delusion and craziness, still, the erroneous views which develop from the two conditions are generally no different. If one is unequal in [the cultivation of these disciplines], this then results in the perfection of deviation. How then could one possibly be able to swiftly ascend to the most ultimate of results?" Fifth, scriptural citation and explanation of the utter necessity of evenly-balanced advancement in stopping and contemplation. (2) The scriptural citation illustrating importance. Hence, one of the Sutras declares, "Because the Hearers are most developed in the power of meditative absorption, they are unable to perceive the Buddha nature. The Bodhisattvas abiding at the level of the Ten Dwellings are most developed in the power of wisdom. Although they do perceive the Buddha nature, still, they have not become entirely clear about it. The powers of meditative absorption and wisdom are equally developed in the Buddhas, the Thus Come Ones. Consequently, they possess absolute understanding and perception of the Buddha nature." Extrapolating from this, how could stopping and contemplation not constitute the essential entryway unto the great result of nirvana, the supreme path for the cultivation of the practitioner, the point of confluence for perfection of the manifold virtues and the actual substance of the unsurpassed and ultimate result?" Next, clarifying the rationale in this explanation of stopping and contemplation. If one understands accordingly, then it will be quite apparent that this Dharma entryway of stopping and contemplation is truly not a shallow one. When one desires to draw in and lead along those who are new to the study of this discipline so that they may develop beyond their untutored understanding and advance along the Way, it is easy to discourse on the subject but difficult to implement the practice. [This being the case,] how could one justify launching into extensive discussions of the abstruse and marvelous? Next, the doctrine proper. (2) First, a general delineation of the ten concepts involved in the cultivation of stopping and contemplation with notes of encouragement and admonishment. (3) First, encouragement. Now, we shall briefly explain ten concepts in order to reveal to the novice practitioner the steps traversed in ascending via the orthodox Way as well as the stages passed through in progressing toward the entry into nirvana. The investigator should adopt appropriate humility with regard to the difficulty of succeeding in one's cultivation and thus not demean this text's shallowness and ready accessibility. Next, offering cautionary advice. If one's mind correctly gauges the import of these words, then in the blink of an eye one's qualities of wisdom and severance will grow beyond measure while the depths of spiritual faculties and intelligence will become unfathomable. If, however, one disingenuously seizes on passages out of context or, due to emotional biases, contradicts the instructions of the text, then the months and years will be needlessly drawn out while actual realization will have no basis for development. One's circumstance then would be like that of the pauper who spends his time calculating the wealth of other men. What possible benefit could this have for oneself? Third, listing the sections and revealing the intent. (2) First, listing the section titles. First, fulfillment of [the prerequisite] conditions. Second, renunciation of desire. Third, casting off the coverings. Fourth, regulation [of five crucial factors]. Fifth, [employment of the correct] skillful means. Sixth, cultivation proper. Seventh, manifestations

[arising from roots (9)] of goodness. Eighth, awareness of demonic influences. Ninth, curing disorders. Tenth, realization of the fruits. Next, clarifying the intent of the listed sections. Now, we shall briefly treat these ten concepts in order to instruct the cultivator of stopping and contemplation. These are crucial essentials for the initial phase of learning to sit [in dhyana meditation]. If one is well able to grasp their intent and thus proceed to cultivate them, one will be able to settle the mind, avoid difficulties, manifest meditative absorption, develop understanding, and achieve realization of the non-outflow fruits gained by the Superiors.(10) [End of Master Chih-i's Introductory Discussion] End Notes 7. These page numbers refer to the most widely available modern commentary on this work: Syou-syi jr-gwan dzwo-chan fa yao jyang shu, by Dharma Master Bao Jing. Hong Kong: Syang-gang fwo-jing lyou-tung chu, 1971. The text is also available in the Taisho tripitaka (T46.1915). 8. "Absorption" renders the Chinese "ding (4)" which in turn typically corresponds to the Sanskrit "samadhi". Where it is not preceded by the word "dhyana" I render it as "meditative absorption." 9. "Roots" in a Buddhist context refer to the relative strength of specific karmic propensities rooted in the karmic activity of former existences. For instance, one who has studied under countless buddhas across the course of a Ganges' sands number of aeons would most likely possess very sharp faculties as regards instinctively moral conduct, ease of entry into meditative absorption, and a deep resonance with transcendental wisdom. 10. "Superior" renders the Chinese "sheng (4)" which typically corresponds to the Sanskrit "arya." It's actually a technical term which generally refers to anyone who has realized the Path of Seeing. It carries the additional connotation of "saint" or "holy one" either of which I would be pleased to employ were it not for the misleading Christian-tradition associations of those terms. Bhikshu Dharmamitra retains the copyright to this document. Although all rights are reserved, downloading, printing out from a personal computer, photocopying, and free-only distribution of separate unbound single sections only is expressly permitted & encouraged so long as such photocopying and distribution retains the copyright statement found in each section and so long as no charge whatsoever is made to recipients. Inclusion of any of this copyrighted material in other publications, whether electronic, on the Internet (except for links), or printed (except for short sections for review or other fair-use purposes) requires prior written permission. Binding together of separate sections into "books" is expressly disapproved.

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Chapter One: Fulfillment of [the Requisite] Conditions

A) Upholding the Precepts Purely B) Ensuring Adequacy of Clothing and Food C) Obtaining an Easeful and Quiet Dwelling Place D) Putting All Responsibilities to Rest E) Drawing Near to Good and Knowledgeable Friends The direct exposition of the ten sections. (10) A) Upholding the precepts purely. (2) First, generally clarifying the essentials of upholding the precepts. Now,

having generated the resolve to take up the practice, one who desires to cultivate stopping and contemplation must first fulfill five conditions related to external phenomena. The first among them is the requirement that one must be pure in upholding the precepts. This is as stated in one of the Sutras, "It is in dependence upon and [directly] because of these precepts that one succeeds in developing the dhyana absorptions as well as the wisdom which puts an end to suffering. Therefore the bhikshu(11) should be pure in upholding the precepts." Next, the specific clarification of the characteristics of three levels of upholding the precepts. (3) First, the superior level of upholding the precepts. In this regard, there are three classes of cultivators according to differences in the upholding of precepts. The first is as follows: Prior to becoming a disciple of the Buddha [this cultivator] did not commit any of the five nefarious offences.(12) Later he encountered a good master who taught him to accept the three refuges and the five precepts, whereby he became a disciple of the Buddha. If he succeeded in leaving the home life he first took on the ten precepts of the Shramanera and then later received the complete precepts becoming thereby a bhikshu or [in the case of a woman] a bhikshuni. From the time of first taking precepts, he [or she] has been pure in guarding and upholding [the precepts] and thus has been entirely without transgression. In the upholding of the precepts, this person is of the superior grade. One should understand that in cultivating stopping and contemplation, such a person as this will certainly achieve realization in those dharmas of the Buddha. [A cultivator] such as this may be likened to a robe which is perfectly clean and which thus will easily absorb the appropriate dye. Second, the middling level of upholding the precepts. In the case of the second, after having received the precepts, although there have been no transgressions of the major precepts, still there have been many breaches of minor prohibitions. If for the sake of cultivating meditative absorption, [such a cultivator] is able to carry out repentance in a manner prescribed by Dharma, he too may be referred to as one whose upholding of the precepts is pure and he too shall be able to develop meditative absorption and wisdom. Such an individual may be compared to a robe which, although once soiled, has nonetheless been entirely cleaned such that dye will take in this case as well. Third, the inferior level of upholding the precepts. (2) First, repentance according to the methods of the Great Vehicle. (3) First, clarification of the ability or inability to repent according to the Great and Lesser Vehicles. In the case of the third, having received the precepts, one was unable to guard and uphold the precepts with a firm mind and thus there has been much transgression of both minor and major prohibitions. According to the approach of the Lesser Vehicle, there is no method whereby one may repent and be purified of transgressions against the four major prohibitions. If however one resorts to the approach of the teachings of the Great Vehicle, there is still a means whereby [such offenses] may be extinguished. Next, citation of evidence that one who is able to repent becomes a healthy person. Accordingly, one of the Sutras notes, "Within the Buddha's Dharma, there are two types of healthy people: those who have committed no evil deeds whatsoever and those who, having committed them, have been able to repent of them. Third, repentance directly according to the methods of the Great Vehicle. (2) i First, implementation through according with ten dharmas which assist repentance. (4) a [First, enumeration of the ten dharmas which assist repentance.]

Now as for the one who is desirous of repenting [transgressions of the prohibitions], it is essential for him to fulfill ten dharmas which assist the success of his repentance: First, understand and believe in cause and effect; Second, develop extreme fearfulness; Third, give rise to a deep sense of remorse; Fourth, seek out a method to extinguish offenses. This refers to the methods of practice explained in the Great Vehicle sutras. One should cultivate them in accord with the Dharma; Fifth, completely confess the prior offenses; Sixth, cut off the thought of continuance [of the offenses confessed]; Seventh, bring forth the resolve to serve as a protector of Dharma; Eighth, make great vows to deliver beings; Ninth, constantly be mindful of all buddhas of the ten directions; Tenth, contemplate the nature of offenses as being unproduced. b

Second, revealing the duration of the dharma of repentance. If one is able to carry out these ten dharmas, one should then proceed to adorn the site for cultivating the Way, bathe one's body, clothe oneself in clean robes, burn incense and scatter flowers. Then, in front of the Triple Jewel, one should carry on the practice of repentance in accord with the Dharma, doing so for one week or three weeks, or perhaps for one month or three months, or perhaps continuing on for a year or more during which one repents singlemindedly of the grave offenses involved in transgressing the prohibitions, stopping only once one has succeeded in extinguishing [those offenses]. c

Third, revealing the signs which indicate the extinguishing of offenses. How is one to recognize the signs that grave offenses have been extinguished? As the practitioner carries out the repentance in this fashion and with an utterly sincere mind, if he experiences his body and mind becoming light and pleasant and also experiences a fine and auspicious dream, or if perhaps he sees all manner of magical, auspicious and rare signs, or if perhaps he becomes aware of his wholesome thoughts opening forth and developing, or if perhaps, while he is seated in meditation, he becomes aware of his body as like a cloud or a shadow, and then from this point on gradually achieves realization of the psychic states characteristic of the dhyanas, or if perhaps he experiences the powerful and sudden arising of awakened thought whereby he is well able to recognize the marks of dharmas and is able to understand the meaning and connotation of whichever sutra he encounters and then realizes from this Dharma bliss and a mind no longer beset by worry or regret, -- all manner of causes and conditions such as these should be recognized as signs indicating that the Way-obstructing offenses resulting from breaking the precepts have been extinguished. d

Fourth, clarification that solid upholding [of the precepts] after repentance constitutes purity. If from this point on one firmly upholds the restrictive prohibitions, this too constitutes purity in shiila. [Such a practitioner] may be able to cultivate dhyana absorption. He may be likened to a torn and soiled robe which one has been able to patch and wash clean such that it may still be dyed and worn. ii

Second, repentance according to the Great Vehicle's principle of signlessness. (2) a

First, the explanation proper. If a person has transgressed against one of the major prohibitions and perturbation thus obstructs his achieving dhyana absorption, even though he may not be able to rely upon cultivating practices methods set forth in the Sutras, still, he may simply bring forth extreme remorse, go before the Triple Jewel, confess his former offenses, cut off any thought of continuing [any such offenses], and then may take up the practice of constantly sitting [in meditation] with his body erect, contemplating the

nature of offenses as empty, remaining mindful of the Buddhas of the ten directions. Whenever he emerges from dhyana he must, with an ultimately sincere mind, burn incense, bow in reverence, repent and then recite the precepts and recite the Great Vehicle sutras as well. The grave offenses which obstruct the Way should naturally and gradually become extinguished. On account of this his shiila(13) becomes pure and thus dhyana absorption may develop. b Second, citation of evidence. Accordingly, The Sutra on the Marvelous and Superior Meditative Absorption states, "If after a person has transgressed against a major precept his mind becomes beset by fearfulness and he thus desires to seek the extinguishing [of that offense], there is no other means aside from dhyana absorption which can be successful in extinguishing it. In a deserted and quiet place, this person should focus his mind and engage in the practice of constantly sitting in meditation while also proceeding to recite the Great Vehicle sutras. All of the grave offenses will be entirely extinguished and all of the dhyana absorptions will naturally manifest before him." B) Ensuring adequacy of clothing and food. (2) First, clothing. (3) First, the clothing of one of superior roots. As for the second, the requirement that clothing and food be adequate, there are three approaches associated with clothing [in particular]: The first is as exemplified by the Great Master of the Snowy Mountains(14) who happened to obtain a single cloak adequate to cover up his body and took that to be adequate on account of the fact that he never encountered people and additionally had perfected the ability to endure [the elements]. Next, the clothing of one of middling roots. The second category is that exemplified by Mahaakaashyapa who, because he always cultivated the dhuuta practices,(15) wore only a single three-part rag robe and accumulated no other clothing. Third, the clothing of those of inferior roots. The third category relates to countries where the weather is often cold and to individuals whose endurance abilities are not yet perfected. In these cases the Thus Come One also permitted the accumulation of a hundred and one other things aside from the three-part robe. However it was necessary to purify them verbally(16) and it was also necessary to refrain from being excessive and necessary to be satisfied with the appropriate amount. Were one to allow oneself to overindulge by being acquisitive and desirous of accumulation [of material objects], then the mind would become disrupted and they would become an obstacle to the Path. Next, sustenance. (3) First, the sustenance of those of superior roots. Next, as for the categories relating to food, there are four, the first of which is that exemplified by the superior man and great master who dwells deep in the mountains having entirely severed relations with the world, eating the native herbs and fruits according to the season and succeeding thus in supplying the requirements of the body. Second, the sustenance of those of middling roots. As for the second, he constantly cultivates the dhuuta practice of accepting only food which has been obtained on the alms round. Through the practice of accepting only alms food one is able to curb four types of unsuitable livelihood. [Such a practitioner] relies exclusively upon correct livelihood to maintain life because he is thereby able to bring forth the Way of the Superior. As for the inappropriate livelihoods, they are: first, obtaining food through inferiorly-directed endeavors; second, obtaining food through upwardly-directed endeavors; thirdly, obtaining food through endeavors directed at the midpoints; and fourth, obtaining food through endeavors directed to the

directions.(17) The sustenance of those with inferior roots. The third involves residing in an ara.nya(18) where a daanapati(19) brings offerings of food. The fourth is where one lives among the Sangha and eats pure food. Where one has the advantage of sustenance arrangements such as these, then this is what is meant by achieving adequacy in food and clothing. Why is this? If one does not have circumstances such as these the mind will not be at peace and thus this will constitute an obstacle to the Way. [C) Obtaining an easeful and quiet dwelling place.] The third [among the five prerequisite conditions] requires that one find an easeful and quiet dwelling place. One who is in a state of ease is not working at doing manifold tasks and so this is what we mean when we stipulate "easeful." A quiet place is one in which there is no commotion whatsoever. There are three types of places where one may be able to cultivate dhyana absorption. The first is deep in the mountains in a place cut off from people. The second is an ara.nya dedicated to dhuuta practices which is no closer than a mile or so from a village.(20) In this case the noise of cattle will be cut off and there will be no commotion. The third is within the confines of a pure sa.nghaaraama(21) far from the dwellings of laypeople. All of these constitute quiet places suitable for easeful dwelling. [D) Putting all responsibilities to rest.] The fourth [of the five prerequisite conditions] is that one put all responsibilities to rest. This involves four specific ideas: First, one must put to rest all responsibilities relating to making a living and must not perform any sort of work in the realm of the conditioned. Secondly, one must put to rest all interpersonal responsibilities. One must not seek out ordinary people, friends, relatives or intellectual associates. One must entirely cut off all interactions having to do with other people. Thirdly, one must put to rest all responsibilities relating to arts or crafts and must not pursue any activities involving skilled worldly trades, art, medicine, mantric activities, physiognomy, keeping books, carrying out calculations and other such matters. Fourthly, one must put to rest all responsibilities relating to study matters. One must put aside reading, reciting, listening, studying and so forth. This is what is meant by putting all responsibilities to rest. Why is this necessary? If one is involved in many responsibilities then matters related to cultivating the Way will deteriorate. The mind will become disturbed and difficult to focus. [E) Drawing near to good and knowledgeable friends.] The fifth [of the five prerequisite conditions] requires that one draw near to a good and knowledgeable friend. Good and knowledgeable friends are of three types: The first is the "externally-protecting" good and knowledgeable friend who provides necessary provisions, makes offerings, and is well able to take care of the practitioner's needs, doing so in a fashion which precludes any mutual disturbance. The second is the "identical practice" good and knowledgeable friend together with whom one cultivates a single path. Each provides the other with encouragement and inspiration, and refrain from bothering or disturbing each other. The third is the "instructive" good and knowledgeable friend who employs the internal and external skillful means pertaining to the Dharma entryway of dhyana absorption as a means to instruct and delight. This is the conclusion of the summary clarification of the five kinds of necessary prerequisites. [End of Chapter One] 11. In the generic context of Indian religious traditions, a "bhikshu" is a mendicant. In the specific context of Buddhism, a "bhikshu" is fully-ordained monk. 12. The five nefarious offenses are: patricide; matricide; killing an arhat; spilling the

blood of a buddha; and, causing a schism in the harmoniously-united [monastic] Sangha. 13. "Shiila" is the Sanskrit term for the practice of moral conduct. 14. This refers to Shakyamuni Buddha's period of cultivating ascetic practices in the Himalayas in this lifetime and also to his cultivation in the mountains in previous lives while coursing along the bodhisattva path. 15. "Dhuuta" practices refers to a dozen relatively ascetic practices which were allowed by the Buddha. They included such practices as eating but a single meal each day, sitting up while sleeping at night, etc. They tend to reinforce certain aspects of spiritual cultivation and are to be distinguished from the non-beneficial ascetic practices which the Buddha specifically discouraged (such as lying down on a bed of nails, covering oneself with ashes, etc.). 16. Verbal purification refers to a mental contemplation attended by a verbal statement wherein a monastic offers material goods in excess of one's most basic needs to the Triple Jewel (Buddha, Dharma, and monastic Sangha), requesting that they compassionately accept their ownership. One then becomes able to use them without the assumption that they belong specifically to oneself. The practical utility of this practice is that it tends to discourage attachment to personal material possessions. 17. According to Shaariputra's classic explanation narrated by Naagaarjuna in the third fascicle of The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom, "Upwardly" refers to such professions as meteorological and astronomical prognostications, "Inferiorly" refers to the blending of herbs, tilling the soil, planting fruit trees and so forth, "midpoints" refers to occult professions involving mantras, oracles, omens and so forth, and "directions" refers to manipulation and flattery of the rich and powerful through sending off in all four directions messages intended to obtain their favors. 18. An ara.nya is a quiet forest dwelling. 19. A daanapati is a layperson who provides for the material needs of the monastic Sangha. 20. Literally: "no closer than three or four li to a village." 21. A sa.nghaaraama is a monastic dwelling place.

