

# The Four Yogas of Mahāmudrā

Excerpted from *Naked Awareness:  
Practical Teachings on the Union of Mahāmudrā and Dzogchen*  
by  
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## Yoga of Single-pointedness

1. Rangjung Dorjé's *Great Instructions*:
  - a. Single-pointedness occurs when a contemplative focuses his experience, without scattering away from the immaculate, vivid clarity and non-conceptuality of the mind, and remains single-pointedly in the stream of unified śamatha and vipaśyanā.
  - b. Single-pointedness corresponds to the [paths of] accumulation and preparation.
2. Karma Chagmé:
  - a. First in the *yoga* of experience there is an integration of the bliss, luminosity, and non-conceptuality of dhyāna. For as long as you apply yourself to this, you attain empowerment, and that is the single-pointedness of experience.
  - b. *The Primary Words of the Great Instructions* state, "Abide in the reality of single-pointed, indivisible śamatha and vipaśyanā." The meaning is that abiding in the space-like reality of emptiness and luminosity is single-pointedness. At that time, you realize the essential nature of meditation as space-like emptiness and luminosity, but the vipaśyanā of certain knowledge has not arisen from the space-like emptiness and luminosity. Thus, with single-pointedness you pointlessly wander about in darkness. At that time, your subsequent consciousness reifies phenomena by grasping onto them as ordinary and real. Hence, even though you cognize empty luminosity during meditative equipoise, your subsequent consciousness becomes confused concerning ordinary things, so there is the stain of grasping onto them as real, and the stains of karma are not purified.
  - c. If you are not mindful, you are disengaged from meditation, so there is separation; and even if you are mindful, the essential nature is not seen, so there is no attainment. Superimpositions upon experience have not been severed, and there is still the sense of an object and agent of meditation; so, this is a time of meditation in which the actual nature of the mind is reified. The form aggregate and the five avenues of consciousness are purified. They are cognized as naturally empty, ungrounded in an essential nature. Since you are inevitably subject to grasping, your meditative experiences and realizations are stained. In terms of the appearances to your lucid awareness, you precisely discern subtle and gross causality; but because this is grasped as being real, causality is reified. When you are undistracted, there is meditative equipoise, and when you are distracted, there is the post-meditative state. At this time, you disengage from characteristics, and you chiefly cultivate śamatha in a state that is free of the intellect. You know your own essential nature of empty luminosity.
  - d. When you remain resting in the meditative equipoise of bliss, luminosity, and nonconceptuality, that is the culmination of the power of single-pointedness. If at

times this does not happen even while meditating, and at times it does occur even while not meditating, the power of single-pointedness has still not been perfected.

- e. By cultivating that meditation for a long while, your mind will turn away from the eight mundane concerns, you will get rid of outer and inner parasites, and you will be able to display supernormal powers such as meditative manipulation and domination of the elements and so forth. When that happens, the qualities of single-pointedness have arisen. If the mind is not functional, if the essence and the dross of meditation are not differentiated due to an absence of mental peace, and if you are incapable of bringing forth the common signs of warmth, those qualities have not arisen.
- Small stage
  - Karma Chagmé: At the stage of small single-pointedness there are four applications of mindfulness: (1) the application of mindfulness of non-compositeness, free of any thought of the body as being either clean or unclean; (2) the application of mindfulness of taintless bliss, without thinking of feelings as being either suffering or joy; (3) the application of mindfulness of the mind, free of conceptual elaborations concerning the mind being either permanent or impermanent; (4) the application of mindfulness of phenomena, cutting off superimpositions concerning the reality of *nirvāṇa*, without thinking of phenomena as either having or not having an identity.
  - This corresponds to the Mahāyāna path of accumulation.
- Medium stage
  - Karma Chagmé:
    - At the stage of middling single-pointedness, by abandoning complacency and sustaining single-pointedness, (1) you do not engage in the arising of false views; (2) non-virtuous behavior, such as false views, naturally ceases; (3) as a result, realizations arise automatically from within; (4) and consequently, excellent qualities increase.
    - The bliss, luminosity, and nonconceptuality of dhyāna are thus integrated, and the mastery of remaining therein for any duration is experiential single-pointedness. The medium stage of single-pointedness, in which the facsimile of empty luminosity is maintained with mindfulness—or even if there is occasional distraction during which it is not maintained continually—is called the warmth and the pinnacle [stages] of the path of preparation. Once the experience has become stable, if that empty luminosity is maintained with mindfulness, it will become constant, even if at times it is not maintained. This is also called warmth and the pinnacle [stages of the path of preparation].
  - Rangjung Dorjé's *Great Instructions*: In the medium stage of single-pointedness, you occasionally enter into *samādhi* even when you are not meditating, and stability comes when you are meditating. In the lucidity of training in the *samādhi* of bliss, luminosity, and non-conceptuality you can display numerous kinds of defiled extrasensory perception and paranormal abilities. In that state ideation arises less than before, and whatever arises proceeds in its own lucidity. Afterwards, whenever you are mindful of spacious appearances that are imbued with the sense of empty luminosity, at times this arises as meditation, and at times

