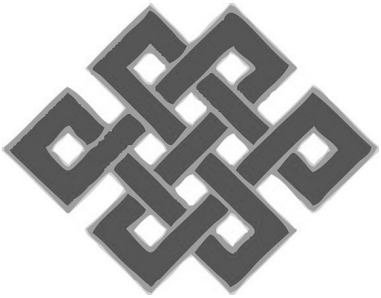
# The Open Secret of Human Happiness

## Mindfulness Meditation in Action

**Third Edition**

David Paul Boaz, PhD.
(Dechen Wangdu)



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For

Adzom Gyalse Rinpoche

from whom I have learned so much

# Books by David Paul Boaz

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*The Teaching of the Buddha: Being Happy Now*

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*The Prior Unity of Science and Spirit:*
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*Christianity and Buddhism:*
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# I

# Human Happiness and Mindful Breathing

Happiness arises from the choice of your present mind state.
—Adzom Paylo Rinpoche

Have you ever wondered what you may discover of your appearing realities, and the very nature of your thinking perceiving mind, if you did not habitually filter your experience through the cognitive reticulum of your concepts and beliefs—your often scattered 'wild horse of the mind'? What would it be like to experience *directly,* clearly and lucidly, beyond any concept or belief, the very nature of your mind prior to thinking about it? What if your belief in an ultimately 'real' self-ego-I with its habitual certainty of a solid material world of separate 'other' things and beings were suddenly surrendered to your nonconceptual 'primordial wisdom' of a profound deeper reality? Well, you can!

"Mindfulness of Breathing" is mythopoetic '*metacognition'*—simple, natural, conscious cognitive activity beyond mere thinking. You've heard about it. You may have established a secular 'mindfulness practice', even an 'advanced' yogic practice to tame your scattered mind and connect to its formless, timeless Awareness Ground. Let us further explore it; perhaps enhance it.

All the buddhas, mahasiddhas, saints and sages of the great Primordial Wisdom Tradition of humankind have told it. The *poesis* and praxis of 'mindfulness of breathing' (*shamatha, zhine, sati, smrti*)—deep contemplative direct experience—is a personal protean encounter that provides a *relative* immediate antidote, then an *ultimate* cessation to the

bewitchment of our natural intelligence by the colossus of habitual discursive conceptual mind. That remedy is our innate indwelling compassionate love-wisdom Buddha Nature, Christ Mind—*Presence* of That. How shall we realize this great truth in our busy lives?

We begin by *choosing* conscious 'placement of attention/ awareness' upon our 'innermost' love-wisdom mind *Presence* of basal nondual Primordial Awareness-Consciousness 'groundless' Ground of Being—by whatever grand name—in whom this all arises. We do this upon mindful *prana* wind life force 'spirit breath' in the body *(lungsem).* Peace and happiness arise from where, and when we choose to consciously place our awareness! No mystery here. We do have this conscious choice. Mindfulness of Breathing is assiduous effortless *practice* of that moment to moment choice. But how do we do it?

We train the mind in *awareness management.* As we begin to turn our attentional awareness inward we learn to *rest* in 'clear light luminous clarity' (*ösel, prabhasvara*)—that numinous Presence of trans-conceptual primordial love-wisdom Nature of Mind—our 'supreme identity' of that 'supreme source' that is 'basic space' (*chöying*) *ultimate* nondual *dharmakaya* Ground of Being itself of all *relative* spacetime stuff. This book shows you how.

## Being Happy Now

Human beings desire most of all to have happiness. Yet, cloaked in the global mindscape of 'primal ignorance' (*marigpa, avidya, ajnana, hamartia*/sin) we fail to see that the real cause of human happiness lies in our awakening to Buddha's *anatman* or 'noself', Jesus' selfless *kenosis*—selfless compassionate conduct—very secret of human happiness.

Just so, every human being desires to avoid suffering. Yet we do not recognize that the root cause of human suffering lies in the disjunctive afflicted negative emotions of a *relatively* all too real yet *ultimately* illusory self-ego-I that begets negative thoughts, intentions, and then actions. Cause and effect karma. Due consideration of that *great truth* naturally arouses positive compassionate feeling desire to benefit living beings. That is the providential beginning of our own relative and ultimate happiness—entering in the outer exoteric and inner esoteric teaching of love-wisdom dharma—Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, and Abrahamic Hebrew, Christian, Sufi/Islam. Self-ego-I too often denies that great truth.

That dharma is a vital turning point in our lives. We have this urgent moment to moment *choice* of placement of our attentional awareness (meditation, *göm*) on the breath. Indeed, untrained mind already 'meditates' via its obsessive random attention upon grasping, clinging desire-mind objects of its troubled self-ego-I. Through conscious *placement of attention* 'self' learns freedom from itself—its adventitious fear-anxiety-anger.
We may use our conceptual mind to self-reflexively critique its own inherent limits. We establish a bit of healthy skepticism as to our ego defended biases—our skeptical cultural 'global web of belief' (Quine 1969). That includes our choice to establish a mindful meditation practice in the first place.