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Chapter Two: Renunciation of Desires

Desire for "Forms" Desire for Sounds Desire for Fragrances Desire for Flavors Desire for Touchables A Summary Discussion of Desire As for the above-listed "renunciation of desire," this refers to the five [objects of] desire. When one wishes to endeavor at sitting in dhyana cultivating stopping and contemplation, it is absolutely essential to renounce them. As for the five desires, this refers to worldly forms, sounds, smells, tastes and touchables. They are ever able to deceive and delude all ordinary people causing them to develop fond attachment. If one is able to become deeply aware of the negative consequences of desires, one will not become involved with them. This is what is meant by renouncing desire. First, the renunciation of the desire for form, refers to such forms as the stately and decorous shapes and features of men and women including long eyebrows, red lips and white teeth, as well as things universally regarded

as precious, colors such as blue, yellow, red, white, vermillion, purple, chartreuse and green, and all sorts of marvelous forms which are able to influence the foolish person seeing them to develop fondness for them and consequently embark on all manner of unwholesome karmic deeds. One example is King Bimbasaara who, on account of sexual desire, stole into a hostile kingdom and entered the quarters of the courtesan Aamrapaalii. Another is the King Udayana who, corrupted by lust, hacked off the hands and feet of five hundred rishis.(22) [Desire for forms] is possessed of all manner of negative consequences like this. Second, the renunciation of the desire for sounds, refers to musical sounds such as issue from harps, zithers, or flutes, and such as are created by strings, bamboo, metal or stone, and refers also to such sounds as the voices of men and women singing, chanting, hymning, or reciting. They may influence the foolish common person who hears them to develop defiled attachment and then consequently generate all manner of unwholesome karmic deeds. One example of this phenomenon is the case of the five hundred rishis dwelling in the Snowy Mountains who heard the singing of the gandharva(23) maiden, lost dhyana absorption and thus experienced intoxication, derangement and disturbance of mind. On account of all sorts of reasons such as these one should realize the negative consequences of [desire for] sounds. Third, the renunciation of the desire for fragrances, refers to the physical scents of men and women, the fragrances of society's food, drink and perfumes as well as all manner of incenses and aromas. An ordinary fool does not understand the [true] character of fragrances and thus on sensing them becomes fondly attached and opens the door to the fetters.(24) An example of this is the case of the bhikshu at the side of the lotus pond who smelled the fragrance of the blossoms and whose thoughts were moved to fondness and pleasure. The pond spirit then rebuked him soundly by scolding, "Why did you steal my fragrance?!" One may, on account of becoming attached to fragrances, stir to action otherwise quiescent fetters. For all manner of reasons such as these one should realize the negative consequences of [the desire for] fragrances. Fourth, the renunciation of the desire for flavors, refers to bitterness, sourness, sweetness, pungency, saltiness, mildness and other such fine flavors characteristic of fine beverages and cuisine. They may be able to incite the foolish common person to develop a kind of impure attachment and then consequently engage in unwholesome karma. An example of this is the case of the shraama.nera who developed an unhealthy obsession with the flavor of curds and who thus, at the conclusion of his life, was reborn among curd worms. For all manner of reasons such as these one should realize the negative consequences of [the desire for] flavors. Fifth, the renunciation of the desire for touchables, refers to the softness and delicate slickness of the bodies of men and women, to the sensation of physical warmth when it is cold, physical coolness when it is hot, as well as to all other pleasant tactile contacts. The foolish person, lacking in wisdom, is submerged by them and thus generates karma which blocks progress along the Way. An example of this was the one-horned rishi who on account of indulging the desire for physical contact lost the superknowledges and ended up with a lustful woman riding him about, mounted atop his shoulders. For all manner of reasons such as these, one should realize the negative consequences of [the desire for] touchables. The dharma of renouncing desire as treated above is drawn from

the discussion in The Mahayana Treatise. (25) It additionally states, "Alas! These beings! They are constantly harassed by the five desires and yet they still pursue them incessantly. "As for these five types of desire, when one gains [their objects] they become progressively more intense, just as when a fire is stoked with more firewood its flames burn ever brighter. The five desires afford no [enduring] pleasure. [They go on and on] like a dog's gnawing away at a withered old bone. The five desires proliferate contention just as carrion occasions the skirmishing of scavenging birds. The five desires scorch a person just as one is burned carrying a torch into the wind. The five desires bring harm to a person just as when one treads upon a poisonous snake. The five desires have nothing real about them for they are like bounty gained in a dream. [Satisfaction gained from] the five desires doesn't remain for long. It's borrowed only for an instant and is like the gleam of a spark. A wise man contemplates them as like an enemy or a thief. The worldly person is foolish and deluded, is greedily attached to the five desires, won't relinquish them even in the face of death, and later on undergoes immeasurable suffering and aggravation [as a result]." This dharma of the five desires is something [people] have in common with animals. All beings act under the direction of the five desires and are slaves to the desires. On account of these corrupting desires one may sink down into the three [lower] paths [of rebirth]. [One should contemplate thus,] "If now in cultivating dhyana I were to continue to be obstructed and covered over by them, I would be acting like a great thief." One must urgently distance oneself from [the five desires]. A pertinent treatment of this topic is found in The Dhyana Sutra verse: That birth and death are not cut off Is on account of desire and fondness for its flavor. As when nursing a grudge until entering the tomb, One vainly endures all manner of bitter suffering. The smell of the body is like that of a corpse, Impurities stream forth from its nine apertures. Just as worms in an outhouse delight in the feces, The foolish man's [pleasure in the] body is no different. The one who is wise should contemplate the body, And not lust after the tainted pleasures of the world. To be without burdens and to have nothing desired, -- This is what's known as the true nirvana. It's just as described by the Buddha himself: Practicing with one mind and singular intention, While counting the breath in dhyana absorption, -- This constitutes the dhuuta practice. [End of Chapter Two] End Notes 22. A rishi is a recluse who devotes himself to meditation. 23. A gandharva is a type of musical spirit attracted to fine fragrances. 24. "Fetters" are just the afflictions of greed, hatred, stupidity, arrogance, doubt, etc. which tie people up and bind them to the world. 25. Chih-i refers to an abbreviated title of the 100-fascicle work by Nagarjuna more commonly known as The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom (T25.1509). These quotations and references all come from fascicle number seventeen.

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Chapter Three: Casting off the Coverings

The Covering of Desires (in the Mind) The Covering of Anger The Covering of Sleep The Covering of Agitation and Remorse The Covering of Doubt As for the casting off of the coverings brought up earlier, it refers to the five coverings. The first involves the casting off of the covering of desire. Earlier we discussed arising of desire amidst the five external sense objects. Now we are concerned with the arising of desire in the sphere of the internal mental faculty. This refers specifically to the situation where the practitioner is seated upright cultivating dhyana and his mind generates primary thoughts characterized by desire which become continuous with one such thought following upon another in such a way that they cover over the wholesome mind and prevent it from developing. Having become aware of this one should cast it off. Why should he do so? Just as in the case of Shubhakara whose lustful mind arose internally, it is even able to burn the body, how much the more so is the mind, when generating the fire of desire, able to burn up all wholesome dharmas. Persons who are possessed by desire are extremely far away from the Way. How is this so? Desire is the dwelling place of all manner of afflictions and disturbances. If the mind becomes attached and beset by desire, there is no way for one to grow near to the Way. A relevant treatment of this topic is found in "The Verse on Getting Rid of the Coverings": The person with a sense of shame who's entered the Way Takes up his bowl and provides merit for beings. How could one give free reign to desire for sense objects And become immersed in the five senses? Having already renounced the bliss of the five desires, One has cast them off and does not look back. Why would one still desire to gain them Like a fool who laps up his own vomit? All desires are suffering at the time they are sought. When gained, one is usually fearful [of losing them]. On losing them, one experiences intense aggravation. At every point there's nowhere where pleasure abides. Given desires are subject to shortcomings like this, How is one able to relinquish them? If one gains the bliss of deep dhyana absorption, One is no longer deceived by [desire]. The second is the casting off of the covering of anger. Anger is the basis for losing the Buddha Dharma, a cause and condition for falling into the wretched destinies,(26) the nemesis of Dharma bliss, the great thief [which preys] on the wholesome mind, and the repository for all manner of abusive speech. Accordingly, [it might occur that] when the practitioner is sitting in dhyana meditation, he might think to himself, "This fellow is now tormenting me. What's more, he torments my relations and praises my adversaries." [Continuing], he might think, "It's been like this in the past as well and it will continue to be the case in the future. This amounts to a nine-fold torment." Consequently, he might become angry and based upon that anger he might begin to cherish hatred. On account of becoming hateful he might then think to torment the other individual. In this fashion anger serves to cover over the mind and for this reason it is referred to as a covering. One should proceed urgently to cast it off and should not allow it to proliferate. Pertinent to this topic is Shakra-devaanaam-indra's versified conundrum for the Buddha: What is it that murders one's peacefulness and bliss? What is it that murders freedom from worry? What is it that is the root of poisonousness and Which swallows up and destroys every goodness? The Buddha responded, speaking in verse: If one slays hatred one becomes peaceful and happy. If one slays hatred one becomes free of worry. It's hatred that is the root of poisonousness. It's hatred that destroys every goodness. After one has

become cognizant of this, one should cultivate compassion and patience as a means to get rid of it and thereby allow the mind to become pure. Third, casting off the covering of sleep.

"Drowsiness" (the first word in the Chinese compound for "sleep") refers to a dullness and dimness of the subjective mental processes, whereas "slumber" (the second word in the Chinese compound for "sleep") refers to the state in which the five sense faculties are so obscured by this dimness that the control of the limbs is relinquished and one curls up and sleeps soundly. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "covering" of sleep. It is capable of destroying the mind intent on Dharma which generates genuine bliss in this and later lives and is also capable of destroying the bliss in later lives associated with rebirth in the heavens and with the realization of nirvana. A dharma such as this which is so possessed of ill effects is the very worst. How is this so? Unlike the mental states associated with the other coverings which may be gotten rid of through becoming aware of their presence, sleep is like being dead in that there is no consciousness which abides in a state of awareness. Because one is not in a state of wakefulness, it is difficult to do away with it. A related citation is found in a verse employed by buddhas and bodhisattvas in reprimanding somnolent disciples: Get up! Don't lie there hugging that stinking corpse. It's but various impurities falsely regarded as a "person." It's as if you've gotten a serious disease or been shot by an arrow. With such an accumulation of suffering's pains, how then can you sleep? You're like a man in shackles being led to the gallows. With disastrous harm so imminent, how can you sleep? The thieves of the fetters are not yet destroyed nor injury yet averted. It's as if one were sharing a room with a venomous serpent. It's also as if one were entering an army's gauntlet of swords. At such a time as that, how could one sleep? Sleep is a vast darkness where one can't see anything. Every day it deceives and steals a person's brilliance. Because sleep covers over the mind, nothing whatever is perceived. As it has such great drawbacks, how could one sleep? For all manner of reasons such as these one remonstrates against the covering of sleep. One becomes alarmed by and aware of impermanence, pares down one's need for sleep and causes oneself to not be covered over by its dullness. If the mind becomes severely afflicted with dullness and sleep, one should resort to a dhyana wake-up device⁽²⁷⁾ or staff to get rid of them. The fourth, casting off the covering of agitation and remorsefulness. As for agitation itself, there are three types: The first is physical agitation which is characterized by the body's habitual enjoyment of wandering about endeavoring at all manner of foolishness and by the inability to feel even momentarily peaceful when sitting down. The second type is verbal agitation which is characterized by the habitual enjoyment of singing, chanting, disputation over rights and wrongs, useless and frivolous discourse, the discussion of worldly matters, and so forth. The third type is mental agitation where one's mental inclination is towards neglectfulness, towards giving the mind free rein in the manipulation of situations, and where one muses over literature, the arts, worldly talents and artisanship and where one indulges in all manner of unwholesome initial and discursive thought. Agitation's function as a dharma is to destroy the mind of the monastic. Even if a person is focused in his thoughts he might still be unable to develop meditative absorption, how much the less if he is agitated and scattered. A person who is agitated and scattered is like a drunken elephant unrestrained by the trainer's hook

and like a camel without a nose ring. None of these are subject to control or discipline. An appropriate verse states: You've already shaved your head and donned the dyed robe. Taking up the clay bowl you go out on the alms round. How then can you delight in and be attached to dharmas of frivolity and agitation? Being neglectful and giving rein to your inclinations, you lose the benefits of Dharma. Having lost the benefits of the Dharma in addition to having sacrificed the pleasures of the world one should, after realizing one's errors, urgently cast off [agitation]. As for remorsefulness, it is remorsefulness which brings about the creation of a covering. If one experiences agitation in which there is no remorsefulness, this does not constitute a covering. Why not? Because at such a time of agitation, it (remorsefulness) has not yet become one of the associated conditions. But later, when one is desirous of entering meditative absorption, one then may experience remorsefulness over what one has done, whereupon worry and affliction cover over the mind. It is for this reason that it is referred to as a covering. Remorsefulness itself is of two types. The first is remorsefulness which arises as a consequence of agitation as alluded to above. The second is exemplified by the person who has committed a monstrous and severe offense and who thus constantly experiences feelings of fearfulness. The arrow of remorsefulness has entered his mind and has become stuck so firmly that it can not be pulled out. A pertinent verse states: Through having done what one shouldn't have done, Or through having failed to do what one should have done, One is burned by the fire of the affliction of remorse, And in a later life falls into the wretched destinies. If a person is able to feel remorse for an offense, Then having experienced remorse, he should not continue to feel troubled. In this way the mind can be peaceful and happy. One should not constantly seize upon it through recollection. If one possesses either of the two kinds of remorse, Whether it be over having failed to do what one should have done, Or over having done what one should not have done, This is the mark of a stupid person. It is not the case that on account of being remorseful One will somehow be able to do what one failed to do. All of the ill deeds which one has already committed Can't be caused thereby to be undone. Fifth, casting off the covering of doubt. Because doubt covers over the mind, one is unable to develop faith in any dharma. Because one has no mind of faith, one encounters the Buddha's Dharma in vain and gains nothing whatsoever from it. This is analogous to a man's entering into a mountain of jewels. If he has no hands he is unable to acquire anything at all. Thus the faults of doubt are extremely numerous. What needn't obstruct the development of meditative absorption now in fact becomes the primary obstruction to gaining meditative absorption. There are three types of doubt. The first is where one doubts oneself and thus thinks to himself, "My faculties are all dim and dull. The defilement from my previous offenses is deep and severe. Could it be that I'm not the man for this?" If one allows oneself to manufacture doubts such as these then the dharma of meditative absorption will never be able to manifest. If one desires to cultivate meditative absorption, one must not slight oneself, for it is difficult to fathom the extent of one's roots of goodness planted in former lifetimes. The second type of doubt is that wherein one doubts one's own guru, [thinking to oneself,] "If his deportment and appearance are such as this he must not have any [realization of the] Way himself. How then could he be able to teach me." If one develops such doubting arrogance then it