it arises concretely. Dreams arise less frequently than before. At times that experience comes to you, and at times it does not. You become fascinated with the meditation.

- Great stage
  - Karma Chagmé:
    - At the stage of great single-pointedness, you practice the four foundations of supernormal powers: (1) the absence of distraction is the foundation of the miraculous power of aspiration, (2) the absence of lassitude is the foundation of enthusiasm, (3) the abandonment of antithetical factors is the foundation of behavior; and (4) the foundation of the supernormal power of the mind is due to sustaining the attention.
    - Due to that realization, (1) the faculty of faith is uninterrupted; as a result, (2) the faculty of enthusiasm is incessant; that results in (3) the faculty of mindfulness without forgetfulness; perpetual *samādhi* is the (4) faculty of *samādhi*; and (5) the reality of discerning wisdom is realized with *samādhi*. Those comprise the great single-pointedness of the path of preparation, and they are of the nature of the warmth, and pinnacle [stages of the path of preparation].
  - Rangjung Dorjé's *Great Instructions*
    - From the very nature of the arising of the clear, immaculate, unborn actual nature of the mind, perfect *samādhi* manifestly realizes the essential nature of your own mind, which is like space, free of the conceptual elaborations of the three constituents. The absence of effort is (1) the enthusiasm factor of awakening; the absence of pain is the (2) delight factor of awakening; (3) the absence of stains is the purification factor of awakening; the absence of a distinction between *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* is (4) the discrimination of phenomena factor of awakening; the maintenance of non-forgetfulness is (5) the mindfulness factor of awakening; and even-mindedness towards everything is (6) the equanimity factor of awakening.
    - In the great stage of single-pointedness meditative equipoise, the post-meditative state, and the four kinds of activities constantly proceed day and night without interruption in the state of empty luminosity. All ideation as well as subsequent appearances and dreams also proceed in that state. The actual nature of the mind is imbued with a sense of emptiness, including empty bliss, empty awareness, empty appearances, and empty luminosity; and everything arises chiefly as many illusion-like and dream-like experiences.
    - Here the difference between meditative equipoise and the post-meditative state is made in terms of dwelling and non-dwelling. Dwelling in bliss, luminosity, and nonconceptuality is meditative equipoise. Not dwelling therein is the post-meditative state. In great single-pointedness all realizations and associated experiences dissolve into that state, and day and night they arise as space-like empty luminosity. The stage at which the thought arises that you have arrived at non-meditation is the patience and supreme Dharma stages of the path of preparation.