Through mindful attention upon the breath in the body we move beyond habitual web of concepts and beliefs with its often negative, judgmental thinking and emotion, into always present peaceful empty clear light (*ösel*) Primordial Presence of our indwelling love-wisdom mind. Peace and happiness of *That* (*tathata*). [*Appendix B*] That Awareness is the prior and present unity of love and wisdom.

## Buddhist Foundations:
## Emptiness and the Mahayana Middle Way

The First Turning of the Buddha's Dharmachakra Wheel of 'interdependently arising' existence is the Hinayana of 1st century *Pali Canon*, now extant only in the Theravada tradition of Southeast Asia. That is the foundation of the Second and Third Turnings of the Wheel, namely the Mahayana sutras of the noble bodhisattvas, and tantric Indian and Tibetan Vajrayana, respectively. Well, what precisely is this Middle Way?

Gautama Shakyamuni the Buddha of this present age taught a subtle Middle Way between life world extremes of severe life denying asceticism, and of sensory indulgence. His Middle Way does as well teach a balance between two conceptual false absolutes—the 'metaphysical extremes' of absolutism and nihilism—between affirmation of the absolute independent existence of arising spacetime phenomena, Ontological Realism, and the absolute negation or denial of any phenomenal existence whatsoever, Ontological Idealism; between absolute *Metaphysical Scientific Local Realism*, and absolute *Metaphysical Idealism*. [Garfield/Nagarjuna 1995; H.H. Dalai Lama 2009] The history of ideas in the West has been a cognitive litany of these false dichotomies. Human concept/belief cognition is after all inherently 'dualistic'. That innate 'truth functional' either-or true-false duality of our thinking believing mind is expressed in our semiotic (linguistic logical syntax, semantics/meaning, and pragmatics/usage) dependence upon language to grasp the vast whole of Reality Being Itself. How shall we understand this rather prolix esoteric view?

*Dependent Arising is Emptiness.* For 2nd century Middle Way founder Nagarjuna (*MMK* 1995) Buddha's *shunyata*/ emptiness, Reality Being Itself *(chönyi),* is *ultimate* mode of being

for all *relative* arising physical and mental phenomena. Emptiness is Ultimate Truth. Dependent Arising is Relative Truth. Together they are Buddha's prodigious coalescent Two Truths that are finally the *one truth unity (dzög)* of vast whole of timeless Ground of Being itself *(dharmakaya).* The spiritual realization of the 'wisdom of emptiness'—liberation, enlightenment—pacifies our brutal grasping at and clinging to intrinsic existence of a self-ego-I, and the phenomena of its sensory experience, as ultimately *real*.

What to do? It is, on accord of H.H. Dalai Lama (2009), Je Tsongkhapa's *Three Principle Aspects of the Path* that cultures freedom from this our all too human predicament. These essential elements are: 1) *"True Renunciation"* as authentic aspiration to liberation from 'primal ignorance' (non-recognition) of Buddha's Two Truths and his Four Noble Truths; 2) *Bodhichitta* or altruistic 'awakening mind' founded in True Renunciation and in the thought, intention and engaged action for benefit of living beings; and 3) *Meditation on Emptiness* which realizes the Ground of Being, very Nature of Mind that is Buddha's Two Truths *union* of ultimate emptiness and its relative Interdependent Arising.

So Buddhist View and practice of the Path is grounded in the profound truth of 'dependent origination' (*pratitya samutpada, tendrel*), the 'interdependent arising' or interconnectedness of all appearing causal physical, mental, and emotional phenomena arising from its nondual acausal *dharmakaya* Primordial 'groundless' Ground. That represents the Middle Way that is essence of Buddha's teaching. It is the very foundation of Buddhist *shunyata*/emptiness—lucid clear light (*ösel*) luminosity, 'basic space' (*chöying*) of nonconceptual nondual ultimate basal Ground in whom all spacetime phenomena arises.

*The term 'dependent' refutes independent absolute existence of this appearing stuff of reality; and the term 'arising' refutes nihilistic absolute nonexistence of it.* We have here a centrist Middle Way between the false dichotomy of these two 'metaphysical extremes'. Thus are philosophical extremes of naïve Realism and of nihilistic Idealism refuted. That constitutes the open portal of the 'explanatory gap' that bestrides the Buddha's wondrous Two Truths—two reality dimensions of conventionally 'real' Relative Truth (*samvriti satya*), and luminous emptiness of Ultimate Truth (*paramartha satya*) in whom (Adi Buddha Samantabhadra) this all arises, participates, and is instantiated for us here in Einstein's *ultimately* illusory relative space and time *($E=mc^2$).* Yes, this useful Two Truths dichotomy is indeed an ontic prior and phenomenally ever present changeless nondual *one truth unity* (*dzög*) that is invariant throughout all appearing relative-conventional phenomena.