constitutes an obstruction to meditative absorption. A dharma appropriate to one wishing to be rid of it is exemplified by a passage from The Mahayana Treatise wherein it states that this is just as when there is gold [dust] contained in a smelly leather pouch. Because one is desirous of obtaining the gold one can't just pitch out the smelly pouch. The practitioner's situation may be just like this. Although the guru may not be immaculate, still, one should look upon him as one would the Buddha. The third type of doubt is that wherein one doubts the Dharma. Worldly people are usually attached to their own ideas and thus are not able to immediately believe the Dharma which they have received [nor are they able to readily] accept it and cultivate it with a respectful mind. If the mind becomes hesitant, then even though one has immediate exposure to the Dharma, it makes no imprint on the mind. Why not? The significance of the obstruction of doubtfulness is exemplified by a verse which states: It's just as when a person stands at a fork in the road And is so deluded by doubt that he goes nowhere at all. With respect to the reality mark of all dharmas, Doubt functions just like this. Because one has doubts one doesn't search industriously For the reality mark of all dharmas. Views and doubts arise from delusion. Among the ills they are the worst. Among all the good and unwholesome dharmas Throughout the spheres of birth-and-death and nirvana Dhyana absorption is an actual and truly existent dharma. Don't develop doubts about it. If you cherish the delusion of doubt, The hell messenger from the King of Death will tie you up Like a lion pouncing on a deer And you'll be unable to gain liberation. Although dwelling in the world one may have doubts, One should happily accord with wholesome dharmas, Just as when one contemplates a fork in the road One should follow the one offering the best benefits. With respect to the Dharma of the Buddha, faith constitutes the means whereby one can enter. If one has no faith, then although he is in the presence of the Buddha's Dharma, one will finally gain nothing whatsoever. For all manner of reasons such as these, realizing the faults of doubtfulness, one should urgently cast it off. Question: Unwholesome dharmas are vast in number and the "dusts" [of the sense objects] are immeasurably numerous. Why is it that one must only get rid of five dharmas? Reply: These five coverings basically comprise four dharmas, namely the three poisons and "equal-distribution" [among each of the three poisons.] These in turn subsume all 84,000 access points to weariness with sense objects. Firstly, the covering of desire is just the poison of desire. Secondly, the covering of anger, is just the poison of anger. Thirdly, the two dharmas of sleep and doubt are just the poison of stupidity. The fourth is agitation-associated remorsefulness It is equally present [in each of the three poisons]. Together, these constitute the four categories of afflictions. In each of them there are 21,000. In all four of them there are collectively a total of 84,000. Hence when one gets rid of these five coverings it is just the elimination of all unwholesome dharmas. For all manner of reasons such as these the practitioner casts off the five coverings. Like a person who has gained freedom from a great burden or one who has been cured of a serious disease, like a starving man arriving in a prosperous country or like one who has been rescued safe and unharmed, from a band of villains--The practitioner is just like these. When he eliminates these five coverings his mind is calm and secure and he feels clear, cool and blissful. Just as with the sun and moon which may be obscured by five phenomena: smoke, dust, clouds, fog and the hand of Raahu the

asura, such that they are unable to shine brightly,--so too it is with a person's mind and the five coverings. [End of Chapter Three] End Notes 26. The (three) wretched destinies are rebirth in the hells, as a hungry ghost, and as an animal. 27. The "dhyana wake-up device" refers to a piece of wood connected by a string to the earlobes which falls and tugs at them when the meditator's posture starts to droop as a result of sleepiness.

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Chapter Four: Making Adjustments

Adjustments with Regard to Eating Adjustments with Regard to Sleep Adjustments with Regard to the Body Adjustments with Regard to the Breath Adjustments with Regard to the Mind Now when the practitioner first takes up the study of sitting in dhyana, as one who is desirous of cultivating the Dharma of the Buddhas of the ten directions and the three periods of time, he should first make the great vows to bring all beings to liberation. In vowing to pursue the unsurpassed way of the Buddhas [he makes] his mind as solid as vajra and [resolves to be] industrious and courageous to the point that he will not even spare his own life and will never turn back in his quest to perfect all the dharmas of the Buddha. Next, seated in meditation and employing right mindfulness, he deliberates upon the true and actual mark of all dharmas, including the so-called wholesome, unwholesome and neutral dharmas, including the internal and external sense faculties, sense objects, the false consciousnesses and all of the dharmas associated with outflows and afflictions, and including also the conditioned dharmas throughout the three realms which are associated with birth and death and with cause and effect, [and in reflecting upon them perceives them] as existing solely on account of the mind. Accordingly, The Sutra on the Ten Grounds states, "Throughout the three realms nothing else whatsoever exists. It is all created solely by the one mind." If one realizes that mind is devoid of [an inherently-existent] nature then [one realizes that] all dharmas are not actual. If the mind has no defiled attachment then all of the karmic activity in the sphere of birth and death comes to a halt. After one has carried out this contemplation he should then take up the cultivation according to the proper sequence. What is meant by "making adjustments?" Now, to draw upon familiar subjects as analogies for this dharma, it is just as when a common potter wishes to create various sorts of vessels. He must first skillfully make adjustments in the clay such that it is neither too stiff nor too soft. Afterwards he is able to move to the potter's wheel. It's also like playing the lute. One should first make adjustments to the strings, properly setting their the tension. Then one may proceed to play, producing all sorts of marvelous melodies. When the practitioner cultivates the mind it is just the same . One must make skillful adjustments in five different matters and must make those adjustments appropriately. Then samadhi will develop easily. If there is some area which has not been properly adjusted, then there will be all sorts of obstructive difficulties and one's roots of goodness will come forth only with difficulty. First, making

adjustments with respect to food. Now as for food's function as a dharma, it is originally consumed out of a desire to supply the body so that one may advance along the Way. If one eats to the point of becoming too full, then the breathing will be strained, the central region will feel stuffed, the energetic channels will not flow freely, the mental faculties will be blocked up, and, when sitting, one's thoughts will not be tranquil. If one eats too little the body will waste away, the mind will be too tightly strung, and mental deliberation will be unstable. Neither of these two [extremes] constitute the way to the realization of meditative absorption. If one consumes contaminated food, then it will cause a person's mind consciousness to become dull and confused. If one consumes foods which are not appropriate, then it will stimulate all sorts of disorders to arise and will cause the four great elements to be thrown far out of balance. This is the beginning phase of one's cultivation of meditative absorption and so one must be extremely careful in the way one proceeds. Accordingly, a sutra states, "If the body is tranquil then one's progress along the Way will flourish. Knowing the proper measure with respect to eating, being ever blissful in a remote abode, and maintaining a pure mind while taking pleasure in diligent effort,--This is the teaching of all Buddhas." Second, adjustments with regard to sleep. Now sleep is a matter of being covered over by a state of ignorance and delusion. One must not give free reign to it. If one sleeps too much, one not only wastes the opportunity to cultivate the dharma of the Superiors, but one also destroys any meditative skill [which may have developed] so that one may potentially cause the mind to be cloaked in darkness and the roots of goodness to become entirely submerged. One should awaken to and realize [the significance of] impermanence, regulate and subdue sleep, cause one's spiritual energy to be clear and white and one's mindful thought to be bright and pure. In this way one will establish one's mind in the mental state of the Superiors and cause samadhi to manifest before one. Accordingly, a sutra states, "Whether in the beginning or end of the night, there must be no wasting [of the opportunity to cultivate. One must not, on account of sleep, cause a lifetime to pass by emptily with nothing whatsoever achieved. One should be mindful that the fire of impermanence burns up the entire world and thus one should seek early on to bring about one's own deliverance. One must not [indulge in] sleep. Third, adjustments with regard to the body. Fourth, adjustments with regard to the breath. Fifth, adjustments with regard to the mind. These three ought to be employed together. They cannot be discussed separately. There is only the matter of their having a first, a middle and a last. In this sense the technique is not the same. This being the case, there are differences then in their features when entering into, abiding in, and coming out of [a session]. Now, as for the physical adjustments to be undertaken when one first desires to enter dhyana: There are issues of appropriateness in the physical adjustments to be undertaken by the cultivator who wishes to enter into samadhi. For instance, when one is abiding outside of meditative absorption, whether walking, standing, commencing an activity or stopping one, whether one is moving or is still, in whatsoever endeavor one is carrying on-- In every case it is essential to be meticulously attentive. If one's actions are characterized by coarseness and impetuosity then one's breath will be correspondingly coarse. Because the breath is coarse, then the thoughts will be scattered and difficult to register clearly. Additionally, when one

returns to sitting, he will be agitated and muddled and the mind will not be tranquil or contented. Even though one's body is not abiding in a state of meditative absorption, still, it is essential to employ one's mind to counteractively implement skillful means. Later, when one enters into dhyana [meditation session], it is essential to take care in setting up the body in its proper place. When one first arrives at the sitting cushion, one must first establish oneself in the sitting location in such a manner that all is peaceful and secure and so that nothing will interfere with one's remaining for a long time. Next one should arrange the feet correctly. If one is sitting in the half-lotus posture, then one places the left foot so that it is on top of the right foot and then pulls it in so that it is close to the body proper so that the toes of the left foot are aligned with the right thigh while the toes of the right foot are aligned with the left thigh. If one wishes to sit in full lotus then one [next] brings the right foot up so that it rests above the left. Next one loosens the belt on one's robe, making sure that it is straight all around and cannot fall open while one is sitting. Next one should arrange the hands, lays the open left hand on top of the right hand so that they fit together and then one rests them atop the left foot [in the case of half lotus] and draws them in toward the body so that they are proximate to the center of the body. Next, one should properly arrange the body, first making sure that the body is erect and then seeing that all of the limbs are symmetrically arranged, doing this as many as seven or eight times like a type of massaging method. One must not allow the hands or feet to slip out of correct posture. After one has done this then one sits up perfect straight insuring that the spine is neither slumping nor pushed forward. Next one should straighten up the neck and head so that the nose and the navel are lined up and so that the head is not tilted to the side, held at an angle, drooped downward or raised upward. One faces forward and remains straight. Next, one should expel the turbid breath. The method for expelling the breath requires that one open the mouth and release the breath while not allowing this process to be either coarse or urgent. One should make it soft and smooth as one releases the breath and sends it forth. One should imagine that throughout the body any blockages within the numerous energetic pathways are moved on out as one exhales. Then, one closes the mouth and inhales pure breath through the nose. One should do this up to three times. If the physical respiration is already correctly adjusted then only once is adequate. Next, one should close the mouth such that the lips and teeth are held together while the tongue is held back up against the hard palate. Then one should close the eyes only enough that they block off the light from outside. One should straighten up the body and sit upright like a stela. One cannot allow the body, the head or the four limbs to move about even slightly. This constitutes the technique for making physical adjustments as one first proceeds to enter dhyana absorption. To speak of what is most essential, being neither too loose nor too tight constitutes the mark of correct physical adjustment. Fourth, the technique for making adjustments in the breath when first entering dhyana [meditation]. There are four types of characteristics: first, windy breathing; second, uneven breathing; third, normal breathing; and fourth, subtle respiration. The first three are indications of inadequate adjustment whereas the last one is characteristic of correct adjustment. What is meant by "windy" breathing? When one is sitting and one senses the presence of a sound as the breath comes into and goes forth from the nose this is "windy"

breathing. What is meant by "uneven" breathing? When one is sitting and even though the breath makes no sound there is still a catching and stopping such that it does not move on through, this is "uneven" breathing. What is meant by "normal" breathing? When one is sitting and even though the breath makes no sound and even though there is no catching and stopping, still, it is not subtle, this is "normal" breathing. What is meant by "subtle" respiration? There is no sound, no catching, and no coarseness. The going forth and coming in of the breath is smooth and drawn out such that it is as if still there and yet as if it has disappeared. It supports the spirit becoming peaceful and stable. One feels pleased and content. These are the marks of subtle respiration. If one maintains windy breathing, then one becomes scattered. If one maintains uneven breathing, then one becomes stuck. If one maintains normal breathing, then one becomes weary. If one maintains subtle respiration, then one enters meditative absorption. If when one is sitting there exist the three characteristics of windy breathing, uneven breathing, and normal breathing, these constitute inadequate adjustment. In a case where one applies mental effort under these circumstances they also become [causes of] mental disorder and make it difficult for the mind to enter meditative absorption. If one wishes to correct them, then one should rely on three techniques: First, stabilize the mind by anchoring it below; second, relax and release the body; and third, visualize the breath penetrating through to all of the pores, going forth and coming in without any obstructions whatsoever. If one makes one's mind subtle, one causes the breath to become very fine. If the breath becomes regulated, then the manifold disorders do not arise. One's mind easily enters meditative absorption. This constitutes the practitioner's technique for regulating the breath when first entering meditative absorption. To speak of the essentials, it is neither coarse nor tending to slip away. This is the mark of breathing which has been regulated. Fifth, regulating the mind when one first enters meditative absorption involves three topics: first, entering; second, abiding; and third, coming out. The first, entering, consists of two topics. The first is the regulation and control of chaotic thinking so that [one's thoughts] are not allowed to run off. As for the second, one must cause situations involving "sinking," "floating," "laxity" and "urgency" to [return to] their proper place. What constitutes the mark of "sinking"? If when one is sitting one's [mental state] is murky and dim, if one doesn't remember anything or if one's head tends to droop downward, these constitute marks of "sinking." At such a time one should anchor one mindfulness at the tip of the nose and thus compel one's mind to abide in the midst of objective conditions so that there will be no breaking up and scattering of the mental focus. This technique is able to counter "sinking." What constitutes the mark of "floating"? If while one is sitting the mind prefers to drift off and move about, if the body too is ill at ease, or if one brings to mind various external objective conditions these constitute marks of "floating." At such a time it is appropriate to stabilize the mind by directing it downwards and anchoring it at the objective condition constituted by the navel. When one controls all discursive thoughts the mind immediately becomes stable and abides. In such a case one's mind is easily established in stillness. To speak of the essentials, being neither sinking nor floating constitutes the mark of the regulated mind. The meditating mind may also possess marks of laxity or urgency. As for the marks of the meditating mind afflicted with the "urgency" malady, they arise from a situation

where one has focused the mind and brought mindfulness to bear. Because of this one has entered a meditative absorption through which [one's attention] has moved upward and brought about intense pain in the chest. One should relax and release his mind and visualize the breath all flowing downward. If one were to do this then the calamity would naturally be cured. As for the marks of mind afflicted with the "laxity" malady, the determination on the part of the mind of awareness is scattered and dilatory. The body prefers to be slack and slumped. Perhaps saliva flows forth from the mouth. At times one is dull and unclear. At such a time one should draw up the body and make one's mindfulness more urgent. One should compel the mind to abide in the midst of objective conditions and the body to hold itself in position. One uses this technique as the antidote. The mind may possess the characteristics of being either rough or slippery. If one infers from this [the appropriate correctives] are obvious. These constitute the techniques for regulating the mind when one first enters meditative absorption. Now, entering meditative absorption is fundamentally a process wherein one proceeds from the coarse to enter the subtle. In this matter it is the body which constitutes that which is coarse. The breath abodes within it. The mind is the most subtle and still. One causes the mind to become established in stillness. This then is the initial skillful means for entering meditative absorption. This constitutes the regulation of the two matters which takes place when one first enters meditative absorption. As for the regulation of the three matters which takes place as one abides in the sitting posture, the practitioner should utilize his mind in the focusing of mindfulness whether the given session of sitting meditation is long or short and whether it extends for one, two, or three of the twelve [two-hour] periods in a day. One must clearly recognize the characteristics which indicate whether or not the three phenomena of body, breath and mind are in a state of correct adjustment. As one continues with a given instance of sitting, if even though one has already finished making adjustments to the body it nonetheless occurs that his body becomes perhaps lax, perhaps tight, perhaps tilted, perhaps crooked, perhaps drooped, or perhaps arched upward, after one becomes aware of it one must then correct it. One must ensure that one is peaceful and stable, that one is free of any laxity and urgency, and that one is abiding in a posture which is level, straight and upright. Then again, during a single session of sitting although the body may be correctly adjusted, still, the breath may not be in harmony. The marks of its not being regulated are as discussed above. Perhaps there is "windy" breathing. Perhaps there is "uneven" breathing. Or perhaps in addition the breathing has become urgent such that there is a sense of within the body of distension and fullness. In such cases one should employ the previously discussed methods and thus counter them accordingly. In every case one should cause [the movement of] the respiration along its pathways to become soft and smooth so that it seems as if it is present and yet it is as if it is absent. Again, it may be that in the course of single session of sitting, although the body and the breath are correctly regulated, still, the mind may have failed to achieve meditative absorption on account of being either "floating," "sinking," "lax," or "urgent." At such a time, when one becomes aware of it one should employ the previously mentioned techniques to cause it through regulation to abide appropriately in the median range. These three matters most definitely do not have any fixed sequence of implementation. One