## Yoga of Freedom from Conceptual Elaborations

1. Karma Chagmé
  - a. From within that [single-pointed] state, while dwelling in the essential nature of emptiness, if you relate to emptiness without intellectual fabrication, that is the experiential freedom from conceptual elaborations.
  - b. The difference between single-pointedness and the state free of conceptual elaboration is the arising and non-arising of thought as the dharmakāya.
  - c. In the realization of equality, the great severance of superimpositions is free of conceptual elaboration, and the nature of the mind is realized without conceptual elaborations.
2. Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*)
  - a. Freedom from conceptual elaborations corresponds to the path of seeing.
  - b. Whatever you meditate on, without reliance on the effort of mindful apprehension, there is realization of the nature that is free of the extremes of both stillness and movement, and of connate, primordial consciousness, which is the essential nature of the mind, and the arising, cessation, and presence of ideation. There is the uncontrived understanding that all phenomena are free of conceptual elaboration. All experiences are understood to be empty and without an object. Like peeling off the husk of the essential nature of awareness, or like finding a treasure, there is a naked, vivid realization, free of conceptual elaboration. You think that you have attained mastery over the mind, and that this alone is it. From the outset, there is homogenous recognition. Fluctuations in the experience do not occur, or even if they do, there is no gladness or sorrow. Upon directing the mind towards outer phenomena, everything appears like an illusion and proceeds into emptiness. And even if it does not, there is no incongruity. Thus, appearances are indeterminate, and recognition arises, free of superimpositions. Realizations arise with the sense that it is like that, and in that integration of śamatha and vipaśyanā the signs of ideation are released right where they are. Thoughts arise as the dharmakāya. Appearances are realized as your own mind. By knowing the actual nature of the mind to be the dharmakāya, your view is dominated by emptiness. Thus, these appearances, too, are ascertained solely as empty, non-existent, and ungrounded. There is bliss in the emptiness. The dominant realization of causality and emptiness is *called the yoga that is free of conceptual elaboration*.
3. Dagpo Rinpoche: In the *yoga* free of conceptual elaboration by seeing the unborn essential nature of awareness, you have no hopes above for spiritual awakening; you have no anxiety about saṃsāra below; you do not grasp at appearances in-between; and you cannot be altered by anything else.
4. The Great Brahmin Saraha: Like recognizing water even when it appears as ice, in the second [*yoga*], without impeding the appearances of mindfulness, emptiness and bliss arise without differentiation. This is the occasion in which ice melts into water.
5. Gyalwa Yang Gönpa: By sustaining single-pointed meditation in that way, without craving, after a while in the state of that pure experience you will see the truth of ultimate reality, free of conceptual elaboration. What is seen? You see yourself. What is it that sees? You yourself see. This is seeing without an object and without a subject. In between the cessation of the continuum of past

consciousness and prior to the arising of future consciousness, there is either the momentary ideation of the consciousness of the present, or the essential nature of nonconceptuality, which recognizes its own nature without an object. At this time you distinguish the demarcation between saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. All your previous understanding and experiences of Dharma conversations which you held so dear are seen as outer husks. As the mind looks outwards, it is free of conceptual elaboration, and as it looks inwards, it is free of conceptual elaboration. The recognition of seeing the essential nature of freedom from conceptual elaboration is ungrounded. No conventional designation for it can be found, and it cannot act as an object of the mind. Without an object, you recognize yourself. The nonconceptual severance of superimpositions is seeing the essential nature that is free of conceptual elaboration.

- Small stage
  - Gyalwa Yang Gönpa: Even though the essential nature of luminosity and emptiness is seen, if you are not free of any trace of the grasping of recognition of emptiness, you have not differentiated between experience and realization; so that is the small stage of freedom from conceptual elaboration.
  - Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*): There are small, medium, and great stages. Among them, in the first, you realize that appearances and the mind are simply of the essential nature of pristine awareness, free of arising and cessation. However, a trace of grasping of the recognition of the facet of emptiness has crept in; and since you are not free of that, you have not really differentiated between meditative experience and realization. In subsequent consciousness, when this is not sustained with mindfulness, grasping to friends and foes will not cease, and grasping onto objects is not severed. Thus, virtuous as well as non-virtuous grasping occur, for the disengagement from the practice of Mahāmudrā is non-virtue, and not disengaging from it is virtue. The scriptures do not speak much of seeing the truth in this phase.
  - Götsangwa: In the first stage of freedom from conceptual elaboration you realize that all phenomena are free of arising, cessation, and remaining. That acts as the basis for all excellent qualities. Extraordinary gladness arises, so the first ground is called the very joyful.
- Medium stage
  - Gyalwa Yang Gönpa: At that time, the realization that the mind is free of arising and cessation is naked, ordinary consciousness; and appearances due to ideation and latent predilections are bright and vivid. Awareness is empty, and movement is empty. They do not arise as real phenomena, they do not cease as unreal phenomena; and they do not remain as conventional phenomena. So they are free of arising, cessation, and remaining. The meaning of the three doors of liberation is seen. Due to the absence of mentally engaged non-virtue, it is said that spiritual practice arises. Since this enters the undefiled path, it is the actual path of liberation. That realization becomes stable, and the degenerative stain of the element of recognition of grasping onto emptiness is utterly purified. Ordinary consciousness becomes objectless and lucid. You are freed from the basic root of grasping onto appearances and grasping onto emptiness; so the medium stage of freedom from conceptual elaboration is said to be a rootless realization.

- Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*): The medium stage of freedom from conceptual elaboration entails a coarse, experiential sense of the mind's freedom from arising, cessation, and remaining. Coarse stains of grasping onto emptiness are purified, and you are freed from the sense of purity or craving. Ordinary consciousness becomes objectless and resplendent. All ideation and all mental afflictions of grasping onto appearances and emptiness are groundless and rootless, and it is enough simply for them to recognize their own nature in their own state. External objects are still not quite fathomed, so there is a little unease with respect to appearances. You wonder, "Whence do these arise? They are empty, but these appearances cease, and they no longer act as dependently related events." When such thoughts, entailing slight hopes and fears, arise during subsequent consciousness and while dreaming, various states of confusion and non-confusion occur. The consciousness subsequent to that is called recognition. You then remain effortlessly in the state of recognition in meditative equipoise.
- Great stage
  - Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*): In the great stage of freedom from conceptual elaboration, you cut off superimpositions upon all outer and inner phenomena. You know that appearances are your own mind. The mind and appearances have no inherent nature, and you are free of any object on which to focus. This homogeneously joyful realization is like the center of space. Previously you were unhappy with respect to appearances, but happy with respect to awareness, and you engaged in practice with respect to awareness. Now you know that appearances are the mind. You know that the mind is empty. That is the usefulness of emptiness. Emptiness is the foremost of meditations. Superimpositions with respect to emptiness are cut off and are seen as having no inherent nature, or as being ungrounded. The slight unhappiness due to the decline of freshness with respect to present appearances is asserted to a baseless, deceptive appearance. At this point, meditation is unceasing during the daytime; and at night, at times there arises realization and at times there arises confusion in the subsequent consciousness regarding the grasping onto dreams. That happens because of letting your mindfulness and aspiration decline during sleep. When there is agitation due to long-term, violent conditions, subsequent consciousness may carry on for a little while. From this point on, if meditation proceeds without the sense of an agent, you should never at any time be separated from it... If you are not harmed by daily circumstances, that is called the realization of the great stage of freedom from conceptual elaboration. Then you realize that the essential nature of the mind is free of arising, cessation, and remaining. You see beyond the intellect. You renounce the world. You feel no jealousy for others. Many qualities such as extrasensory perception arise. During the post-meditative state, appearances arise as illusions. The nature of bodhicitta is realized. You are free of hopes and fears. The root of grasping is cut. The eighty-two obscurations on the path of seeing are eliminated. You do not return to saṃsāra. Apart from the power of prayers, you do not take birth in saṃsāra due to the influence of *karma*. When that happens, the essential nature of freedom from conceptual elaboration is seen, and that is called the perfection of ability and the arising of excellent qualities.

Here, too, the three cravings are cast off. You resort to solitude, a sealed meditation cell, and to the wilderness, and you cease speaking.