*We shall soon see that in nondual Dzogchen View, nothing ultimately exists! Longchenpa reveals that in the Ultimate Truth View. "Emptiness is the absence of subject and object." [Ch. III]*

*Emptiness of Self is Emptiness as Noself.* We shall here encounter Nagarjuna's teaching that the Middle Way Madhyamikas express two modes of emptiness/*shunyata*—*emptiness of self*, and *emptiness of phenomena* that appear to a self. Thus are the reality constituting *five skandas* or 'heaps' of form and formless form of the *relative* form aggregates of self-existence—physical form, feeling/sensation, perception/ volition, mental formation, and personal consciousness—absent and empty any whit of *ultimate* 'intrinsic existence'.

Well, does that mean that the emptiness of form is nihilistic nonexistence of form? It does not. Buddhist emptiness/*shunyata* is not nothingness! Empty but not zero. Our sublime gift (*jinlob*) of this precious life as embodied form is absent and empty of

*intrinsic ultimate* existence, but it is alive and well as *relative* existence abiding here in ultimately nonexistent physical space and time. *Self and all its stuff exist relatively, but not ultimately*.

Yes. Buddha's emptiness is selfless absence of the duality of perceiving subject-self, and a *separate* perceived object—habitual subject-object split. Nagarjuna told (1995), "The buddhas have taught that neither self nor no-self exists." So self of the person is empty of intrinsic existence, but so too is the *ultimate* existence of selfless noself—emptiness itself! Emptiness too is free of absolute existence. That is known as the 'emptiness of emptiness'. Should we reify emptiness into an existent objective 'thing', some vast vessel that contains everything, then emptiness itself would perforce be intrinsically real! If that were true then the *intrinsic existence* of arising phenomena to a self could not be negated. Buddha's emptiness of phenomena is correctly understood only as a categorical "nonimplicative negation" of intrinsic existence. Nothing remains to grasp/covet—very cause of suffering.

How then *does* Buddhist emptiness exist? H.H. Dalai Lama explains, "Emptiness is established by human conceptual minds." All relative phenomena arising in space and time are absent and empty of intrinsic existence; but so is emptiness itself! That is the Middle Way Prasangika view. However, Middle Way Yogachara Mind Only school views the "perfected nature" that is our buddha nature as inherently existing. [More in *Ch. VI*]

*About Time.* Both Albert Einstein and postmodern quantum physics agree with this hitherto radical, but now almost common non-nihilist view of the absence or emptiness of a relative objective time (*t*). Postmodern physics has almost universally adopted "presentism"—only the present is 'real'. [*Appendix A*] As we search for objective 'self' in 'local' real time we shall not find it

in a past, a future, nor even in this present moment now. Past is but a present memory. Future is but a present anticipation. And this brief objective present moment now is but a vanishing illusion, a vacuous concept. We cannot *objectively* locate any present moment! Only as a *relative* conventional *belief* is the present 'real'. Thus do we fail to find any *ultimate* intrinsic existence in the three voices of time—past, present, future. Einstein told, "Time is an illusion; albeit a very persistent one."

Just so, our relative physical and mental phenomena—persons and their perceptions—remain merely pragmatic useful conventional naming, "labels" arising only in a commonsense, semiotic linguistic context, as Longchenpa (2001) has often pointed out. Therefore, self-ego-I in time, and phenomena arising to it 'exist' not intrinsically or ultimately—but only nominally and relatively in dependence upon 'naming' (*namarupa*)— inter-objective and inter-subjective very useful but merely linguistic conceptual constructs.

Relative objective existence; ultimate subjective nonexistence. Buddha's Two Truths, our two ways of being here: *relative* 'interdependent arising' of spacetime stuff, and perfectly subjective *ultimate* Ground of Being in whom that all arises. Yes. *One truth unity*.

How else could we *choose* the daunting spiritual practice of this confusing relative Path? So yes, the personal self-ego-I does indeed exist, but only relatively, conventionally, in interdependence with the physical and mental aggregates of form. And yes, Buddhist emptiness is the interdependent arising of form. *Interdependent Arising* ***is*** *emptiness!* As Buddha told so long ago in his monumental *Heart of Wisdom Sutra*: "Form is emptiness; emptiness is form." 'Self' in this all too real world of ours actually exists dependently, relatively, nominally, but not independently and ultimately. That's good news. How so?