accords with whatever aspect is out of adjustment in proceeding to establish appropriate adjustment of it so that throughout the course of a single session of sitting the three factors of the body, the respiration, and the mind abide in a state of appropriate regulation. They remain free of any mutual violation and thus they become fused to the point that there is no duality among them. When this is the case, one is then able to get rid of any residual disorders rooted in previous existences, one is able to guard against and prevent the arising of all obstacles, and one is able to establish ascendancy in the path of meditative absorption. As for the regulation of the three factors at the time of coming out [of meditative absorption], if it is the case that the practitioner's specific session of sitting in dhyana is about to come to an end, when he desires to come out of meditative absorption, he should first release his mind onto a different objective condition, and then open his mouth and release the breath while also visualizing it dispersing itself from within its many energetic pathways so that it follows along with the mental attention. Afterwards, one should move the body ever so slightly and then move the shoulders and then the hands, the head, and the neck. Next, one moves the two feet and allows them to become entirely limber again. Next, one uses the hands to massage over all of his pores and then massages his hands so that they are caused to become warm. He then uses them to cover his two eyes and afterwards then opens them. Once one has waited for the body to warm up a little one can then come and go as he pleases. If one fails to do this, since one may have succeeded in causing the mind to dwell [in a particular way] during the sit, if one then acts in a sudden and hurried fashion as one comes out [of meditation], then the subtle factors may not have yet been allowed to disperse. If they thus continue to abide [trapped] within the body, they may cause a person to have headaches and to experience stiffness of all of the joints similar to rheumatism. In subsequent sitting sessions one may become afflicted, agitated and ill at ease. Therefore when the mind wishes to emerge from meditative absorption one must always pay careful attention [to these points]. This constitutes the technique for regulating the body, respiration and mind as one emerges from meditative absorption. Because one moves forth from the subtle on into that which is coarse this involves a skillful entering abiding and emerging as described in a verse: In moving forward and in stopping there is a [proper] sequence [So that] the coarse and the subtle do not work against each other. It is just as with [the responses of] a well-tamed horse When one desires to halt and then desires to move on. In The Lotus Sutra, it says: "For the sake of the Buddha Way, the bodhisattvas in this great assembly have already diligently practiced vigor for an incalculable number of tens of millions of ko.tiis(28) of kalpas. They have become skillful in entering, abiding in, and emerging from an incalculable number of trillions of ko.tiis of samadhis. They have gained great superknowledges, have long cultivated the brahman conduct and have become well able to practice in appropriate sequence all of the good dharmas. [End of Chapter Four]

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Chapter Five: Practicing in accord with Skillful Means

Now, as for cultivating stopping and contemplation, it is necessary to employ accesses to Dharma characterized by skillful means. [In this connection] there are five dharmas. The first is zeal. One possesses the zeal to separate from all of the world's erroneous thinking and inverted views because one nurtures the zeal to achieve success in all of the Dharma accesses associated with dhyana and wisdom. This may also be referred to by [such terms as] "being determined to," "aspiring to," "having a fondness for," and "taking pleasure in." This is because this person is determined towards, aspires to, is fond of, and takes pleasure in all of the profound accesses to Dharma. Hence this is known as "zeal." This is as stated by the Buddha when he said, "Zeal constitutes the origin of all good dharmas." The second is vigor. In solidly upholding the precepts and getting rid of the five coverings one is focused, intensely energetic, and unremitting in both the early and later watches of the night. This is analogous to when one employs a drill to make fire but it has not yet gotten hot. Even to the very end one does not rest. This refers to being vigorous in the good dharmas of the Way. The third is mindfulness. One remains mindful that the world is deceptive and may be deemed base whereas dhyana absorption is honorable and may be deemed noble. If one achieves dhyana absorption, one is immediately able to perfectly generate non-outflow wisdom and the power of the Way which comes with all of the superknowledges. One realizes the equal and right enlightenment and extensively engages in delivering beings to liberation. This may be deemed noble. Hence we refer here to mindfulness. The fourth is discerning wisdom. One takes the measure of worldly bliss as opposed to the bliss associated with dhyana absorption and wisdom, judging the successes versus the failures and the valueless versus the valuable. Why? As for the bliss of the world, the bliss is but little whereas the suffering is much. It is false, deceptive and unreal. This amounts to a failure and is valueless. As for the bliss which accompanies dhyana absorption and wisdom, it is devoid of outflows, unconditioned, characterized by stillness, leisure and liberation. One leaves birth and death behind forever and is always separate from suffering. This constitutes a success and is a thing which is valuable. Because one engages in such an analysis we speak here of discerning wisdom. The fifth is single-mindedness in making clear distinctions. One sees clearly that the world may be deemed disastrous and horrible. One recognizes well that the meritorious qualities of meditative absorption and wisdom may be deemed honorable and noble. At such a time one should make a single-minded decision to cultivate stopping and contemplation, making one's mind like vajra so that the heavenly demons and the non-buddhists will be unable to impose obstruction or destruction. [One's determination should be such that] even if one's efforts came up empty and nothing whatsoever was gained one will still persevere to the end and not turn back or change [one's resolve]. This is what is meant by single-mindedness. This is analogous to a person's travels. It is first necessary to know the signs of the open or obstructed road. Afterwards one decides to proceed single-mindedly along the road and then advances accordingly. Hence we speak here of discerning wisdom and single-mindedness. One of the Sutras states, "Were it not for wisdom, one would not develop dhyana absorption. Were it not for

dhyana absorption, one would not develop wisdom." The principle abides right here. [End of Chapter Five]

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Chapter Six: The Actual Cultivation

As for the cultivation of stopping and contemplation, there are two modes. The first is cultivation while sitting. The second is cultivation while moving through objective conditions and as one relates to the objective sphere. As for the first [mode], the cultivation as one cultivates stopping and contemplation while sitting, although it is true that this can be accomplished in any of the four departments,(1) still, for the study of the Way, sitting is the superior posture. Therefore one first explains stopping and contemplation in relation to sitting. Generally speaking, one sets forth five different concepts in this connection: 1) Cultivating stopping and contemplation as means of countering the coarseness and chaos of the beginner's mind; 2) Cultivating stopping and contemplation as means of countering the disorders of mental "sinking," or "floating;" 3) Cultivating stopping and contemplation in a manner which accords with whatever is appropriate; 4) Cultivating stopping and contemplation to counteract subtle states of mind occurring in meditative absorption; 5) Cultivating stopping and contemplation as means of achieving equal balance in meditative absorption and wisdom.] The first [concept] is cultivating stopping and contemplation as means of countering the coarseness and chaos of the beginner's mind. This refers to the case where, because the practitioner's thoughts are coarse and disordered when he first attempts to sit in dhyana, he should cultivate stopping to get rid of and demolish them. If one is unable to break their hold through stopping, then one ought to cultivate contemplation in such a case. Hence one speaks of cultivating stopping and contemplation in order to counter and break the coarseness and chaos of the beginner's mind. Now, the explanation of the cultivation of stopping and contemplation involves two concepts. The first, the cultivation of stopping, is itself comprised of three types: The first of these is stopping wherein one maintains the [mental] state through anchoring [one's attention] on an objective condition. This refers to anchoring the mind at such locations as the tip of the nose or the navel in order to prevent the mind from becoming scattered. Accordingly, a sutra states, "One anchors the mind and refrains from falling into neglectfulness. This is just like locking up a monkey." The second is stopping through controlling the mind. This refers to exerting control no matter what comes up in the mind in order to prevent it from running off and becoming scattered. A sutra says, "As for these five [sense] faculties, the mind acts as their ruler. Therefore, you should all skillfully control your minds." Because these two are both characterized by [obvious] phenomena it is unnecessary to analyze them [further here]. The third is stopping through realization of truth. The means that, no matter what the mind dwells upon, if one understands that all dharmas are produced from causes and conditions and are devoid of an inherently-existent nature, then the mind will not seize upon

them. If the mind does not seize upon them then the mind characterized by false thoughts will cease. Hence this constitutes stopping. This is as described in a sutra where it states: Within each and every one of all the dharmas Causes and conditions are empty, devoid of a ruler. Put the mind to rest; penetrate to the original source. Based on this one is referred to as a "shrama.na." When the practitioner first sits in dhyana, [he should realize that] no matter what the mind thinks of, no dharma abides for even an instant. If one's false thoughts do not cease even though one has implemented the above-described technique of stopping through realization of truth, one should reflect upon the thoughts which arise, and realize that, as for the past, they have already been destroyed, as for the present, they do not abide, and as for the future, they have not yet come. When one searches throughout these three regions they cannot be found at all. If they constitute a dharma which cannot be found then there is no thought. If there is no thought, then all dharmas are entirely nonexistent. Although the practitioner contemplates and finds that thoughts do not abide and are entirely nonexistent, still, it is not the case that there is not a single k.sa.na in which there is carried out the arising of aware and knowing mindfulness. One additionally contemplates this mind's thought, [observing that] it is on account of the internal presence of the six [sense] faculties, the external presence of the six [sense] objects, and the mutual opposition between the faculties and the objects that consciousness therefore arises. When the faculties and the objects have not yet been placed in mutual opposition, the production of consciousness is fundamentally nonexistent. One contemplates production in this manner and also contemplates extinction in the same way. The names "production" and "extinction" are only falsely established. When the mind which is characterized by production and extinction is extinguished, then still extinction manifests before one and there is nothing whatsoever which can be found. This is the so-called empty and still noumenal principle of nirvana. [Having carried out this contemplation], one's mind naturally comes to a halt. The Treatise on the Awakening of Faith states, "If the mind has run off and become scattered one should immediately draw it back in and establish it in right mindfulness. As for this "right mindfulness," one should be aware that it is only mind. There is no external realm. This very mind itself is devoid of any inherently existent characteristic. There is no instant in which it can be gotten at. It is reported that there are beginners in the cultivation of this study who, not yet having developed an easy ability to achieve a stillness of the mind, suppress it so as to force it to remain still, and so often become crazy [as a result]. This is just like studying archery. If one devotes a long time to the practice one then succeeds in hitting the target. The second, the cultivation of contemplation, is of two types. The first is counteractive contemplation. It is exemplified by the contemplation of impurity which counteracts desire, the contemplation involving the mind of loving-kindness which counteracts hatred, the contemplation involving analysis of the sense realms which counteracts attachment to a self, and the breath-counting contemplation which counteracts excessive discursive thinking. These will not be discussed in detail here. The second, right contemplation, involves contemplating all dharmas as being devoid of marks and also as produced from causes and conditions. The absence of an [inherently-existent] nature in causes and conditions is just the reality mark. If one first comprehends that absolutely everything in the

realm which is contemplated is entirely empty then the mind which is able to engage in the contemplation spontaneously refrains from arising. The earlier and later parts of the text primarily discuss this principle. The reader is requested to study this in detail himself. This is as exemplified in a sutra verse where it states: All dharmas are insubstantial. They constantly abide in thought. One who's already understood and perceived emptiness In every case is free of thinking. The second [concept] involves cultivating stopping and contemplation as means of countering the disorders of mental "sinking," or "floating." When the practitioner is sitting in dhyana if his mind is obstructed by dimness and fails to attend to anything as he stares blankly, or if one sometimes sleeps a lot, at that time one should cultivate contemplation as a means of bringing forth complete illumination. If in the midst of sitting one's mind moves about in a floating manner such that it is light, agitated, and ill at ease, at that time one should cultivate stopping in order to bring it to a halt. This is a summary explanation of the features of cultivating stopping and contemplation as means of countering the disorders of mental "sinking," or "floating." It is only necessary that in utilizing them one knows well how to match the medicine and the disorder. In every case one must not commit the error of applying the antidotes in a contrary or unorthodox manner. The third [concept] involves cultivating stopping and contemplation in a manner which accords with whatever is appropriate. When the practitioner is sitting in dhyana, if even though he does cultivate contemplative illumination for the sake of counteracting mental sinking, his mind still does not become bright and pure and there is no Dharmic benefit from it, he should then try cultivating stopping in order to arrest it. If when he is utilizing stopping he then becomes aware of his body and mind having become peaceful and still, one should know that it is appropriate to utilize stopping. One should then employ stopping to pacify the mind. When one is sitting in dhyana, if even though one cultivates stopping to counteract mental floating and moving about, the mind still does not come to a stop and one derives no Dharmic benefit from it, one should then try cultivating contemplation. If in the midst of contemplation one then becomes aware that the mind and spirit have become bright, pure, still and stable, one ought to know that it is appropriate to engage in contemplation. One should then employ contemplation to pacify the mind. This is a summary explanation of the features of cultivating stopping and contemplation in a manner which accords with whatever is appropriate. It is only necessary that one skillfully adapt to what is appropriate and cultivate that. If one does this, then the mind and spirit will become peaceful and stable, the calamity of the afflictions will be put to rest and one will realize success in the entryways to Dharma. The fourth [concept] involves cultivating stopping and contemplation to counteract subtle states of mind occurring in meditative absorption. This refers to the situation where the practitioner has first utilized stopping and contemplation to counteract and demolish coarseness and disordered [thought] and, since the disordered thought has already ceased, he then succeeds in entering meditative absorption. On account of the subtle mind state occurring in meditative absorption one becomes aware of the body as empty and still and then experiences bliss. It may be that a mind prone to indulgence is then brought forth which is able to use that subtle mental state as a basis for seizing on a deviant principle. If one is unaware of the false and deceptive nature of the mind which has

come to a rest in meditative absorption, one will certainly become desirously attached [to this experience]. If one becomes desirously attached one will cling to this as being genuine. If [however] one is aware that this is false, deceptive, and not genuine, then the two afflictions of affection and views will not arise. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. If even though one continues to cultivate stopping, the mind still remains attached and the karma of the fetters linked to affection and views does not cease, one should then cultivate contemplation, directing one's contemplation to the subtle mind associated with meditative absorption. If one does not [in fact] perceive [the actual existence of] the subtle mind occurring in meditative absorption, then one will not maintain attachment to the views linked to meditative absorption. If one does not establish attachment to views linked to meditative absorption then the karma associated with the afflictions of affection and views will all be entirely shattered and destroyed. This constitutes the cultivation of contemplation. This is a summary explanation of the features of cultivating stopping and contemplation to counteract the subtle mental states occurring in meditative absorption. The distinctions associated with the methods of stopping and contemplation are identical to those set forth previously. The only difference here is that they are employed to demolish extremely subtle errors inherent in [certain] views linked to meditative absorption. The fifth [concept] is the cultivation of stopping and contemplation as means of achieving equal balance in meditative absorption and wisdom. While sitting in dhyana, either on account of cultivating stopping or perhaps on account of cultivating contemplation, the practitioner then enters dhyana absorption. If although one has succeeded in entering meditative absorption, one still has no contemplative wisdom, this constitutes an absorption characterized by stupidity whereby one is unable to cut off the fetters. Or it may be that the operative contemplative wisdom is only faint and scant. In such a case one is unable to generate true wisdom, sever the fetters, or develop the entryways to Dharma. At such a time one should cultivate contemplative analysis. If one does so then meditative absorption and wisdom become equally balanced, one becomes able to sever the fetters, and one achieves realization in the entryways to Dharma. When the practitioner is sitting in dhyana, on account of cultivating contemplation, the mind may suddenly open up and become awakened such that one's wisdom is sharp and clear. However, it may be that the mind of meditative absorption is still only faint and scant. In such a case the mind may be moved and scattered. Like a lamp [flame] in the wind it does not completely illuminate things. In such a case one is unable to leave behind birth and death. At such a time one should return to the cultivation of stopping. On account of cultivating stopping one then gains the mind of meditative absorption. Like the lamp [flame] in a closed room it is immediately able to dispel the darkness and illuminate things clearly. This is a summary explanation of the cultivation of the two dharmas of stopping and contemplation in order to establish equal balance of meditative absorption and wisdom. If the practitioner is able to skillfully utilize these five concepts in this manner as he cultivates stopping and contemplation while sitting correctly with the body upright, and if in selecting them and dispensing with them he does not fail to accord with what is appropriate, then one should know that this person skillfully cultivates the Dharma of the Buddha. Because one is able to cultivate skillfully he most certainly will not pass through