### Yoga of One Taste

1. Karma Chagmé
  - a. The homogenous taste of your conduct during the post-meditative state, without interruption due to conditions, is the one taste of experience.
  - b. Everything that appears arises as meditation, so there is one taste, with nothing to be rejected or accepted. You realize the characteristic of the actual nature of the mind appearing as the array of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.
  - c. The difference between meditative equipoise and the post-meditative state is that in one there is grasping and in the other there is not.
2. Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*)
  - a. The path of meditation goes from the one taste up to the middling stage of non-meditation.
  - b. At the stage of the one taste there is bliss regarding the emptiness, or the ungroundedness in any inherent nature, of all the phenomena on the stage of freedom from conceptual elaboration. Once the slight discomfort regarding appearances or all fresh ideation has been purified, there will come the state called “the merging of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.” The meaning of that does not cease, and there is no grasping onto the reality of these fresh appearances. Nor is there any grasping onto emptiness. There is no intellectual meditation on these external appearances as having no inherent nature, nor are there any dualistically appearing phenomena. In a manner that is not simply an intellectual conclusion, you realize that all dualities—including appearance and non-appearance, perceived appearances and emptiness, the stage of generation and the stage of completion, conventional and ultimate truth, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, and joy and sorrow—are not different, but are indivisibly of the one taste of unity; and connate, primordial consciousness arises. Whatever fresh appearances and fresh thoughts arise, they are free of rejection and affirmation. With self-cognizing, self-luminous, effortless, perfect mindfulness, the mind, mindfulness, and appearances manifest as causally related interdependent events, like fire and heat. The bliss regarding appearances is called “the yoga of the one taste.”
3. Gyalwa Yang Gönpa: Thus, upon sustaining the realization of freedom from conceptual elaboration, you recognize your own essential nature as being naturally liberated right where it is, with no distinctions between freedom or non-freedom from conceptual elaboration, emptiness and non-emptiness, auspicious and non-auspicious occasions, or negation and affirmation with respect to anything in the entire phenomenal world of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. Although manifold phenomena appear, they are realized as the essential nature of a single realization. This is the yoga of the one taste of the manifold.
  - Small stage
    - Karma Chagmé: In the small stage of the one taste there is a unification of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*: all dualities—including appearances and emptiness, the ultimate and the conventional, the stage of generation and the stage of completion, and so on—manifest as the union of the indivisible essential nature of a single realization. Appearances and emptiness have never been separate, so all the

qualities of the path are complete in either appearances or in emptiness, and they are non-dually unified. So that is the great union.

- Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*): In the small stage of the one taste, appearances and emptiness are indivisibly merged, and everything is realized as the connate nature. Fresh consciousness of whatever arises, with no distinction between emptiness and non-emptiness—is enough. You realize that all the qualities of the path are complete in either the appearance or the emptiness of whatever is known as a phenomenon; and the body, appearances, and the mind are indivisible. Even though you ascertain your mind at times, there is still a slight sense of an object of experience and the apprehension of it. Afterwards, the ground and so on appear to be firm and solid, and there is discomfort in your practice concerning the appearances of the six collections of consciousness that are disturbed by violent, objective circumstances. At times there are fragmented appearances of a duality between the apprehended and the apprehender; and it is as if there is a slight inability to practice Dharma in secret. Even in terms of “illusion-like” subsequent appearances and while dreaming there is occasional, fragmented confusion and grasping. At times you experience a sense of the indivisibility of the body, appearances, and the mind; you may not heed causality, and your reverence, veneration, and compassion may be somewhat feeble. So do not go that way.
- Medium Stage
  - Gyalwa Yang Gönpa: At the medium stage of the one taste, the root of subject-object dualism is completely cut, but that realization has not become stable. Thus, the one who realizes that unifies the manifold as one taste, and the process of grasping onto objects is utterly purified. Thus, material phenomena are not left over outside, awareness is not left over inside, and appearances and the mind are straightforwardly one. The mental engagement of the medium stage of the one taste manifests those characteristics.
  - Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*): At the medium stage of the one taste, the grasping of the recognition of your earlier experience is merged into one. Thus, once that is purified, material phenomena are not left over outside, and awareness is not left over inside. Appearances and the mind are straightforwardly unified, and the root of subject-object duality is completely cut. That grasping arises in dependence upon objects. Here, all apprehended objects arise in their own connate luminosity. When they are non-existent [as external objects], you are free of consciousness that grasps onto them. All grasping arises with the aid of a consciousness that arises with respect to objects. Due to objects such as forms appearing without realization, the subject-object duality arises with respect to objects. Although there is no difference between the small stage of the one taste and the essential nature of union, the experience has become more stable. There arises a sense of the unification of the body, appearances, and the mind. There is less confusion than before during subsequent consciousness and dreams, and the grasping of reification does not occur strongly. Nevertheless, while dreaming and on other occasions, depending on whether perfect mindfulness is or is not distracted, illusion-like, grasped appearances become indistinct. Here is the difference between mindfulness of an apprehended object and perfect



mindfulness: [in the former case] when there is distraction, you sense that there is distraction; and afterwards, even though your spiritual practice is vividly present in your mind-stream, that is mindfulness of an apprehended object; and that is a sign that earlier grasping has returned. The advent of vigilance in your practice of just mindfulness without grasping onto realization is called perfect mindfulness of realized phenomena; and even if earlier recognition is not maintained, this is a sign that grasping has not intruded.