Our all too real human physical, mental, and emotional suffering (*dukkha*)—whose *ultimate* cessation is very essence of the Buddha's teaching—is the result of the first of the twelve links of 'interdependent arising', namely atavistic non-recognition '*primal ignorance'* (*avidya, marigpa*)—grasping, clinging attachment to ultimately illusory impermanent self-ego-I. Through the emotional affliction of fear-anger our ego self creates negative karma by harming other beings to get what it thinks it needs. The individual and collective result is a 'world filled with weeping'—suffering, ethnic hatred, endless war and despair.

Just so, both relative and ultimate human happiness is dependent upon our individual and collective recognition, then realization of Buddha's inherent indwelling 'noself' (*anatman*), always already present Presence of selfless love-wisdom buddha heart, buddha mind, buddha nature (*buddhajnana, buddhadhatu, tathagatagarba*). And *That* is the open secret of our harmless (*ahimsa*) human happiness. Buddha's subtle centrist Middle Way Two Truths wisdom reveals *That* (*tathata,* suchness*, chönyi, quidditas*). *Mahasukaho! A la la ho!*

A nice neat conceptual understanding—profound analytic penetrating 'discursive meditation'. Well and good. However, should you desire to *realize* your interdependently arisen innate buddha mind Ground Presence beyond such a discursive understanding it is wise to engage directly (*yogi pratyaksa*) effortless cognitive continuity of Ati Dzogchen 'nonmeditation' *(ma gom)* guided by the Dzogchen master. [*Appendix B*] Thus does one receive, prior to the filtering of it through the reticulum of concept mind *(namtok, vikalpa),* lucid realization of nondual emptiness, and so the end of habitual grasping at an intrinsic self and ultimate existence of its phenomena. That is cessation of afflictive new negative karma

and purification of 'old karma' that are both due to non-recognition or 'primal ignorance'. That is liberation from 'rebirth' in cyclic existence. Such freeing realization is nondual "wisdom realizing emptiness". Thus spoke Nagarjuna. [1995] That wisdom is the result of "The Path of Seeing" that is "cessation" in Buddha's Third Noble Truth. [Dalai Lama 2009 p.78]

## Buddhist Foundations: Indo-Tibetan Vajrayana View and Practice

Tibetan Buddhist tantric practice has three ostensible 'stages' of emotional-spiritual development: Development Stage *(shamatha)* unified in Completion Stage that bestows clarity to our conceptual *aporia*; then nondual Ati Dzogchen Perfection Stage.

Completion Stage practice engages dualistic *yidam deity mantra practice*, primal *sambhogakaya* archetypes that personify and facilitate our own very real awakened Buddha qualities and attributes—*Vajra Guru, Vajra Sattva, Manjushri, Chenrezig, Tara, Menla Medicine Buddha*—mantras that reveal and ground our always already present 'innermost secret' buddha heart buddha mind, very Buddha Nature of Mind. And that is formless, timeless, selfless, spacious primordial *dharmakaya* Ground of Being of all arising phenomena. That is our *'samadhi* of certainty' that arises above and beyond the doleful subject-object split. Yes. *"Emptiness is the absence of subject and object."* [Longchenpa]

The limpid mindscape of causal Completion Stage and acausal nondual Perfection Stage—Dzogchen *kadag trekchö* and *lhundrub tögal*, and in Essence Mahamudra (*The Six Dharmas of Naropa)*—may be viewed, inter alia, as nonconceptual contemplative yogic technologies that train in opening our trans-physical central

subtle body 'channels' (*nadi, tsa*), 'winds' (*prana, lung, pneuma*), and bright 'spirit orbs' or 'drops' (*bindu, thigle*).

Thus do we liberate subtle life energy *prana/lung* spirit breath *(lungsem)* to move freely, then dissolve in subtle central energy channel (*avadhuti*) thus connecting to our already awake indwelling, always present Ground Presence of blissful lucid clear light clarity (*ösel*)—nondual Primordial Wisdom (gnosis, *yeshe, jnana*)—for compassionate *bodhicitta* benefit of all living beings. And that is the very Heart of Buddha's Mahayana teaching vehicle, causal root of acausal nondual Nyingma Dzogchen, and of Kagyu Essence Mahamudra. Yes, that is the open secret of our human happiness—"mindfulness meditation in action".

[The prodigious Kagyu Mahamudra *Six Dharmas of Naropa* are: daytime *tummo* yoga and illusory body yoga (*gyulu*); nighttime dream yoga (*milam*) and luminous clear light yoga (*ösel*); and the 'shadow yoga' of liminal *bardo* and *phowa* near the moment of death.]