this one lifetime in vain. Next, the second [mode]. Here we explain the cultivation of stopping and contemplation while moving through objective conditions and in relation to the objective sphere. Constantly sitting with the body upright is the supreme essential for entering the Way. However, a person with responsibilities must necessarily be involved in phenomenal conditions. If one adapts to objective conditions in relating to the objective sphere and yet fails to cultivate stopping and contemplation, this will produce gaps in and severances of the mind of cultivation. In such a case the karma of the fetters will arise where one comes into contact [with the objective sphere]. How then could one succeed in quickly achieving interactive correspondence with the Dharma of the Buddha? If a person is at all times constantly cultivating skillful means related to meditative absorption and wisdom, one should know that this person will certainly be able to reach a penetrating understanding of all of the Buddha's dharmas. What is meant by cultivating stopping and contemplation as one moves through objective conditions? As for what is referred to as "objective conditions," it refers to six kinds of objective conditions. The first is walking; the second is standing; the third is sitting; the fourth is lying down; the fifth is doing things; and the sixth is speaking. What is meant by cultivating stopping and contemplation in relation to the objective sphere? As for what is referred to as "the objective sphere," it refers to the sphere of the six [sense] objects. The first is the eye in relation to forms; the second is the ear in relation to sounds; the third is the nose in relation to fragrances; the fourth is the tongue in relation to flavors; the fifth is the body in relation to tangibles; and the sixth is the intellectual mind in relation to dharmas [as objects of mind]. It is based on the practitioner's cultivation of stopping and contemplation in relation to these twelve phenomena that one speaks of the cultivation of stopping and contemplation as one moves through objective conditions and as one relates to the objective sphere. First, walking. At times when one is involved in walking one should bring forth this thought, "For what purpose do I now wish to walk?" If it is on account of being directed by afflictions or unwholesome or neutral matters, then one should not walk. If it is not an instance of being directed by the afflictions and if it is for the sake of a matter which produces wholesome benefits and which is in accord with the Dharma, then one should walk. How does one go about cultivating stopping while walking? If one is walking one maintains the awareness that it is on account of walking that there may exist all of the dharmas of the afflictions, of good and bad, and so forth. If one is completely aware that the mind engaged in walking as well as all dharmas present in walking cannot be gotten at, then the false-thinking mind ceases. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. How does one go about cultivating contemplation while walking? One should bring forth this thought, "It is on account of the mind that one moves the body. As a result one has that forward movement referred to as "walking." It is on account of walking that there may then exist all of the dharmas of the afflictions, of good and bad, and so forth." One should then immediately turn around [one's attention] and contemplate the mind which is engaged in walking. One does not perceive any characteristic appearance in it. One should then realize that the one who walks as well as all dharmas involved in walking are both ultimately empty and still. This constitutes the cultivation of contemplation. Second, standing. If one is standing one should bring forth this thought, "On account of what endeavor do I now wish to stand?" If it is for the

sake of the afflictions or unwholesome or neutral endeavors that one stands then one should not stand. If it is for the sake of good and beneficial endeavors then one should stand. How does one go about cultivating stopping while standing? If one is standing one maintains the awareness that it is on account of standing that there may then exist all of the dharmas of the afflictions, of good and bad and so forth. If one is completely aware that the mind engaged in standing as well as all of the dharmas involved in standing cannot be gotten at then the false-thinking mind ceases. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. How does one go about cultivating contemplation while standing? One should bring forth this thought, "It is on account of the mind that the body is brought to a stop. As a result one refers to "standing." It is on account of this standing that there may then exist all of the dharmas of the afflictions, of good and bad, and so forth." One should then turn back one's attention and contemplate the mind engaged in standing. One does not perceive any characteristic appearance. One should then realize that the one who stands as well as all of the dharmas involved in standing are ultimately empty and still. This constitutes the cultivation of contemplation. Third, sitting. If one is sitting one should bring forth this thought, "On account of what endeavor do I now wish to sit?" If it is for the sake of the afflictions or unwholesome or neutral matters, then one should not sit. If it is for the sake of good and beneficial endeavors then one should sit. How does one go about cultivating stopping while sitting? If one is engaged in sitting then one should be completely aware that it is on account of sitting that one may then have all of the dharmas of the afflictions, of good and bad and so forth. However, there is not one single dharma which can be gotten at. If [one realizes this] then false thoughts will not arise. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. How does one go about cultivating contemplation while sitting? One should bring forth this thought, "It is on account of what is thought by the mind that one sets up the body with the legs folded up. It is on account of this that one may have all of the dharmas of good, of bad, and so forth. Thus one refers to "sitting." In turning around the attention to contemplate the mind engaged in sitting one does not perceive any characteristic appearance. One should then realize that the one who sits as well as all dharmas involved in sitting are ultimately empty and still. This constitutes the cultivation of contemplation. Fourth, lying down. When one is lying down one should bring forth this thought, "On account of what endeavor do I now wish to lie down?" If it is on account of some matter which is unwholesome or neglectful, then one should not lie down. If it is for the sake of bringing the four great elements into adjustment and harmony, then one ought to lie down like the king of the lions. How does one go about cultivating stopping when lying down? If one is going to sleep then one ought to become completely aware that on account of lying down there may be all manner of dharmas of good, bad, and so forth. However, there is not one single dharma which can be gotten at. If [one remains aware of this] then false thinking will not arise. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. How does one go about cultivating contemplation when lying down? One should bring forth this thought, "It is on account of becoming worn out and exhausted that one then becomes beclouded and dim and then lets loose of the six sense faculties. It is on account of this that one may then have all of the dharmas of the afflictions, of good and bad, and so forth." One should then turn back one's attention and contemplate the mind.

One does not perceive any characteristic appearance in it. One should then realize that the one who lies down as well as all of the dharmas involved in lying down are ultimately empty and still. This constitutes the cultivation of contemplation. Fifth, engaging in actions. When one is engaging in actions one should bring forth this thought: "On account of what matter do I now wish to perform engage in an action such as this?" If it is for the sake of matters which are unwholesome, neutral, and so forth, then one should not act. If it is for the sake of good and beneficial matters, then one should act. How does one go about cultivating stopping in the midst of engaging in actions? If one is involved in carrying out actions, then one should be completely aware that it is on account of engaging in actions that there may then exist all of the dharmas of good, bad, and so forth. However, there is not one single dharma which can be gotten at. If [one becomes aware of this] then false thoughts will not arise. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. What is meant by cultivating contemplation while engaging in actions? One should bring forth this thought: "It is on account of the mind's controlling the movement of the body and hands that one engages in endeavors. It is because of this that there may come to exist all of the dharmas of good, bad, and so forth. Hence the concept termed 'engaging in action.'" One turns back [the attention] and contemplates the mind which engages in actions. One does not perceive any characteristic appearance. One should realize then that the agent of actions as well as all of the dharmas involved in engaging in actions are ultimately empty and still. This constitutes the cultivation of contemplation. Sixth, speaking. When one is involved in speaking one should bring forth this thought: "On account of what matter do I now wish to speak?" If one would thereby follow along with afflictions or if it is for the sake of discussing matters which are unwholesome, neutral, and so forth, then one should not speak. If it is for the sake of good and beneficial matters, then one should speak. What is meant by cultivating stopping in speaking? If one is engaged in speaking one maintains the awareness that on account of this speaking there may then come to exist all of the dharmas of the afflictions, of good and bad, and so forth. One becomes completely aware that the mind which engages in speaking and all dharmas of the afflictions and of good and bad cannot be gotten at. Thus the mind which brings forth false thoughts comes to a rest. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. What is meant by cultivating contemplating in the midst of speaking? One should bring forth this thought: "It is based on the initial and secondary thought of the mind that one provokes the breath to move through the throat, the lips, the tongue, the teeth and the palate. Thus one emits sound as the words of speech. It is because of this speaking that there may then come to exist the dharmas of good, bad, and so forth. Hence the concept termed 'speech.'" One turns back [the attention] and contemplates the mind which engages in speaking. One does not perceive any characteristic appearance. One should then realize that the one who speaks as well as all of the dharmas involved in speaking are ultimately empty and still. This constitutes the cultivation of contemplation. The six concepts involved in the cultivation of stopping and contemplation such as have been set forth above are to be employed in a manner which adapts to what is appropriate and which accords with the exigencies of the moment. In each and every case they involve the five previously-[explained] ideas related to stopping and contemplation [which should be

implemented] in the manner discussed above.(2) Next, the cultivation of stopping and contemplation at the entrances of the six [sense] faculties. First, cultivation of stopping when the eye views forms. Whenever there is the viewing of form it is like the moon [reflected in] water. There is no definite reality involved. If one sees forms with which one is temperamentally agreeable, one does not give rise to desirous affection. If one sees forms to which one is temperamentally opposed, one does not give rise to hateful affliction. If one sees forms to which one is neither opposed nor agreeable one does not give rise to ignorance or any form of chaotic thinking. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. What is meant by the cultivation of contemplation when the eyes view form? One should bring forth this thought: "No matter what is viewed, those very characteristic features are empty and still. How is this the case? Within the sphere of the sense faculty, sense object, space and light, nothing is seen by any of them nor is there any discrimination which takes place. The combination of causes and conditions generates eye consciousness. Next, there occurs the arising of the mind consciousness. It is then immediately able to make distinctions among all of the various types of forms. It is on account of this that there may then come to exist all of the dharmas of the afflictions, good and bad, and so forth." One should immediately turn back [the attention] and contemplate the mind which bears forms in mind. One does not perceive any characteristic appearance. One should then realize that the one who sees as well as all of the other associated dharmas are ultimately empty and still. This constitutes the cultivation of contemplation. Second, the cultivation of stopping when the ear hears sounds. Whichever sounds are heard by the ear, one immediately realizes that the sounds are characterized by being like echoes. If one hears sounds with which one is temperamentally agreeable one does not give rise to an affectionate mind. As for sounds to which one is temperamentally opposed, one does not give rise to a hateful mind. And as for sounds to which one is neither opposed nor agreeable, one does not give rise to a discriminating mind. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. What is meant by the cultivation of contemplation in the hearing of sounds? One should bring forth this thought: "No matter what sound is heard, it is empty and is utterly nonexistent. It is only from the coming together of the sense faculty and the sense object that there is the generation of ear consciousness. Next, the mind consciousness arises and in a forced manner gives rise to discriminations. It is because of this that there may then come to exist all of the dharmas of the afflictions, good and bad, and so forth." One turns back [the attention] and contemplates the mind which hears sounds. One does not perceive any characteristic appearance. One should then realize that the one who hears as well as all of the other associated dharmas are ultimately empty and still. This constitutes contemplation. Third, the cultivation of stopping when the nose smells fragrances. No matter what fragrances are smelled one immediately realizes that they are like flames and are unreal. If one smells fragrances with which one is temperamentally agreeable one does not give rise to a mind characterized by attachment. As for smells to which one is temperamentally opposed one does not give rise to a hateful mind. And as for smells towards which one is neither opposed nor agreeable, one does not bring forth chaotic thinking. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. What is meant by the cultivation of contemplation in the smelling of fragrances? One should

bring forth this thought: "The fragrances which I am now smelling are false, deceptive and unreal. How is this the case? It is because of the coming together of the sense faculty and the sense object that there is then produced the olfactory consciousness. Next, there is the production of the mind consciousness. In a forced manner it seizes upon the characteristics of fragrances. It is because of this that there may then come to exist all of the dharmas of the afflictions, good and bad, and so forth. Hence we have what is termed the smelling of fragrances." One turns back [the attention] and contemplates the mind which smells fragrances. One does not perceive any characteristic appearance. One should then realize that the one who smells fragrances as well as all of the other associated dharmas are ultimately empty and still. This constitutes the cultivation of contemplation. Fourth, the cultivation of stopping when the tongue experiences tastes. No matter what tastes are experienced one immediately realizes that they are like tastes obtained in a dream or a fantasy. If one obtains a marvelous flavor towards which one is temperamentally agreeable one does not give rise to desirous attachment. As for bad tastes towards which one is temperamentally opposed, one does not give rise to a hateful mind. And as for tastes towards which one is neither opposed nor agreeable, one does not give rise to discriminating thoughts on the part of the intellectual mind. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. What is meant by cultivating contemplation when the tongue experiences tastes? One should bring forth this thought: "In reality, the tastes which are now being experienced cannot be gotten at. How is this the case? Both subjectively and objectively the six flavors are in their nature devoid of distinctions. It is because the subject-related tongue organ comes into conjunction with them that gustatory consciousness arises. Next one gives rise to mind consciousness. In a forced manner it seizes upon the characteristics of flavors. It is because of this that there may then come to exist all of the dharmas of the afflictions, good and bad, and so forth." One turns back [the attention] and contemplates the consciousness which takes tastes as its objective conditions. One does not perceive any characteristic appearance. One should then realize that the one who experiences tastes as well as all of the other associated dharmas are ultimately empty and still. This constitutes the cultivation of contemplation. Fifth, the cultivation of stopping when the body experiences tactile sensations. No matter which tactile sensations become the object of awareness one immediately realizes that they are like a reflection, an illusion, or a conjuration, and are unreal. If one experiences a pleasurable tactile sensation to which one is temperamentally agreeable, one does not give rise to desirous attachment. If one experiences painful tactile sensations to which one is temperamentally opposed, one does not give rise to hateful affliction. If one experiences tactile sensations to which one is neither opposed nor agreeable, one does not give rise to thoughts which retain them in mind nor does one engage in making distinctions among them. This constitutes the cultivation of stopping. What is meant by the cultivation of contemplation when the body experiences tactile sensations? One should bring forth this thought: "Lightness and heaviness, coolness and heat, roughness and slickness, and other such dharmas all constitute tactile sensations. The six sections of the body consisting of the head and so forth constitute what is referred to as the body. The nature of tactile sensations is that they are empty and false. The body too is unreal. It is through the coming together of causes and conditions that

there is the arising of physical consciousness. There next arises the mind consciousness which engages in recollective thought and the making of distinctions with regard to the characteristics of pleasure, pain and so forth. On account of this one refers to the experiencing of tactile sensations." One turns back the attention and contemplates the mind which takes tactile sensations as objective conditions. One does not perceive any characteristic appearance. One should then realize that the one who experiences tactile sensations as well as all of the other associated dharmas are ultimately empty and still. This constitutes the cultivation of contemplation. Sixth, the features of the cultivation of stopping and contemplation in the midst of the mind's awareness of dharmas are as already explained at the beginning in the section on sitting. From among the above features relating to the cultivation of stopping and contemplation in dependence upon the six sense faculties one implements whichever ones correspond to [the faculty] one intends to utilize. The five concepts discussed earlier are inherent in each and every one of these situations.⁽³⁾ They have already been extensively detailed herein. Hence we will not now repeat the analysis. If the practitioner is able to cultivate stopping and contemplation at every point as he walks, stands, sits, lies down, sees, hears, experiences awareness, and so forth, then one ought to know that this person truly cultivates the Mahayana Way. As stated in The Great [Perfection of Wisdom] Sutra, "The Buddha told Subhuti, 'If when the bodhisattva walks he is aware of walking, if when he sits he is aware of sitting, and so forth until we come to when he dons the sa.nghaa.tii, gazes or blinks he is single-minded. [And so too it is as] he exits from and enters into dhyana absorption. One should know that this person is to be known as a bodhisattva, [an exemplar] of the Mahayana. Furthermore, if a person is able to cultivate the Great Vehicle in every place and in this manner, this person is the most superior in all the world. He is the most supreme and has no peer. A verse from The Treatise [on the Great Perfection of Wisdom] states: Easefully sitting within the forest, Quiescently extinguishing every ill, Serenely gaining unity of mind,-- This bliss is not the bliss of the heavens. People seek after worldly profit, Renowned attire, fine beds and cushions. This bliss is neither peaceful or secure. In seeking profit there is no satisfaction. The patched-robed one abides in deserted places. Moving and stopping, his mind is always one. Spontaneously employing the clarity of wisdom, He contemplates the reality mark of the dharmas. In all of the different classes of Dharma, All are entered through contemplation of equality. The mind of understanding wisdom is quiescent. Throughout the three realms there are none ranked as peer. [End of Chapter Six] ENDNOTES 1. The four types of deportment are walking, standing, sitting, and lying down. 2. This refers to the five concepts discussed earlier, namely, cultivating stopping and contemplation as means: 1) to counter the coarseness and chaos of the beginner's mind; 2) to counter the disorders of mental "sinking," or "floating;" 3) to accord with whatever is appropriate; 4) to counteract subtle states of mind occurring in meditative absorption; 5) to achieve equal balance in meditative absorption and wisdom. 3. Again, this refers to the five concepts discussed earlier, namely, cultivating stopping and contemplation as means: 1) to counter the coarseness and chaos of the beginner's mind; 2) to counter the disorders of mental "sinking," or "floating;" 3) to accord with whatever is

appropriate; 4) to counteract subtle states of mind occurring in meditative absorption; 5) to achieve equal balance in meditative absorption and wisdom.