- Great Stage

- Gyalwa Yang Gönpa: At the great stage of the one taste, all possible phenomena are calmed in the unborn state, and that is the realization of the one taste. Due to the arising of manifold appearances, all the phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are present as instances of emptiness. That is called “the manifold one taste,” and it is a realization of the indivisibility of the profound and the vast. That is the samādhi which in the sūtras is called “the appearance of profound phenomena” and “the samādhi, free of conceptual elaboration, of the equality of all phenomena.” All phenomena included in the phenomenal world of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are present in the essential nature of the non-dual realization of them just as they are in their own state, with undiminishing freshness and unchanging radiance. Therefore, whether in meditative equipoise or in the attainment of freedom, there is not a trace of alteration by antidotes; and that is the great stage of the one taste.
- Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*): At the great stage of the one taste, all possible phenomena within saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are realized to be unborn in the state of equality. Appearances and the mind are known to be one, and the experience of your earlier recognition becomes stable. Then with respect to these unceasing appearances grasping onto true existence is purified. As a result, that non-dual realization constantly arises throughout the day and night. Occasionally a slight experience of non-ascertaining perception occurs with respect to the sheer luminosity of nonconceptual appearances. There is no cessation of luminous appearances that are devoid of grasping; and at times realization arises in the nature of the entirety of phenomena within saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. The continuum of dualistic grasping is cut, and merely illusion-like subsequent appearances are present without any recognition entailing grasping. They are like apparitions created by an illusionist. Subtle dualistic appearances may not stop, even though you know they do not exist, or indistinct dreams entailing dualistic grasping may occur. At times you may not dream at all. These subtle dualistic appearances indistinctly occur as the display, the appearance, or the empty appearance of purification in the experience of your practice. They are said to appear as the empty, subsequent consciousness of the one taste. In reality, they are the residual display of antidotes. Furthermore, as long as there is an experiential sense of meditating, other things will automatically occur as a result. Thus, subtle dualistic appearances are impurities. Nevertheless, some nonconceptual appearances arise as manifold, natural displays that appear but are not ascertained. Depending on whether mindfulness is or is not distracted, you may feel uncomfortable sustaining the sense of stillness, and fragmented feelings of sheer luminosity may occur. They are residues of that which is to be eliminated. For as long as they are

present, other things apart from those subtle [dualistic appearances] may automatically happen as a result. They are called the subtle illusions of the great stage of the one taste. Therefore, whatever appearances arise, there is nothing to eliminate or accept and nothing to negate or affirm. You know your own essential nature as empty luminosity, and as connate equality without an object. All phenomena included among dualities such as saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are realized to be of one taste. The eight mundane concerns are equalized, and all dependent relationships become apparent. As for the understanding regarding appearances, this is called the arising of the vision and qualities of the perfected power of the essential nature of the one taste.

- Götsangwa: “The one taste is said to be the eighth ground,” and “The great stage of the one taste is said to be one of subtle illusion.” To relate this to the grounds, this is the ninth ground, and the complete perfection occurs as soon as you attain the tenth ground. The one taste of the manifold is said to be a realization that arises on the tenth ground. However, it is said that in reality it is the ninth ground itself, and it is just given the name of the tenth ground.

### **Yoga of Non-Meditation**

#### 1. Karma Chagmé

- a. All experiential feelings of meditating on emptiness and so forth are purified, so the purification of experience is non-meditation. There is a constant realization that the actual nature of the mind variously appears as saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. If the lack of recognition of nonconceptuality is not purified, that is a cloud-like obscuration over the sun of non-meditation. Moreover, subsequent consciousness arises as objectless compassion. The lack of recognition of nonconceptuality obscures the indwelling reality, so that is a stain of subsequent consciousness. With the purification of the stain of cognitive [obscurations] there is no difference between maintaining mindfulness and either seeing or not seeing the essential nature; so the duality of separation and attainment becomes one. The primordial consciousness of vipaśyanā becomes constant, so there is only meditative equipoise. At all times there is indivisible vipaśyanā into the absolute nature of indwelling equality, so this is a time when the actual nature of the mind becomes manifest.
- b. The difference between the one taste and non-meditation has to do with the purification or non-purification of subtle dualistic appearances and the effort of mindfulness. At this point there is no distinction between meditative equipoise and subsequent consciousness. The subtlest of dualistic appearances and dysfunction are purified.