*Guru Yoga.* How may we realize this Promethean quest for our already present human happiness? In Indo-Tibetan Vajrayana view we realize our indwelling lucid self-reflexive Intrinsic Awareness (*rang rig yeshe*) through Guru Yoga, devotion to precious outer Guru, our authentic fully qualified Vajra master—who faithfully mirrors our selfless inner Guru—very nature of our buddha mind Presence that we already are; nature and essence of intrinsic Primordial Awareness Ground of all arising phenomenal reality. "Primordial intrinsic awareness itself is absolute Guru—Ultimate Truth." [Jigme Lingpa]

Just so, our seeking grail quest for *buddic* 'noself' (*anatman*) happiness is a subtle egocentric trap. That selfless happiness *Presence* is always already present within each one of

us here and now upon bright life force *prana* spirit wind with each mindful breath.

Guru Yoga means "union with the nature of the guru" (*guru sattva*), outer, inner, and 'innermost secret intrinsic awareness itself'. That essential Ground Nature is our ultimate 'supreme identity'. In Tibetan Buddhist tradition primary Guru Yoga practice is wondrous *Seven Line Prayer* to Guru Rinpoche. Sakyapa master Lama Jamyang Gyaltsen speaks the truth of the matter: "The Guru is the embodiment of all refuge...All practices, whether preliminary or primary have to take place within the sphere of Guru Yoga." For Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche (in Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, *Guru Yoga* 1999):

> When we take refuge, we see the guru present in all of the Three Jewels: the guru's physical presence is seen in the Sangha, the guru's teaching is seen as the Dharma, the guru's mind is seen as the Buddha...Guru Yoga is the quickest, most effective way for attaining enlightenment and is the one path in which all other paths are completed. Guru Yoga includes renunciation, bodhicitta, development and completion stage meditation, mind training, and [Dzogchen approach], which is why we can say that Guru Yoga is the embodiment, or the essence of all paths...It is not only the most complete path, but also the most condensed...As our devotion becomes stronger still, it is with a growing sense of joy that we begin to rely on the guru for everything...An inner confidence arises, an absolute certainty that the guru is the sole source of refuge...Finally we have managed to merge our mind with the guru's mind. That frees us from fear...Thus have we realized the ultimate goal of all Buddhist practice.

*Fourfold Tantric Refuge.* Outer refuge is the Three Jewels—Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. Inner refuge is Guru, Deva, Dakini. Secret refuge is subtle body "channels, energies,

and bright orbs/drops". Dzogchen Refuge is *essential rigpa*: essence, nature, compassion-energy.

The twelve syllable *Vajra Gura Mantra* is often said to be the most powerful Tibetan Buddhist mantra. "It has the power to dispel all obstacles and confer all the qualities of wisdom...Its twelve syllables are the essence of the twelve branches of Lord Buddha's teachings...The twelve links of Interdependent Origination, which arise from ignorance...are purified, releasing us from samsara." [Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche 1999] The Mantra is recited in Sanskrit thus: *OM AH HUM VAJRA GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUM.* "The first three syllables of the mantra represent the three *kayas* or buddha bodies of reality, as well as Vajra Body, Speech and Mind of all the buddhas." In mantra *OM AH HUM* we enter in all three dimensions of *Trikaya of the Base/Ground*—boundless whole itself. Let's conceptually unpack this a bit.

*OM* is 'basic space' (*chöying*) of nondual primordial *dharmakaya* Awareness-Consciousness Ground of all arising phenomena. *AH* is *sambhogakaya*: logos, lucid luminous clear light bridge into form and formless form. *HUM*—our essential nature—is *nirmanakaya,* manifested bright *Presence* of *OM,* ever present love-wisdom mind of all the buddhas. The *Seven Line Prayer* to Padmasambhava is composed on these three levels of understanding—outer, inner, and innermost secret nondual. These three dimensions of our unfolding Ground of Being are a prior always present enfolded *one truth unity (dzög).* [Mipham 2007 *White Lotus*]

*VAJRA* (*BENZA*) symbolizes the changeless, formless, timeless, selfless nondual indestructible primordial love-wisdom mind (*buddhajnana*) of all the buddhas; nondual ultimate *dharmakaya* "groundless Ground" of all phenomenal being, indivisible *one truth unity* of Buddha's Two Truths (relative form and ultimate emptiness); unity of Original Ground and awakened

Fruition/Result of that Ground. *Invictus* Vajra cannot be defiled by concepts nor destroyed by 'primal ignorance' (*marigpa, avidya*). Free of all defects, like a diamond it cuts through negative illusion, delusion, and all obstructions. It is stainless 'basic space' *dharmakaya* Ground of Being, primordial buddahood, very nature of Buddha Amitabha. And we are all already that buddha nature! That is the non-causal Vajrayana Ati Dzogchen 'Fruitional Vehicle'—Great Completion of Mahayana Causal Vehicle. Ultimately, primordial buddhahood does not have a cause. How so? "It is already present and accomplished from the very beginning". [Nagarjuna] Our indwelling 'supreme identity'. So it's useless to seek it elsewhere. That is Secret Mantra Fruitional Refuge.