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Chapter Seven: The Manifestation of Roots of Goodness

If the practitioner is able in this manner to skillfully cultivate stopping and contemplation, going from the conventional into the contemplation of emptiness, as he sits [in dhyana meditation] his body and mind will become bright and pure. At such time there may occur the development and manifestation of many different sorts of roots of goodness. One must recognize and be aware of them. Now, we explain in brief the signs associated with the manifestation of roots of goodness. There are two different categories. First, the signs associated with the manifestation of external roots of goodness: This refers to the development and manifestation of roots of goodness associated with giving, upholding precepts, filial dutifulness to parents, veneration of seniors, making offerings to the Triple Jewel, listening to and studying [the teachings], and so forth. These are external matters. If one is not engaged in correct cultivation, these may spill over into [and manifest as] demonic states [of mind]. We will not now analyze these in detail. Second, the signs of the manifestation of internal roots of goodness. This refers to the development and manifestation of roots of goodness associated with dhyana absorption Dharma gateways. There are three concepts in this regard. The first, the explanation of the signs of the manifestation of roots of goodness. There are five different categories. First, the signs associated with the manifestation of roots of goodness related to the pathways of the breath. On account of the practitioner's skillfully cultivating stopping and contemplation, the body and mind become regulated correctly and false thinking comes to a halt. Because of this, one becomes aware that his mind gradually enters into meditative absorption. One develops meditative absorptions such as those associated with the desire realm and [specifically], the preliminary ground (anaagamyā, a.k.a. "access concentration").(1) The body and mind become as if they have perished and are empty and quiescent. The mind associated with meditative absorption becomes peaceful and stable. In the midst of this meditative absorption, one does not perceive any appearance whatsoever of a body or a mind. Then afterwards one may continue on through one sitting session or two sitting sessions, and so forth until we come to one day, two days, one month or two months. One may be unable to bring this to a rest and so it may be that one does not retreat from it nor does it disappear. Then in the midst of meditative absorption one may suddenly become aware of the body and mind moving and provoking the manifestation of eight tactile sensations, namely the awareness of physical pain, itching, coldness, heat, lightness, heaviness, roughness, smoothness, and so forth. At that time when there is the manifestation of these dharmas of tactile sensation, the body and mind are peaceful and stabilized. There is an empty and subtle blissfulness. One's happiness and pleasure are pure and indescribable even by simile.

This constitutes signs of the manifestation of roots of goodness related to the awareness of the pathways of breath and the basic dhyana absorption. In the preliminary ground of the desire realm the practitioner suddenly becomes aware of the exiting, entry and duration of the breath and of its moving emptily [in and out] through the hair pores of the entire body. Then one sees with the mind's eye the thirty-six things contained within the body just as when, upon opening up a pantry, one sees all of the sesame, beans, and so forth. The mind becomes greatly startled and delighted. One is quiescent, peaceful and happy. These constitute signs of the manifestation of roots of goodness corresponding to the special ascendant practices associated with the breath.(2) Second, the signs of the manifestation of roots of goodness related to the contemplation of impurity. When the practitioner is immersed in the meditative absorption of the desire realm's preliminary ground his body and mind may become empty and still in the midst of this meditative absorption, [whereupon he may experience the following signs]: He may suddenly observe the physical death of some other man or woman and then following upon that death [he may observe] the bloating and rotting [of that corpse], the presence of worms and the flowing forth of pus. [He may] then observe the whitened bones scattered about. His mind may become affected by sorrow and delight and he may then experience revulsion and abhorrence for that which he had loved. These are signs indicating the manifestation of roots of goodness related to the nine visualizations.(3) Or perhaps in the midst of still meditative absorption he may suddenly observe the impure things inside of the body, [he may observe] someone else's body as bloated and scattered, or [he may observe] his own body as a white skeleton from the head to foot with every one of the bones remaining supported in position by the others. After having seen this phenomenon, the mind of absorption may become peaceful and stable. One may experience a startling awakening to [the fact of] impermanence. One may then develop revulsion and abhorrence for the five objects of desire, and may then desist from attachment to either oneself or other persons. These are signs of the manifestation of roots of goodness related to the liberations.(4) Or perhaps when the mind is immersed in meditative absorption one may observe everything as utterly impure whether it be with regard to one's own body, the bodies of others, flying birds, crawling beasts, clothing, drink, food, dwellings, mountains or forests. These are signs indicating the manifestation of roots of goodness related to [the contemplation of] the great [all-encompassing] impurity. Third, the signs of the manifestation of roots of goodness related to the mind of loving-kindness. If on account of cultivating stopping and contemplation the practitioner succeeds in entering the meditative absorption of the desire realm's preliminary ground, while he is immersed in this meditative absorption, [there may occur the following signs]: He may suddenly bring forth a mind characterized by a lovingly-kind mindfulness of other beings wherein there appear to him signs indicating that persons with whom he has close affinities gain happiness. He may then immediately develop deep meditative absorption wherein his own mind manifests a pure blissful happiness indescribable even by simile. Similar phenomena may occur with regard to people towards whom he has only middling affinities and towards people who have been his enemies and may then extend to all of the beings within the five destinies throughout the ten directions. When he arises from meditative absorption his mind

is blissfully happy such that, no matter whom he sees, his countenance remains constantly harmonious. These are signs of the manifestation of roots of goodness related to the mind of loving-kindness. The signs of the manifestation of the mind of compassion, the mind of sympathetic joy, and the mind of equanimity may all be understood through comparison to this. Fourth, the signs of the manifestation of roots of goodness related to the contemplation of causes and conditions. It may be that on account of cultivating stopping and contemplation the practitioner gains the desire realm's preliminary ground meditative absorption in which the body and mind abide in stillness. He may then suddenly experience the arising of a mind of awakening [characterized by the following signs]: In deliberating upon the causes and conditions of ignorance, karmic formative factors (sa.mskaaras), and so forth [as they interact] throughout the three periods of time he does not perceive the [inherent] existence of either others or a self. He then immediately transcends annihilationism and eternalism, smashes all attachments and views, and gains the peace and security of meditative absorption. Understanding and wisdom manifest. Dharma joy comes forth in his mind and he does not think of any worldly matters. His experience proceeds in this manner to include the five aggregates, the twelve sense fields, and the eighteen sense realms wherein his analytic [realization] extends in the same manner. These are the signs of the manifestation of roots of goodness related to the contemplation of causes and conditions. Fifth, the signs of the manifestation of roots of goodness related to mindfulness of the buddha. It may be that on account of cultivating stopping and contemplation the practitioner gains the desire realm's preliminary ground meditative absorption wherein his body and mind are empty and still [and he experiences the following]: He may immediately bring forth in his mind the inconceivable and ineffable meritorious qualities and major and minor characteristics of the buddha, including all of the ten powers, the fearlessness, the dharmas special to the buddha, the samadhis, the liberations, and other such dharmas, the inconceivable and ineffable superknowledges and [spiritual] transformations, unobstructed eloquences, and the vast benefits [the buddhas] provide to beings. When he brings forth this thought regarding such an incalculable number of inconceivable and ineffable meritorious qualities, he then manifests a mind imbued with affection and reverence, samadhi develops, the body and mind become blissful, pure, peaceful and secure, and become free of any unwholesome characteristics. When he arises from dhyana absorption his body and mind are unencumbered and sharp. He becomes personally aware that these meritorious qualities are lofty and impressive and that they are loved and revered by others. These are signs of the manifestation of roots of goodness related to the mindfulness-of-the-buddha samadhi. Furthermore, in the event that the practitioner gains clarity and purity of body and mind on account of cultivating stopping and contemplation, he may then experience signs of the manifestation [of roots of goodness related to] impermanence, suffering, emptiness, nonexistence of self, impurity, renounceability of the world, or impurity of food. [Or those signs may be related to] deliberative contemplations on death, on separation [from desire], on extinction, mindfulness of the Buddha, of the Dharma, of the Sangha, of the precepts, of renunciation, or of the heavens. [They may be related to] the stations of mindfulness, the right efforts, the foundations of psychic power, the roots, the powers, the constituents of

enlightenment, the Way, emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness (lit. "endeavorlessness"), the six perfections, the [other] paaramitaas, the superknowledges, the transformations, and so forth. [He may experience] signs of the manifestation [of roots of goodness related to] any of the Dharma entryways. [Ideally], these should all be analyzed extensively herein. Hence it states in a sutra: "If one controls the mind [so that it abides] in a single place, there is no endeavor which is not accomplished." Second, "distinguishing between the true and the false" consists of two parts. The first is "articulating the signs of the manifestation of false dhyana absorptions." When the practitioner experiences the manifestation of dhyana absorptions such as discussed above, it may be that on account of the dharmas which have become manifest [he experiences the following]: It may be that the body moves uncontrollably. At times the body may feel heavy as if something was pressing down and smashing it. At times the body may feel light as if it was about to fly. At times it might feel as if it were tied up. At times it may feel as if one were twisting around, being suspended while being cooked. Or at times it may feel as if one were being subjected to boiling or cold. At times one may experience strong heat. Or perhaps one might see all sorts of strange mental states. At times one's mind may become dark and covered over. At times one may bring forth all sorts of evil initial thoughts. Or at times one may bring to mind external scatteredness relating to miscellaneous wholesome endeavors. Or perhaps at times one may experience delight or agitated movement. Or at times one may become worried or preoccupied with sad thoughts. Or perhaps at times one may experience unwholesome tactile sensations whereby the hairs on the body stand on end. Or at times one may become so immensely happy that one is [as if] confused or inebriated. All sorts of deviant dharmas such as these, when manifesting together with dhyana absorption, constitute [signs of] falseness. If one becomes affectionately attached to these deviant meditative absorptions then [one's behavior] corresponds to the dharmas of one of the ninety-five kinds of ghosts and spirits. In the majority of cases one then becomes prone to losing one's mind [of correct determination] and becoming mentally deranged. Sometimes the ghosts, spirits, and other [such beings] become aware that a person has become mentally attached to their dharma and so then increase the intensity of the power [associated with it] such that [the practitioner] then manifests all sorts of deviant meditative absorptions, deviant forms of intelligence, eloquence and spiritual powers whereby he then influences people of the world through deception. When the common foolish person observes this he is of the opinion that [the practitioner] has gained the fruit of [cultivating] the Way. They all believe in and submit to him even though in his mind he has become [attached to] inverted views and even though he practices only the dharma of ghosts and engages in the deception and confusion of [people in] the world. When such a person's life comes to an end he will remain eternally unable to encounter the Buddha and will return to fall down into the path of the ghosts and spirits. If when he has been sitting [in meditative absorption] he has mostly practiced evil dharmas then he will immediately fall into the hells. If when the practitioner cultivates stopping and contemplation he achieves dhyana absorptions like these which are possessed of these signs of falseness he should then immediately get rid of them. How does one get rid of them? If one becomes aware of the presence of falseness and deception, he should establish himself in correctness of mind and

desist from accepting or becoming attached [to these meditative states]. They should then diminish and disappear. If one implements correct contemplation to demolish them, they should immediately become extinguished. Second, "articulating the signs of the manifestation of true and correct dhyana absorption." When the practitioner is engaged in sitting meditation and there manifest dhyana absorptions wherein there are none of the above-described false dharmas [he should observe the following signs]: When each and every dhyana absorption manifests, one is immediately aware of its corresponding to [right] meditative absorption. One experiences emptiness, brightness, and purity. Internally, one's mind is delighted. One feels tranquil and blissful. There are no situations in which one's [mind] is covered over. The mind of goodness comes forth and manifests. One's faith and reverence increase and grow. One's mirror of wisdom becomes sharply focused and clear. The body and mind are supple and pliant. One experiences a subtle and marvelous emptiness and quiescence. One develops a revulsion for and abhorrence of [the ways of] the world. There is nothing [which one feels needs] to be done and one is free of desires. In going forth and entering into [meditative absorption] one is sovereignly independent. These are the signs of the manifestation of correct dhyana absorptions. Just as when working with evil people, one constantly encounters mutual aggravation, whereas when working together with good people, one eventually observes their fine points, so too it is in distinguishing between the signs inherent in deviant versus correct dhyana absorption. Third, "clarifying the use of stopping and contemplation to increase the growth of roots of goodness." When one is sitting [in meditation] and roots of goodness manifest, one should employ the two dharmas of stopping and contemplation to cause them to increase and advance. If it is appropriate to employ stopping then one uses stopping to cultivate them. If it is appropriate to employ contemplation then one uses contemplation to cultivate them. One does this in a manner which accords with the previous discussions. This constitutes a summary explanation of the major ideas [related to this topic]. 1. Anaagamya = Wei-dao di. DFB - 817a = wei-jr ding DFB - 816b. 2. Awareness of the entry of the breath, awareness of the exiting of the breath, awareness of the length of the breath, awareness of the breath pervading the body, experiencing joy, experiencing bliss, and mind's generation of bliss are all included within the "sixteen special ascendant practices" (shr-lyou te-sheng). See DFB - 213c. 3. The nine visualizations are: 1) The bloated corpse; 2) The bluish corpse; 3) The damaged corpse; 4) The The blood-smearred corpse; 5) The purulent, rotting corpse; 6) The corpse which has been gnawed at [by scavenging animals and insects; 7) The scattered corpse; 8) The skeletal corpse; and 9) The burned corpse. See DFB-172a-b. 4. The eight liberations (ba bei-she a.k.a. ba jye-two) . See DFB-136a-c.

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Chapter Eight: Recognizing the Work of Demons

In Sanskrit, the term is "mara." In the language of the Ch'in, it is rendered as "killer." They plunder the practitioner's merit wealth and slay the wisdom life of the practitioner. As for its consequently being referred to as "the work of demons," just as the Buddha takes as his work the use of merit and wisdom to liberate beings that they might enter nirvana, the demons take as their work the continual destruction of being's roots of goodness that they might be caused to flow along and turn about in the realm of birth and death. If one is able to establish the mind in the correct Way, it therefore becomes a case of "where the way is lofty one knows then that the demons will flourish." Hence it is still necessary to be skillful in the recognition of the work of demons. There are only four categories: First, the affliction demons; second, the demons of the [five] aggregates, [twelve] sense bases, and [eighteen] sense fields; third, the death demons; and fourth, the ghost-and-spirit demons. Three of them are normal worldly phenomena as well as products of a given individual's mind. One must get rid of them by rectifying one's own mind, thus exorcizing them. We will not describe them in detail just now. As for the signs of the ghost-and-spirit demons, these matters must be understood. We shall now discuss them briefly. There are three categories of ghost-and-spirit demons: [First, the sprites, goblins, and creatures of the twelve {daily} horary time periods; second, "dwei-ti" demons; and third, demonic-affliction {demons}]. As for the first, the sprites, goblins, and creatures of the twelve [daily] horary time periods, they transform into all sorts of different shapes and forms, perhaps creating the form of a young girl or an old man and so on, including fearsome bodies and so forth not limited to any single type. They aggravate and deceive the practitioner. All of these sprites and goblins desire to afflict practitioners. Each of them comes at a time corresponding to its appointed hour. It is necessary to become skillful in distinguishing and recognizing them. If they come during the yin time period [of 3 to 5 a.m.], they are certainly tigers or other such creatures. If they come during the mao period [of 5 to 7 a.m.], they are certainly rabbits, deer, and so forth. If they come during the chen period [of 7 to 9 a.m.], they are certainly dragons, turtles, and so forth. If they come during the ssu time period [of 9 to 11 a.m.], they are certainly snakes, pythons, and so forth. If they come during the wu period [of 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.], they are certainly horses, mules, camels, and so forth. If they come during the wei time period [of 1 to 3 p.m.], they are certainly sheep, and so forth. If they come during the shen time period [of 3 to 5 p.m.], they are certainly monkeys, baboons, and so forth. If they come during the you time period [of 5 to 7 p.m.], they are certainly chickens, crows, and so forth. If they come during the syu time period [of 7 to 9 p.m.], they are certainly dogs, wolves, and so forth. If they come during the hai time period [of 9 to 11 p.m.], they are certainly pigs and such. If they come during the dze time period [of 11 p.m. to 1 a.m.], they are certainly rats and such. If they come during the chou time period [of 1 to 3 a.m.], they are certainly oxen and such. If the practitioner observes that they always come at this particular time, he may then know which creature goblin it is. He should then declare its name to scold and rebuke it whereupon it should retreat and disappear. Second, the dwei-ti ghosts. They too engage in all sorts of aggravations which they visit upon practitioners. Sometimes they manifest like insects or scorpions which attack a person's head or face, producing a drilling and piercing sensation attended by intense bright light. Sometimes they strike or constrict a person's

sides or perhaps suddenly clutch a person in their embrace, or sometimes they speak, make noises, howl, and even appear in the forms of beasts. These different signs which they manifest in coming to aggravate the practitioner are not limited to any single one. One should recognize them immediately and single-mindedly close the eyes, blocking them from view, and then scold them, saying these [or other such] words, "I now recognize you. You are a shr-hwo (this is the name of the cassowary bird), an evil-smelling ji-jr from Jambudvipa who steals one's purity in the precepts. You are under the sway of deviant views and delight in destroying the ranks of the precept-observers. I am now an upholder of the precepts and will never fear you." If one is a monastic, he should recite the precept texts. If one is a householder, he should recite the three refuges, the five precepts, and so forth. The ghost will then be driven off and will crawl away. All sorts of other such appearances which present difficulties and which aggravate people as well as other techniques for cutting them off and getting rid of them are all just as extensively described in the sutras on dhyana meditation.