#### 2. Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*):

- a. The path of meditation goes from the one taste up to the middling stage of non-meditation
- b. The great stage of non-meditation is perfect buddhahood.
- c. Perfect buddhahood is attained in the culmination of non-meditation. In that regard, by accomplishing the supreme union of śamatha and vipaśyanā in the reality of the four equalities of the taste of the absolute space of phenomena and

primordial consciousness, the fruition of the dharmakāya and the two rūpakāyas is actualized.

- d. Concerning the yoga of non-meditation, by habituating and familiarizing yourself with that, the mere illusions of dualistic appearances to subsequent consciousness up until the great stage of the one taste are purified. There is simple non-distraction of perfect mindfulness of the phenomena that are realized; and the slight stains of grasping onto emptiness, the maintenance of the effort of perfect mindfulness, and all subtle dualistic appearances are purified. Then the state of spontaneity is maintained. There is joy in the enactment of realization in which there is no object of meditation and no act of meditating. Even without meditating, it unceasingly arises as meditation. It arises as meditation whether or not you are in meditative equipoise, whether or not it is sustained with mindfulness, and whether or not there is distraction. The clear light of meditation regarding the character of the mind and the clear light of death—that is, the mother and child clear light—are unified. It is like the sky clear of clouds, or like water free of ripples. Regarding the clear light, the two are unified, and they are the dharmakāya alone. It is free of anything to be rejected or accepted and free of any object or action. You sense that there is no difference between dying and not dying, and there suddenly arises a certain knowledge of there being no difference between meditative equipoise and subsequent consciousness. Others see you as being surrounded by *dākinīs* and you are seen as multiple bodies. To reverent and devout individuals, you appear in the very form of a buddha. Whatever you say, it becomes Dharma. Whatever you do with your body, it instills faith in sentient beings. Wherever you stay, blessings arise. Even if you remain alone, there is no depression or fatigue. Whatever land you visit, joy and goodness arise. At times it may appear to others that you are attracted to external activity and to mundane things. You are demonstrating your *bodhicitta*. You realize the causal relations between actions and their consequences, and you know that everything is unborn. You have no craving for any location, and you have no more thoughts of embarrassment or of things being either clean or dirty. All *vīras* and *dākinīs* make offerings to you, and they help you fulfill the needs of sentient beings. You become a wish-fulfilling jewel for all sentient beings.
- Small Stage
  - Gyalwa Yang Gönpa: Thus, the one taste is the union of trainees. Non-meditation is the union of non-trainees. Beyond that realization, there is nothing with which you need to be acquainted, so you inwardly realize non-meditation. The absence of an object of meditation and the act of meditating in the small stage of non-meditation entails the utter purification of the agent who meditates or the agent who realizes. Thus, there is no object of meditation or act of meditating, no object of realization or act of realizing, no object of knowledge or act of knowing, and no object of mindfulness or act of being mindful. There are no such things on which to meditate, and after completely purifying the stains of meditative experiences, there appears to be no distinction between meditative equipoise and subsequent consciousness throughout the day and no distinction between distraction and non-distraction. In the small

stage of non-meditation, at night there remains a slight stain of the grasping of non-recognition.

- Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*): In the small stage of non-meditation, everything you do arises as meditation, without needing to maintain it with mindfulness. You are free of an object of meditation and the act of meditating. Everything arises as meditation without reliance upon being or not being in meditative equipoise. The previous illusion-like, subsequent appearances at the time of the great stage of the one taste become subtler. Then it is not necessary to maintain perfect mindfulness. They become purified by themselves. The mental affliction called “the non-recognition of the nonconceptuality of subsequent appearances” and all thoughts that are residues of ignorance are purified by the stage of the one taste. You are simply not able to transform the ethically neutral, nonconceptual ground consciousness into primordial consciousness. That mere non-recognition of nonconceptuality itself is the only thing to be eliminated, and it is an aspect of ignorance. Due to that, illusion-like [appearances] occasionally occur for brief moments. Your own essential nature is nonconceptually present, so there is no need to apply antidotes. It is possible that slight stains of grasping may occur occasionally while you are sleeping; and since they are not recognized as your own luminosity, they are cognitive obscurations.
- Medium Stage
  - Gyalwa Yang Gönpa: In the medium stage of non-meditation, the state of spontaneity is reached. Here the fruition traces to the ground, there is a meeting with the mother, the three embodiments, and your wishes are fulfilled. There is no difference whatever between day and night, being asleep or not asleep, maintaining something with mindfulness or generating recognition. In the one great meditative equipoise, there is a self-obscurations of primordial consciousness and a dewdrop of ignorance together with a slight stain that obscures knowledge. That is the medium stage of non-meditation.
  - Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*): In the medium stage of non-meditation, you firmly reach the state of spontaneity. Your experience becomes more stable than before, and you realize the primordial, spontaneous actualization of both saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. Free of all grasping, once you reach the connate state, the wheel of the primordial consciousness of meditative equipoise turns day and night. The subtle trace of nonconceptual non-recognition of subsequent appearances that are thrown up by the power of that primordial consciousness of meditative equipoise becomes subtler than before. It appears for just the duration of a finger snap, with no time to engage with objects, and it is released in the illusion-like natural luminosity. At all times, the nonconceptual essential nature appears as its own natural luminosity. [854] As a result, all states of meditative equipoise that bear the stain of dysfunction and just its subtle aftermath are undefiled, while subsequent appearances, such as the eightfold path of the āryas that is to be practiced, are defiled. Thus, all

states of meditative equipoise that bear the stain of dysfunction and just its subtle aftermath are undefiled, while subsequent appearances, such as the eightfold path of the *āryas* that is to be practiced, are defiled.

- Great Stage
  - Gyalwa Yang Gönpa: In the great stage of non-meditation, the clear lights are united as one. The primordial consciousness of the absolute space of phenomena and the absolute space of phenomena of the sugatas are indivisible, so the path clear light and the natural clear light are united as one. Then in the great clear light, the primordial consciousness that is without conceptual elaboration, ignorance and knowledge and the stains of knowledge are utterly purified. Thus, in neither this life or the hereafter is there even subtle grasping onto karmic causes and effects. Others and you and saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are unified. In the great stage of non-meditation, the clear lights are united as one, so that is the union of non-trainees.
  - Rangjung Dorjé (*Great Instructions*): In the great stage of non-meditation, all consciousness is transformed into primordial consciousness. The sword of primordial consciousness utterly cuts through cognitive obscurations, together with the stains of dysfunction. The immaculate absolute space of phenomena, which is the mother clear light, and the child clear light of mirror-like primordial consciousness are united. The union of non-trainees and supreme enlightenment become manifest. There is no distinction between meditative equipoise and the post-meditative state. By coming to uncontrived, indwelling reality, the natural potency of the connate dharmakāya, which is for your own sake, is wholly perfected. As a result, the two rūpakāyas, which are for the sake of others, fulfill the needs of the world until saṃsāra is empty. Thus, the culminating path becomes manifest. In non-meditation, meditative equipoise opens up vastly. For the most part there is no fluctuation away from meditative equipoise. Thus, with nothing of which to be mindful and nothing on which to meditate, experience is purified. You are free of the effort of mindful apprehension including recognition. The extinction into the actual nature of reality is reached. You are freed from grasping onto true existence with respect to appearances. When non-meditation is first realized, all the great qualities of a buddha converge like clouds, so the tenth ground is called “the cloud of Dharma.” In the medium stage of non-meditation, the state of spontaneity is firmly reached, and it is said that your experience becomes more stable than it was before. The liberation which arises as natural luminosity is said to be the special path of the end of the continuum of the ten grounds.
  - Karma Chagmé: In the great stage of non-meditation, once the mother [and child] clear lights are unified, there is no distinction between meditative equipoise and the post-meditative state. By coming to uncontrived, connate reality, the dharmakāya is achieved for your own sake. Due to perfecting the natural potency of connate reality, the two rūpakāyas, which are for the sake of others, fulfill the needs of the world until saṃsāra is empty. This is the eleventh ground, the universal light.