*GURU* is *sambhogakaya* realm, flawless clear light lucid clarity and most precious of all beings, represented by Avalokiteshvara. Guru is highest wisdom essence of all pith instruction (*manngag/upadesha*), received directly (*yogi pratyaksa*) from outer and inner Guru as "Absolute Guru" that is 'primordial purity' of Ultimate Intrinsic Awareness itself.

*PADMA* (*PEMA*) is the Path, 'the jewel in the lotus'. "Guru Rinpoche [the 'Lotus-born' Padmasambhava] is *nirmanakaya* emanation of Buddha Amitabha, who corresponds to the Lotus Family and the speech/voice aspect of all the buddhas." [Khyentse Rinpoche] The Fruit/Result of the Path lies not in some glorious future mind state; it is already present and awake here and now. That great primordial love-wisdom power is *SIDDHI*.

*SIDDHI* means 'power of spiritual enlightenment'. Recognizing, then *resting* in the wondrous qualities and actions of Guru Rinpoche, seen in our own outer Guru, we accomplish the supreme nondual Primordial Wisdom (*jnana, yeshe*, gnosis) *siddhi* of all the buddhas. The profound *Seven Line Prayer* to Guru

Padmasambhava is the quintessential Guru Yoga practice. It is profoundly transmitted by Ju Mipham to us. [2007 *White Lotus*]

*HUM* (*HUNG*) is cleansing dharma rain from *OM*—compassionate Buddhadharma descending upon 'the place below', purifying and blessing all living beings—every one of us without a single exception. *HUM* is our 'supreme source identity'—Primordial Presence we are now.

Just so, outer/inner Guru blesses all who pray with authentic devotion and faith. Reciting *samadhi* 'seed syllable' *HUM* calls forth our Guru to bless us with all *siddhis,* both ordinary and sublime. *HUM* is our essential nature and authentic identity as human beings. *HUM* is seed syllable of our love-wisdom buddha mind acting in *nirmanakaya* space and time as nondual *dharmakaya* Presence of *OM*, always already present here and now, indwelling deep within us. *HUM* is our great *Ultimate Bodhicitta* light-form gift (Tib. *jinlob,* Gr. *euengelion*) naturally, effortlessly expressing itself as skillful, spontaneous compassionate *Relative Bodhicitta*—thought, intention, prayer, and engaged action/conduct for benefit of all living beings. That is unity of View, Meditation, and Action—utterly free of any future-looking hope and fear.

"*Tögal*, the path of spontaneous presence is the self-arisen supreme primordial wisdom, symbolized by the seed syllable *Hung*...expression of enlightened mind of all the Buddhas... inseparability of ground and fruit...actual *dharmakaya*, primordial Buddhahood." [Mipham 2007 *White Lotus*] Thus does Guru Yoga free us from paralyzing fear of dying.

Therefore, through patient recitation of the great *Vajra Guru Mantra*, and prayer and supplication to outer and inner Guru, do we accomplish the practice—"primordial intrinsic awareness itself"—while abiding happy in all the adversity of our precious busy lives. That is the wondrous power and poetry of Guru Yoga. *Nondual* Vajra Guru Mantra is recited in Tibetan thus:

*OM AH HUNG BENZA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG.* Thus is the weight of being here in space and time made light. Happiness Itself. *Mahasukaho!* And so we smile.

*Brief Buddhist View of Quiescent Shamatha Mindfulness.* As you engage this Guide please remain present to these two basic principles of 'mindfulness meditation'. *[Ch. VII]*

1) "Mindfulness of breathing" bestows the precious gift of observing your thoughts as the selfless, egoless *relative* natural play of *ultimate* Buddha Nature of Mind, without identifying with them, or judging them 'good' or 'bad'. Thoughts are after all merely an impermanent evanescent natural arising of the emptiness display of our diaphanous *relative* mind arising within vast boundless *ultimate* Ground of Being—our breath of many voices, luminous contrapuntal fugue of this bright primordial mindscape that is Reality Being Itself. Fear not! Thoughts and self-ego-I that engage them are inherently empty. "Emptiness cannot harm emptiness". Thoughts randomly come and go in dependence upon our present mind state awareness. They have only the power that self-ego-I *chooses* to bestow upon them. Our concept mind can be a good servant. But it's a poor master.

2) The second basic principle of Buddhist *shamatha* on Western ground is that it is an act of *The Great Love* that we are, received from deep within to which we continuously reconnect and thereby gradually awaken, breath by mindful breath, through Guru Yoga—"the source and embodiment of all refuge and the essence of all spiritual paths". Benefits of that Great Love are naturally and spontaneously given again and again to all living beings within your sphere. That includes precious Mother Earth—our little blue planet spaceship home here among the stars in vastness of finite cosmic space and time—

abiding always in perfectly subjective all-embracing Primordial Spirit Ground that is infinite *kosmos* itself.