Third, afflictions inflicted by demons. Typically, these demons transformationally create three kinds of phenomenal states within the sphere of the five sense objects which they bring forth to demolish the wholesome mind: In the case of the first type wherein they create disagreeable phenomena, these appear as fearsome manifestations of the five sense objects which cause a person to be filled with terror. In the case of the second type wherein they create agreeable phenomena, these appear as desirable manifestations of the five sense objects which cause a person to become mentally attached. In the case of the third type which involves phenomena which are neither agreeable nor disagreeable, these appear as neutral manifestations of the five sense objects which distract and confuse the practitioner. On account of this the demons are also referred to as "killers," are also referred to as "floral arrows," and are also referred to as "the five-fold arrows." This is on account of their "shooting" a person [where he is vulnerable] in the five sense faculties. Within "name-and-form" they create all sorts of phenomenal states which deceive and confuse the practitioner. In a case where they create agreeable phenomenal states they may manifest in the form of parents, siblings, buddhas, attractive men or women, or as other desirable phenomena which cause a person to become mentally attached. In a case where they create disagreeable phenomenal states they may manifest in the forms of tigers, lions, or rak.sas or in all sorts of other fearsome appearances by means of which they come forth to terrorize the practitioner. In a case where they create phenomenal states which are neither disagreeable nor agreeable, they may [manifest] ordinary phenomena which they employ to distract and confuse the mind of the practitioner, thus causing the loss of dhyana absorption. Hence they are referred to as "demons." They may also create all sorts of fine or terrible sounds, or may create all sorts of fragrant or stinking smells, or may create all sorts of fine or terrible tastes, or may create all sorts of anguishing or blissful phenomenal states which they bring forth to inflict upon a person's body. These are all the work of demons. Their signs are multifarious. We will not now describe them all. To bring up and speak of that which is essential, wherever there is the creation of all sorts of phenomena among the five sense objects which aggravate and confuse a person, causing the loss of good dharmas and the arising of affliction, these are all [the work of] the demon armies. They are able to employ them to destroy the normal

state of the Buddha's Dharma and to cause the arising of all sorts of Way-blocking dharmas such as desire, worry, anger, sleepiness, and so forth. This is as described in a verse from a sutra: Desire is the foremost of your armies. Worry is the second. Hunger and thirst are the third army. Craving is the fourth. Sleepiness is the fifth of your armies. Fearfulness is the sixth. Doubt and remorse are the seventh army. Anger is the eighth. Offering and empty praises are the ninth. Pridefulness and arrogance are the tenth. Numerous armies such as these subdue and bury the monastic. Using the power of dhyana and wisdom, I smash all of these armies of yours, and after achieving the Way of the Buddha, cross over all beings to liberation. Once the practitioner has recognized the work of demons he should immediately drive them away. There are two methods for driving them away: The first involves using stopping to drive them off. Whenever one observes any of the external evil demon states, knowing that they are false and deceptive, one refrains from becoming either worried or fearful. Nor does one grasp at them or retreat from them or indulge in any erroneous calculations or distinctions with regard to them. Placing the mind at rest so that it is quiescent, they should naturally disappear on their own accord. The second involves using contemplation to drive them off. If one observes any of the different kinds of demon states similar to those discussed above and one finds that even though one employs stopping they nonetheless do not go away, one should then immediately turn back one's attention and contemplate the observing mind. One does not perceive any place [in which it abides]. What then is it that is being afflicted? When one contemplates in this manner, as one continues on with [the process] they should disappear. If they are slow to respond and thus do not go away one should rectify one's own mind and refrain from generating thoughts of terror. One should not even fear for the loss of one's own physical life. One should rectify one's thought so that it does not move. One should recognize that the suchness of the demon realm is just the suchness of the Buddha realm and [should thus recognize] that if the suchness of the demon realm and the suchness of the Buddha realm are a single suchness, there cannot be two [different] suchnesses. If one understands completely in this way, [one will understand that] there is nothing in the demon realm to be relinquished and nothing in the Buddha realm to be seized upon. Of its own accord, the Dharma of the Buddha should then naturally manifest before one, whereupon the demon state should naturally dissolve and disappear. Additionally, if one observes that a demon state does not disappear, one need not give rise to distress. If one observes that it does disappear, one must not become joyful, either. Why is this? We have not yet observed a case of a person sitting in dhyana absorption who has seen the demon transform into a tiger or a wolf which has then [actually] come forth and eaten the person. Nor have we yet observed a case of a demon transforming into a man or woman which has [actually] come forth and acted as a husband or a wife. It is through the taking on of a particular illusory transformation on the part of a foolish person who fails to completely understand it that the mind consequently becomes alarmed or even goes so far as to give rise to desirous attachment. On account of this, the mind becomes confused, one loses one's meditative absorption and one may even become insane. One brings about one's own calamity. In every case, it is a matter of the practitioner bringing on a calamity through the absence of wisdom. It is not a case of something actually brought about by the demon. If demon

states occur which aggravate and disturb the practitioner and which don't go away even after months and years have passed, one must simply make one's own mind upright so that the rectitude of one's own thoughts is solid. [In doing this] one should not spare even one's own physical life. One must not be filled with distress or fearfulness. One should recite the demon-counteracting mantras found within the Great Vehicle Vaipulya (fang-deng) sutras. One should recite them silently and abide in mindfulness of the Triple Jewel. Even when one has emerged from dhyana absorption one should still recite the mantras as a self-protective measure. One should perform repentances, should maintain a sense of shame and a sense of blame, and should also recite the praatimok.sa. The deviant is unable to interfere with whatsoever is [actually] orthodox. After a time it will fade away on its own accord. The work of demons is of many different sorts. A [complete] discussion of it would be endless. One must be skillful in recognizing it. Hence the novice practitioner must draw near to a good and knowledgeable advisor specifically because there can occur difficult situations such as these. These demons may enter into a person's mind whereupon they become able to cause the practitioner's mind and spirit to become crazy and disturbed so that he becomes overcome with joyfulness or distress. On account of this, a calamity can occur which could even lead to one's death. At times they may cause one to gain deviant dhyana absorptions, wisdom, spiritual powers, dhaara.niis, or even cause one to speak Dharma and engage in teaching and conversion whereby others all have faith and submit. In the end one may do damage to other people's wholesome, world-transcending endeavors and may even destroy the correct Dharma. The various strange phenomena of this sort are not of a single type. In describing them, they are endless. Now, we only briefly explain their essential features for the sake of causing the practitioner to avoid erroneously taking on phenomenal states [which arise] when sitting in dhyana absorption. To speak of it in a way which grasps what is essential, if one desires to drive away the deviant and return to the orthodox one should contemplate the reality mark of all dharmas. If one skillfully cultivates stopping and contemplation, there is no deviant phenomenon which will not be demolished. Hence The Treatise [on the Great Perfection of Wisdom] states: "Aside from the reality mark of all dharmas, everything else is demonic phenomena." This is as described in a verse: If one engages in discriminating recollective thought, This is just the net of the maaras. If one does not move and refrains from discriminations, This then is the seal of Dharma. [End of Section Eight]

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Chapter Nine: The Treatment of Disorders

When the practitioner establishes his mind in the cultivating of the Way, it may be that there develop disorders related to the four great elements. On account of the present use of the contemplative mind, the "drum" of the breath may instigate the activation of originally-existing disorders. Sometimes it happens that one is unable to skillfully and appropriately adjust the three

factors of body, mind and breath. As a result, pathological calamities may occur due to interferences between the internal and the external situations. Now, as for the dharma of sitting in dhyana absorption, if one is able to skillfully apply the mind, then the four hundred and four kinds of disorders will naturally be gotten rid of or cured. If, however, one fails in the correct placement of the mind, then the four hundred and four kinds of disorders may arise on account of that. Therefore, whether one is engaged in practice oneself, or whether one is teaching others, one must become skilled in recognizing the causes of disorders. One must know well the methods for treating disorders related to the subjective mind engaged in sitting [meditation]. If someday one activates a disorder, it may not simply be a matter of developing an obstruction to practice of the Way, it may be that one has to contemplate the loss of this one great life. Now, in the explanation of the treatment of disorders there are two ideas [which must be set forth]. First one explains the signs which arise when disorders manifest. Secondly one explains the methods employed in the treatment of disorders. First, the explanation of the signs which arise when disorders manifest. Although there are many different species of disorders which may manifest, when set forth in brief, they do not go beyond two categories. The first are the signs related to the increase or decrease in the four great elements. If the great element of earth becomes excessive, then there may be swelling, obstruction, submersion, or heaviness, and the body may become emaciated. One hundred and one maladies of this sort may arise. If the great element of earth becomes excessive, then there may be the production of the thick and thin disease-related fluids and there may be edema and "fullness." Food and drink may not digest, the abdomen may be painful, there may be diarrhea, and one hundred and one different types of maladies may arise. If the great element of fire becomes excessive, then there may be strong fever in which steaming heat [alternates] with coldness. The joints may all become painful. The respiration, urination and defecation may not occur with normal ease and there may occur one hundred and one different maladies of this sort. Hence a scripture states, "When a single great element is out of adjustment, one hundred and one kinds of disorders may arise. When the four great elements are out of adjustment, four hundred and four disorders may all be activated at one time." When the disorders associated with the four great elements manifest, each of them possesses a characteristic appearance. One should examine [one's situation in this regard] when one is sitting and even during one's dreams. Second, the signs which occur when the five "dzang" organs develop maladies. In the case where a malady has developed from [a cause associated with] the heart, the body may become either cold or hot and there may be headaches or such symptoms as dryness of the mouth on account of the heart's serving as the ruler of the mouth. In the case where a malady has developed from [a cause associated with] the lungs, the body may become edematous, the four limbs may become aggravatingly painful, the heart may become depressed, or the nose may become stopped up, and so forth. This [latter symptomology] is on account of the lungs' serving as the ruler of the nose. In the case where a malady has developed from [a cause associated with] the liver, there are usually no joyful thoughts. One may be distressed, worried, or unhappy. One may have melancholy thoughts or anger. The head may ache, the eyes may become dim, blurred, or dull. This [latter symptomology] is on account of the liver's serving

as the ruler of the eyes. In the case where a malady has developed from [a cause associated with] the spleen, in the body and on the face, a traveling wind goes throughout the body [causing] minor aching, itching, and pain, and food and drink seem to have lost their flavor. This [latter symptom] is on account of the spleen's serving as the ruler of the tongue. In the case where a malady has developed from [a cause associated with] the kidneys, the throat may incline towards feeling choked or obstructed, the abdomen may become distended, and the ears may become hard of hearing. This [latter symptom] is on account of the kidneys' serving as the ruler of the ears. The disorders produced from the five dzang organs are of many different sorts. Each of them presents its own particular signs. One will be able to understand [one's particular situation] through examining it while one is sitting and even during one's dreams. The causality involved in pathological maladies associated with the four great elements and the five dzang organs are not limited to a single type. The symptoms are of many different varieties. They cannot be completely described. If the practitioner wishes to cultivate the Dharma entryway of stopping and contemplation, perhaps there may be maladies which arise. One should become skillful in recognizing their causal bases. These two categories of disorder may both be activated through either internal or external [causes]. In the case of injury from external cold, wind or heat, food and drink may not digest properly and so the disorder may manifest through both of the avenues [of the elements and the organs]. One should know then that this has been activated on account of external [causes]. In the case where one causes maladies to arise in both places through incorrect adjustment of the mind, through contradictory and unorthodox contemplative practice, or through not understanding appropriateness in the give-and-take required when the dharmas of meditative absorption are manifesting, these are instances of pathological symptoms manifesting on account of internal [causes]. Additionally, there are three different categories of causes and conditions for becoming afflicted with disorders: The first consists of excesses and deficiencies in the four great elements and five dzang organs as discussed earlier. The second consists of disorders gotten through the actions of ghosts and spirits. The third consists of disorders gotten as a result of karmic retribution. Disorders such as these are very easily cured if they are treated immediately when first contracted. If they go on for a long time, then the pathology becomes established. If the body becomes emaciated and the disorder becomes bound in place then, in the treatment of it, it may be difficult to cure. Second, explaining the methods for treating the disorders. Having deeply understood the origins of a disorder's arising and manifestations, one should implement a method for treating it. The methods employed in the treatment of disorders are of many types. To bring up those which are essential, they do not go beyond the two skillful means of stopping and contemplation. How does one use stopping as a treatment for the symptoms of a disorder? There are masters who say that if one simply establishes the mind in stopping at the site of the disorder one will be immediately able to cure the disorder. Why is this? The mind is the ruler of this one period of effect-phase retribution. This is just as whenever a king goes somewhere, the bands of rebels immediately scatter. Next, there are masters who say that one inch below the navel is known as the udaana. This refers to what we know as the "dan tyan." (lit. "the field [for cultivating] the pill [of immortality].") [They

state that] if one is able to stop the mind and guard [its position] at this location without becoming scattered, then after one has done this for a long time, then in most cases, there will be that which is remedied. There are [other] masters who say that if one constantly anchors the mind's [attention] beneath the feet without regard to whether one is walking, standing, or lying down to sleep, one will be able to cure disorders. Why is this? This is because it is on account of non-regulation of the four great elements that most illnesses occur. This is brought about by the mind's consciousness becoming anchored in a higher position, thus causing the four great elements to become unregulated. If one anchors the mind below, then the four great elements will naturally become appropriately adjusted and the various disorders will be gotten rid of. There are masters who state that one need only realize that all dharmas are empty and that nothing whatsoever exists. If one refrains from seizing upon the symptoms of illness while quiescently abiding in stopping, then in most cases there will be that which is cured. Why is this? This is because the mind's recollective thought pumps up the four great elements and therefore disorders arise. If one puts the mind to rest in harmony and happiness the various disorders will then be cured. Hence The Vimalakiirti Sutra states, "What is it that constitutes the origin of disease? It is the so-called 'manipulation of conditions.' How does one cut off the manipulation of conditions? This is done through what is referred to as 'non-attainment on the part of the mind.'" All sorts of explanations such as these which promote using stopping to treat the symptoms of disease are not limited to just a single type. Hence one should understand that through skillful cultivation of the dharma of stopping one is able to treat a multitude of disorders. Next, the explanation of using contemplation to treat disorders. There are masters who state that one need only engage in contemplation which employs the mind's [visualizing] thought while also employing six kinds of breath to treat disorders. This is just a case of contemplation being able to treat disorders. What are the six kinds of breath? The first is blowing (chwei). The second is exhaling (hu). The third is mirthful tittering (syi). The fourth is puffing (he). The fifth is drawn-out breathing (syu). The sixth is normal breathing (sz).(1) These six kinds of breath are all created within the lips and mouth and are a skillful means employed by the visualizing mind as one turns to the side. They are done in a soft and subtle manner. A verse states: The heart belongs to "he" and the kidneys belong to "chwei." That the spleen is "hu" and the lungs are "sz" is known to all the sages. When the liver heats up the "syu" word comes forth. Wherever the Triple Warmer is blocked, one need only say "syi." There are masters who say that if one is skillful in using contemplative visualizations in implementing twelve different kinds of breath one is able to treat a multitude of maladies. The first is an ascending breath. The second is a descending breath. The third is a "filling" breath. The fourth is a burning breath. The fifth is a breath of extended length. The sixth is a destructive breath. The seventh is a warm breath. The eighth is a cool breath. The ninth is a forcefully exhaled breath. The tenth is a "retained" breath. The eleventh is a harmonious breath. The twelfth is a restorative breath. All twelve of these breaths arise from the visualizing mind. We now briefly explain the counteractive features of the twelve types of breath. The ascending breath counters sinking and heaviness. The descending breath counteracts emptiness and suspendedness. The "filling" breath counteracts emaciation.

