

How to Practice Vajrasattva Purification

by Patrul Rinpoche

Visualize Vajrasattva clearly

Consider that you remain in your ordinary form. At an arrow's length above your head, upon a lotus and a moon disc seat, is a brilliant white syllable HUNG which becomes, in essence, your glorious root master, the incomparable treasury of compassion who embodies all the Buddhas of past, present and future. He is in the form of the sambhogakāya Buddha Vajrasattva, white in color, and as bright as a snowy peak lit up by a hundred thousand suns. He has one face and two arms. With his right hand, he holds a five-pronged vajra of awareness and emptiness in front of his heart. With his left, he rests the bell of appearance and emptiness upon his left hip. His two legs are crossed in the vajra posture, and he embraces, in an inseparable union, his consort white Vajratopa (Dorje Nyemma). Their bodies are not like those of ordinary beings, but are pure and composed of light.

Visualize the mantra

At Vajrasattva's heart is a full moon disc, and upon it is a white syllable HUNG, as fine as if it were drawn with a single hair. The HUNG is encircled in a clockwise direction by a string of letters forming the hundred syllable mantra. They are like the horns of cattle (meaning that they are close together and yet they do not touch). As you recite the hundred syllable mantra, ensuring that the four powers are complete, imagine that the white bodhicitta nectar drips down from each syllable of the mantra garland.

Visualize the nectar and the purification process

Flowing through the body of Vajrasattva, the nectar emerges from the point of union with the consort, and then, passing through the "aperture of Brahma" at the crown of your head, it cleans the entire interior of your body. Everything impure pours out of your body from the two lower orifices, the soles of your feet and all the pores of your skin. All your physical illnesses are flushed out in the form of rotten blood and pus; all negative forces are expelled in the form of fish, snakes, frogs, tadpoles, spiders, scorpions and ants; and all your negativity is expelled as smoke, black liquid, clouds and vapors.

Visualize how your karmic creditors receive the nectar

The golden earth beneath you opens up to reveal King Yama, the Lord of Death, surrounded by all the male and female beings to whom you owe karmic debts, and those who seek your life in vengeance. As you recite the hundred syllable mantra, the impurities pour down into their open mouths and into the hands and arms they raise expectantly towards you.

At the end, imagine that Death and all the others beneath the earth every kind of karmic creditor and all those who seek your life in vengeance are completely satisfied. Past scores have been settled; debts have been repaid; the desire for vengeance has been pacified; and you are cleansed

of all your past negative actions and obscurations. Yama closes his mouth and fists, and lowers his arms. The earth closes over once again.

Imagine your body now becomes transparent inside and out

Imagine that your body now becomes transparent inside and out, like an immaculate crystal vase. At the crown of your head is the chakra of great bliss with its thirty-two radial channels curving downwards. In your throat is the chakra of enjoyment with its sixteen radial channels curving upwards. At the level of your heart is the Dharma chakra with its eight radial channels curving downwards. At the level of your navel is the chakra of manifestation with its sixty-four radial channels curving upwards.

Receive the four empowerments

As the shining, white bodhicitta fills these four chakras, you receive the four empowerments (vase, secret, wisdom and precious word); you are purified of the four obscurations (karmic, emotional, cognitive and those of habitual tendencies); and you accomplish the four kayas (nirmanakaya, sambhogakaya, dharmakaya and svabhavikakaya).

Lama Vajrasattva is pleased and, smiling at you, he says:

Son/daughter of an enlightened family, your negative actions, obscurations, impairments and breakages of samaya are all purified.

Granting his approval in this way he melts into light, just like butter that is placed on a hot stone, and then dissolves into you.

Visualize yourself now in the form of Vajrasattva and recite OM VAJRA SATTVA HUM

Now you yourself appear in the form of Vajrasattva, exactly as you visualized him before. In your heart is a moon disc, the size of a flattened mustard seed. At its center is a blue HUM. In front of the HUM is a white syllable OM; to its right is the word VAJRA in yellow; behind it is a red SA; and to its left is a green TVA.

As you recite the mantra (OM VAJRA SATTVA HUM), immeasurable rays of colored light emanate from the syllables and make offerings that delight all the Buddha and Bodhisattvas of the ten directions. The blessings of their body, speech and mind come streaming back in the form of light and rays of light that dissolve into you, so that you obtain all the supreme and ordinary accomplishments. This establishes the interdependent conditions for benefiting yourself through realizing the dharmakaya.

Then consider that the rays of light touch all the sentient beings dwelling throughout the six realms of the three worlds, purifying their karma, disturbing emotions, habitual patterns, negativity and obscurations.

The entire outer world becomes the buddhafield of Abhirati ('Manifest Joy'), and all the beings within it are transformed into white, yellow, red, green and blue Vajrasattvas, all of whom recite the mantra OM VAJRA SATTVA HUM, creating an immense humming sound. This establishes the interdependent conditions for benefiting others through attaining the rupakaya. As it is said:

Actualizing the benefit of self and others through the emanation and reconvergence [of light], cognitive obscurations are purified.

Dissolution

At the end of the session, visualize that the whole universe—the pure realm of Manifest Joy—dissolves into the beings within it, the Vajrasattvas. Then, all of these Vajrasattvas dissolve into you, the principal Vajrasattva. Gradually, you too melt into light from the outside inwards, dissolving into the OM at your heart. The OM then dissolves into the VAJRA, the VAJRA into the SA, the SA into the TVA, the TVA into the shabkyu of the HUM, the shabkyu into the A-chung, and the A-chung into the body of the HA. The body then dissolves into the head, the head into the crescent, the crescent into the bindu, and the bindu into the nada. Finally, the nada too dissolves, and you remain for a short while in a state that is without conceptual reference. When you arise from that state, recognize the whole outer universe and the beings contained within it as the environment and inhabitants of the pure realm of Manifest Joy, and dedicate the merit.