How is it that such mindful attention to the breath is an act of love? Through the 'placement of awareness' upon 'already present' indwelling love-wisdom buddha heart buddha mind Presence of Primordial *dharmakaya* Ground, you *are* that Great Love! That all-embracing Love naturally enfolds all form. We *feel* it as romantic *eros* and selfless *agape*.

*Therefore, both happiness and unhappiness naturally arise from the present mind state upon which you choose to place your attentional awareness.* We shall soon see that your present *mind state* in due course causes and creates your present developmental *life stage*. Love-wisdom mind states beget happy compassionate mind traits. *With a bit of practice 'mindfulness of breathing' places you in the mind states you choose. You are now learning to choose your present life-world realities!* And that is a profound love-wisdom benefit to all living beings within the sphere of your life-world. Such a choice is indeed an act that spontaneously arises in timeless, selfless Primordial Great Love gravitas that unifies the elements and binds together the worlds. Entropic great gravity of Love. Now place your awareness upon *That* as it rides the breath in the belly, at the Heart, the throat, the 'third eye', and your crown.

Thus does mindfulness of breathing beget personal transformation. How? By revealing—breath by mindful breath—our selfless timeless Ground Presence naturally abiding deep within, just prior to conceptual chaos of anxiously busy self-ego-I. That Presence of Reality Itself does not always comport with our habitual 'global web of belief'. [Quine 1969] Hence we place it all in abeyance and *rest* in spacious *rigpa* Buddha Nature of Mind—upon this quiescent love of mindful breath in the body. Patience. Great peace.

**What is Mindfulness Meditation? The Four Foundations**

'Mindfulness' has many meanings. It may be construed as a secular breathing practice to quiet hyperactive thinking mind and pacify its anxiety; or as a contemplative 'spiritual practice' to open heart and mind and connect to our numinous Spirit Ground, by whatever noble name. We shall here consider it in its contemplative context as active, compassionate 'mindfulness of breathing'—deep direct nonconceptual contemplative practice as it has risen in our primary wisdom traditions—Eastern Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, and our Western Abrahamic Monotheism traditions—Judaism, Christianity, and Sufi/Islam—in the 'mystical' noetic contemplative voice of these three great traditions.

*Mindfulness Meditation.* The Buddha's 'mindfulness of breathing' (*shamatha, zhine, sati, smrti*) arose in ancient Hindu Vedic Sanatanadharma and was adapted by Gautama the Buddha for training the minds of his disciples. It was codified in 1st century *Pali Canon*. In the West a parallel contemplative tradition began in ancient Hebrew mysticism, and continued in modern Hebrew-Christian Hermetic Mysticism. [*Boaz 2022* p. 82-102]

'Mindfulness' in the West is now mainstream. We find it in its secular raiment in all of our primary institutions: education, medicine, government, business, corrections; and in its 'spiritual' meaning in Western religious practice, and in our Eastern contemplative traditions that have flourished on Western ground. [*Ch. IV*] Well, just what is 'mindfulness of breathing'? What's it good for? How may we use it to benefit 'self and others'? *[Ch. VII]*

The essence of 'mindfulness meditation' is the inward directed wisdom of 'seeing clearly'—both conceptual and contemplative—the actual nature of what Shakyamuni Buddha called in his lapidary *Satipatthana Sutra—The Four Foundations of Mindfulness*—the "four objects of mindfulness". These four 'objects' are indeed the *relationship process* of 'original awakening'—'steps' on the spiritual Path to human 'innermost secret' harmless happiness, liberation, enlightenment, then buddhahood. *A la la ho!*

*Told the Buddha, "Mindfulness of breathing is the direct path for purification of the minds of beings...for overcoming sorrow...for the disappearance of pain...and for realization of nirvana."*

That kind harmless human happiness is what mindfulness meditation is good for. It is indeed the very open secret of human happiness being here upon our precious Mother Earth.

In Buddhist tradition *The Four Foundations of Mindfulness* are, with Buddha's *Anapanasati Sutra* (*On the Full Awareness of Breathing*), the basis of all the love and wisdom that was to come from the great teaching of Shakyamuni the Buddha of this present age.

*The Four Foundations of 'Mindfulness of Breathing':*
*The Satipatthana Sutra*

1) *Mindfulness of Body* is immediate awareness of our physical body, direct awareness of being here embodied in relative material form; our human body, just as it is now. "The body in the body...It is selfless (*anatman*), impermanent (*anitya*), and subject to suffering (*duhkha, Pali. dukkha*)." Here we learn to ground the busy mind—urgent 'grounding relation' of Contemplative Science—firmly in this great gift of our spacetime earth body, precious physical vessel for our 'heart-mind of

enlightenment'. We are here now physically embodied in that present vast Primordial Awareness Ground of Being.