The burning breath counteracts distention. The breath of extended length counteracts injury through wasting away. The "destructive" breath counteracts excessive repletion. The warm breath counteracts coldness. The cold breath counteracts heat. The forcefully exhaled breath counteracts obstructions which do not open up. The "retained" breath counteracts shaking. The harmonious breath counteracts disharmony in the four great elements. The restorative breath fortifies deterioration in the four great elements. If one is skillful in using these kinds of breath one may be able to treat a multitude of maladies. If one extrapolates from this one will be able to reach an understanding. There are masters who say that if one is skillful in employing visualizing contemplations in the sphere of the conventional one will be able to treat a multitude of disorders. For instance if a person is afflicted with coldness one may visualize the fire energy arising within the body and then be able to counteract the coldness. This accords with the Agama Sutra's extensive discussion of seventy-two secret therapeutic techniques. There are masters who say that one need only employ stopping and contemplation to carry out investigative analyses within the body [so as to realize that] the disorders of the four great elements cannot be gotten at and that the disorders of the mind cannot be gotten at. Thus the multitude of disorders will then be cured of themselves. There are all sorts of explanations such as these whereby one employs contemplation to treat disorders. Their implementations differ. However, if one realizes well their meanings they all may be able to treat disorders. One should understand that if one realizes well the meanings inherent in the two techniques of stopping and contemplation, there is no disorder which will not be cured thereby. However, the faculties and potential of people of the present age are shallow and dull. When they carry out these contemplative visualizations, they often fail to succeed. Thus they do not circulate widely in the world. As an additional point, one must not go beyond these techniques to pursue the study of energy-manipulation skills or diets requiring desisting from cereal grains. It is feared that one will then develop heterodox views. Mineral and herbal medicines can be useful in the treatment of disease. They too may be consumed [for this purpose]. If it is a case of a disorder caused by ghosts one should employ a forceful mind in the application of mantras, using them as a means to help with the treatment. If it is a case of a disorder brought on by karmic retribution, then it is essential to cultivate merit and [purifying] repentances. The malady will then disappear. In the case of these two types of methods for the treatment of disorders, where a person has realized well a single concept he may share his own practice experiences with others, how much the more is this acceptable where one has reached a complete and penetrating realization. However, if one has no knowledge of any of this then a disorder may arise for which there is no treatment. Then not only would this constitute a wasting away of one's cultivation of right Dharma, but one fears it might also be a case of one's very life being in danger. How then could one employ one's own practice experience as a basis for teaching others? Therefore, a person who wishes to cultivate stopping and contemplation must well understand the techniques for treating disorders which lie within the province of one's own mind. Those techniques are not limited to a single approach. The realization of the concept is something which is particular to each person. How then could one be able to transcribe such a thing in writing? Furthermore, when one applies one's mind to the treatment of disorders while

engaged in sitting meditation, it is still essential to also include ten dharmas of which there are none which fail to provide benefit. The ten dharmas are: First, faith; second, utilization; third, diligence; fourth, staying constantly focused on the [selected] objective condition; fifth, distinguishing the causality of the disorder; sixth, skillful means; seventh, long-enduring practice; eighth, understanding selection and relinquishing; ninth, upholding and protecting; and tenth, avoiding obstacles. What is meant by "faith"? This refers to having faith that this technique is certainly able to cure the disorder. What is meant by "utilization"? This refers to constant utilization at all times. What is meant by "diligence"? This refers to utilization of the technique in a focused, intense and unceasing manner wherein one takes the achievement of a cure as the standard [for finally desisting]. What is meant by "staying focused on the objective condition"? This refers to the subtle mind abiding in reliance on the dharma in every single thought-moment while not straying off onto different objective conditions. What is meant by "distinguishing the causality of the disorder"? This is as discussed above. What is meant by "skillful means"? This refers to being skillful while not failing in appropriateness as one brings to perfection subtle meditative respiration, application of the mind, and objective visualizations. What is meant by "long-enduring practice"? This means that if when one utilizes a technique and does not gain immediate benefits from it, one ignores the passage of days or months while continuing to be constant and unfailing in carrying on the practice. What is meant by "understanding selection and relinquishment"? This means that where one becomes aware of benefits [in a given technique] one is then diligent whereas where one discovers harmfulness [in a given technique] one immediately relinquishes it. One is extremely subtle in the turning of the mind to the task of making adjustments and implementing treatments. What is meant by upholding and protecting? This means that one is skillful in recognizing the [potential] interference threatened by [straying off onto] different objective conditions. What is meant by avoiding obstacles? This means that if one realizes some benefits [in one's practice] one does not broadcast it to others, whereas where one has not yet seen any harmfulness [in a particular technique] one refrains from developing doubts and slanders. If one relies upon these ten dharmas in the application of treatment it will definitely be efficacious and [one's efforts] will not have been in vain. [End of section nine] End Notes 1. Dhyana Master Bao Jing cautions the reader to not rely on the actual meaning of the character so much as on intoning the sound of the character while exhaling very subtly and performing the related visualization. He refers us to an extended discussion of this technique in the mwo-he jr-gwan.

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Chapter Ten: Realization of the Fruits [of Cultivating the Way]

When the practitioner cultivates stopping and contemplation in this manner he may be able to realize that in every case all dharmas arise from the mind and are empty due to the falseness and

insubstantiality of causes and conditions. Because he realizes that they are empty he is unable to get at [any reality] in the names and characteristics of any dharma. This constitutes the stopping achieved through the comprehension of truth. At such a time, one does not perceive any fruit of buddhahood above which may be sought after nor does one perceive any beings below which could be delivered to liberation. This constitutes moving from the conventional into the contemplation of emptiness. It is also the contemplation of the two truths, is also [a function of] the wisdom eye, and is also the wisdom which comprehends everything. If one abides in this contemplation one falls onto the ground of the Hearers and Pratyekabuddhas. Thus, [The Lotus] Sutra states: "The assembly of Hearers and such sighed to themselves and said, 'If we hear of the purification of buddhalands and of the teaching and transforming of beings, our minds are not pleased. Why is this? All dharmas are empty and still. They are neither produced nor destroyed and are neither great nor small. There are no outflows nor is there anything done. Having deliberated in this fashion we do not generate any joy or happiness [in these dharmas].'" One should realize that if one perceives "non-doing" and [takes that to be] entry into the correct station [of the Way] such a person will never be able to generate the mind directed toward samyak-sambodhi. This is a case of failure to perceive the buddha nature on account of excessive [emphasis on] the power of meditative absorption. The bodhisattva perfects all of the buddha dharmas for the sake of all beings. He should not seize upon or become attached to "non-doing" and thus bring himself to quiescent extinction. At such a time one should cultivate going from the empty into the contemplation of the conventional. Then one ought to carefully contemplate [and realize] that although the nature of the mind is empty, when one abides in the dual realm of conditions one is still able to bring forth all dharmas just as if they were illusory transformations. Although they are devoid of any fixed reality, there still do exist different characteristic distinctions in the sphere of seeing, hearing, awareness, knowing, and so forth. When the practitioner contemplates in this manner, although he realizes that all dharmas are ultimately empty and still, he is nonetheless able to cultivate all kinds of practices in the midst of emptiness. It is just as if he were planting a tree in empty space. One is still able to distinguish the faculties of beings and on account of the incalculable number of [individual] natures and desires, one is then able to proclaim an incalculable number of different dharmas. If one is able to perfect unobstructed eloquence then one will be able to benefit the beings of the six destinies. This constitutes the stopping associated with skillful means which accord with conditions. This then is a moving from the empty into the contemplation of the conventional. It is also the evenly balanced contemplation, is also the [function of] the dharma eye, and is also the wisdom which comprehends the varieties of the Way (dao-jung jr). If one abides in this contemplation, on account of an excessive [emphasis on the] power of wisdom, although one perceives the buddha nature, still, one does not clearly and completely understand it. Although the bodhisattva may perfect these two kinds of contemplations, this still constitutes a skillful means contemplation entryway. It is not the case that it constitutes correct contemplation. Hence [The Bodhisattva Necklace] Sutra states: "The previous two categories are paths of skillful means. It is because of the contemplation of these two emptinesses(1) that one succeeds in entering the contemplation of

the primary meaning of the Middle Way. One engages in simultaneous illumination of the two truths, [one perceives] every single thought-moment as quiescent extinction, and one naturally flows on into the sea of sarvaj~na.(2) If a bodhisattva wishes to perfect all of the buddha dharmas in a single thought-moment he should cultivate the stopping which distinguishes the two extremes and should carry it out within the correct contemplation of the Middle Way." How does one cultivate the correct contemplation? If one completely comprehends that the nature of the mind is neither true nor conventionally existent (lit. "false") and if one puts to rest the mind which takes truth and conventional existence as objective conditions, this constitutes correctness. If one truly contemplates the nature of mind as neither empty nor conventionally existent while still not refuting those dharmas which are either empty or conventionally existent, and if one is able to realize this sort of complete illumination, then in the very nature of mind one achieves a penetrating understanding of the Middle Way and achieves perfect illumination of the two truths. If one is able to perceive the Middle Way and the two truths in one's own mind then one perceives the Middle Way and the two truths in all dharmas while still not seizing upon either the Middle Way or the two truths. Because no definite and fixed nature can be found [herein] this constitutes the correct contemplation of the Middle Way. This is as set forth in a verse from The Treatise on the Middle: All dharmas produced of causes and conditions, I declare them to be empty. They are also [simply] conventional designations, And also [embody] the meaning of the Middle Way. In deliberating deeply on the intent of this verse [one finds that] it not only completely delineates the characteristics of the contemplation of the middle but also simultaneously clarifies the import of the previous two provisional contemplation gateways. One should realize that the correct contemplation of the Middle Way constitutes the buddha eye's wisdom of all modes (i-chye jung jr). If one abides in this contemplation, then the powers of meditative absorption and wisdom are equal, one completely and utterly perceives the buddha nature and one becomes peacefully established in the great vehicle. "His steps are even and correct and his speed is as fleet as the wind."(3) One then naturally flows on into the sea of sarvaj~na. "One practices the practice of the Thus Come One. One enters the room of the Thus Come One. One dons the robe of the Thus come One. One sits in the seat of the Thus Come One."(4) In this case one then takes the adornment of the Thus Come one as one's own adornment and succeeds in realizing purification of the six faculties.(5) One enters into the state [of realization] of a buddha. One has no defiling attachment to any dharma. All of the buddha's dharmas entirely manifest before one and one perfects the mindfulness-of-the-buddha samadhi. One becomes peacefully established in the foremost Suura'ngama meditative absorption. This is the samadhi wherein one realizes the universal manifestation of the form body. One universally enters all of the buddhalands of the ten directions, teaches and transforms beings, adorns and purifies all of the buddha k.setras, makes offerings to the buddhas of the ten directions, receives and maintains the Dharma treasury of all buddhas, perfects the paaramitaas of all practices, awakens to and enters into the station of the great bodhisattvas, and in doing so becomes an equal companion of [the bodhisattvas] Samantabhadra and Ma~njushrii. Having come to eternally abide in the Dharma nature body one is then praised by the buddhas and given a

prediction [of buddhahood]. One then adorns the Tu.sita Heaven, manifests descent into the womb of one's spiritual mother, leaves behind the homelife, goes to the Way place, conquers the demon adversaries, realizes the right enlightenment, turns the wheel of Dharma, and then enters nirvana. Throughout the ten directions one brings to perfect completion all of the buddha's endeavors and becomes complete in the two bodies, the true [body] and the response [body]. This then is the [realization] of the bodhisattva who has initially brought forth the resolve. In the Floral Adornment Sutra [it states]: "When one first brings forth the resolve [to attain bodhi] one then realizes the right enlightenment and gains a completely penetrating understanding of the true nature of dharmas. All of the wisdoms and bodies are not awakened to in reliance on others." It also states: The bodhisattva who has first brought forth the resolve gains the Thus Come One's single body and creates an incalculable number of [other] bodies." It also states: "The bodhisattva who has first brought forth the resolve becomes identical to a buddha." The Nirvana Sutra states: "The bringing forth of the resolve and the ultimate [realization] are indistinguishable. These two minds are difficult for the beginner's mind [to fathom]." The Mahaa-praj~naa-paaramitaa Sutra states: "Subhuti, there are bodhisattvas, mahaasattvas who, from the [very time of] first bringing forth the resolve, have immediately proceeded to sit in the Way place where they have been turning the right Dharma wheel. One should realize that this is a bodhisattva who in his actions is like the Buddha." In The Lotus Sutra, [the speed of the presentation of] the jewel offered up by Dragon Daughter serves as a corroborating case. Sutras such as these all clarify that in the initial setting of resolve one perfects the enactment of all buddha dharmas. Whether it be The Mahaa-praj~naa-paaramitaa Sutra's access [to Dharma] through the use of the syllable "a", whether it be The Lotus Sutra's [being proclaimed] for the sake of causing beings to open up the knowledge and vision of the buddhas, or whether it be the Nirvana Sutra's [concept of] dwelling in the great nirvana on account of seeing the buddha nature, in each case they have already briefly described the signs of the realization of the fruits [of cultivation] which, for the bodhisattva who has initially brought forth the resolve, occur because of having cultivated stopping and contemplation. Next, the clarification of the signs of the realization of the fruits associated with minds at a later stage [of cultivation]. The states of realization which develop for those with minds at a later stage [of cultivation] are unknowable [to us]. If we now extrapolate from what the teaching elucidates one finds that they are not separate from the two dharmas of stopping and contemplation. How is this the case? In instances such as that in The Lotus Sutra where it states, "He assiduously praised the wisdom of the buddhas," this corresponds to the meaning [inherent in] contemplation. This is a case of employing a correlation to contemplation as a means of elucidating the fruits [of cultivation]. As for The Nirvana Sutra's expansive description employing a hundred statements on the topic of liberation as a means of explaining the great nirvana, nirvana corresponds to the meaning [inherent in] stopping. This is a case of employing a correlation with stopping as a means of elucidating the fruits [of cultivation]. Therefore it states that the great parinirvaana is an eternal quiescent meditative absorption. As for "meditative absorption," it corresponds to the meaning [inherent in] stopping. Although in Lotus Sutra, the correlation to contemplation is employed as

a means of elucidating the fruits [of cultivation], it is nonetheless also inclusive of stopping. Hence it states, ". . . and even the ultimate nirvana's characteristic of eternal quiescent extinction is finally returnable to emptiness." Although in The Nirvana [Sutra] the correlation to stopping is employed to elucidate the fruits [of cultivation], it is nonetheless also inclusive of contemplation. Hence it takes the three qualities(6) as constituting the great nirvana. Although there are differences in the texts of these two great sutras as regards the explicit and the esoteric, it is never the case that they depart from correspondences to the two entryways of stopping and contemplation in the articulation of their ultimate [concepts]. They both rely upon the two dharmas of meditative absorption and wisdom in order to elucidate the ultimate fruits [of cultivation]. The practitioner should realize that the initial, middle and later fruits [of cultivation] are all inconceivable and ineffable. Hence the new translation of The Golden Light Sutra states, "The Thus Come Ones at the beginning are inconceivable and ineffable. The Thus Come Ones during the intermediate phase possess all sorts of adornments. The Thus Come Ones at the final phase are eternally indestructible." In every case the correlation to the cultivation of the two minds of stopping and contemplation is employed to articulate their fruits [of cultivation]. Hence a verse from The Pratyutpanna Samadhi Sutra states: It is by means of the mind that all buddhas gain liberation. As for the mind, it is pure and known as undefiled. In the five destinies it is fresh and immaculate and takes on no form. Where there is one who studies this, he perfects the great Way. I declare as a matter of solemn oath that as for that which is practiced, it is essential to get rid of the three obstacles and the five coverings. In the event that they are not gotten rid of, even though one might be diligent in applying one's efforts, one will ultimately gain no benefit from it. [End of Section Ten] [End of The Dharma Essentials for Cultivating Stopping and Contemplation and Sitting in Dhyana] 1. Master Bao-jing states that the two types of emptiness refer here to the emptiness of persons and the emptiness of dharmas. 2. Sarvaj~na is the omniscience or all-knowledge of a buddha. 3. This is a quote from "The Analogies Chapter" of The Lotus Sutra where the great white ox which represents the one buddha vehicle is being described. Master Bao Jing notes that "Even and correct" refers to the equality of meditative absorption and wisdom characteristic of a buddha's perfect contemplation whereas "speed as fleet as the wind" refers to that perfect contemplation's acuity in reflecting the nature and entering the way of effortlessness. He notes that the latter phrase also refers to the practice within the eight-fold path moving speedily into the sea of sarvaj~na. 4. Master Bao Jing notes that in this additional quote from the Lotus Sutra, the "practice" refers to the practice of a buddha wherein a single practice embodies all practices, the "robe" refers to patience, the "room" refers to the great loving-kindness and compassion, and the "seat" refers to the emptiness of dharmas. 5. Master Bao Jing also notes that "adornment" here refers to the merit and wisdom of a buddha. 6. The three qualities alluded to are: praj~naa, liberation, and the Dharma body.

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