2) *Mindfulness of Feeling* is being present, mindful and aware of "the feeling in feelings", our sense/emotional response to being here. Now we learn to ground the mind in loving acceptance of our natural feeling nature, the 'felt sense' of our innermost *buddic* love-wisdom mind, before it arises as concept and belief. As with the body, 'feeling' is also selfless, impermanent, and subject to the suffering of samsaric existence in space and time.

That selfless human feeling capacity is as well the mode of feeling our profound gratitude for this precious gift (*jinlob*) of our life, just as it is now, adversity and all; and our devotion to the treasured 'Three Jewels' of the Path: the spiritual master or Lama, or Guru seen as the Buddha; the Dharma or teaching of the Buddha; and the loving fiery crucible of the Sangha or spiritual community. For Christianity these Three Jewels are the Christ, the Teaching of the Christ as expressed in both canonical and non-canonical Old and New Testament scripture, and the Church in its several holy vestments. [Boaz 2026]

3) *Mindfulness of Mind* is mindful awareness of and non-identification with our adventitious fleeting egocentric thoughts and myriad negative and positive emotions that ride them. Our mind too is ultimately selfless, impermanent, and disposed to human suffering. Our scattered diaphanous thoughts randomly come and go. Nondual *essential rigpa* Presence knows them as empty of 'self'. So we do not judge them good or bad. We learn to find humor in the comedy-drama of our precious lives. Are you really always right? Center of the universe? Superior to nearly everyone? Mindfulness of Mind is 'letting being be as it is'.

Buddha told, "Rest your weary mind and let being be as it is; all things are perfect exactly as they are." That is the *ultimate* View. Incredulous indeed to those of us stuck in conceptual *relative* view—fearful world of self-ego-I. Ultimate 'Big Mind' embraces relative 'Small Mind'. Thus are Buddha's Two Truths a prior and present *one truth unity (dzog).*

4) *Mindfulness of Phenomena* (*dharmas*) that appear to the mind and body is bringing selfless mindful awareness to any and all arising phenomenal experience, moment to moment, at the instant of its arising in and to our human body-mind. With practice we learn to let such ultimately illusory relative appearing phenomena 'self-liberate' (*rang drol*) at the very instant of arising, before it sweeps us away in the thought and action that causes 'negative karma'. That is nondual ultimate view and buddhadharma practice.

Buddha's *Four Foundations of Mindfulness* are as well the key to understanding the prior unity of objective *Science* and its panpsychic/kosmopsychic nondual perfectly subjective *Spirit* Ground. [*Appendix A* below; Boaz 2023 *The Prior Unity of Science and Spirit*]

All arising phenomena are but display of primeval 'basic space' (*chöying*) of *dharmakaya* Awareness 'groundless' Ground, bright lucid love-wisdom mind Presence of That—our indwelling always already present Buddha mind—inherently pristine and 'primordially pure *(kadak)* from the beginning'. We observe such arising phenomena like a loving mother observes her child at play. You are that mother. And you are that child.

In 'Mindfulness of Phenomena' we see the phenomenal experiences of mind as the Nature of Mind itself—'basic space' of *dharmakaya Ground*—selfless, impermanent, interdependent

(*pratitya samutpada*) and interconnected; gently embracing each one of us. Formless primordial *dharmakaya* is not a *thing*. It is nondual Source Ground of everything.

That all-embracing View changes everything! From that ultimate View arises Dzogchen 'non-doing' *ma gom* 'nonmeditation'—*Wu-Wei* letting being be as it is. This 'Path' results in *bodhicitta* 'Action' that is 'The Fruition' of inner freedom from adventitious suffering, and of authentic compassionate harmless human happiness—Happiness Itself. View, Path and its Fruition are always already a prior yet present invariant *one truth unity (dzög).* Padmasambhava Guru Rinpoche revealed that "The only way to realize Ultimate Truth is through the Relative Truth of the Path. Practice these two as a unity."

Yes, this *ultimate* interdependent nature of all arising phenomena (*dharmata*) is none other than vast empty space of nondual boundless Primordial Awareness *dharmakaya* Ground, 'basic space' (*chöying, dharmadhatu*) of all appearing *relative* form, and of our mindful contemplative grounding practices that realize, then compassionately actualize it in our busy lives via *bodhicitta*—thought, intention, and engaged love-wisdom conduct for the relative and ultimate benefit of all living beings, including our precious Mother Earth.

All four *Satipatthanas* are seen to be unified, even if not yet fully realized, through Buddha's 'mindfulness of breathing'. Thus may we see clearly the wisdom of prior and present noetic nondual *ultimate* unity of all *relative* arising phenomena—beyond duality of a subjective knower and its separate objects of experience; beyond that dreadful mind-body subject-object split. *Relative mindfulness of breathing is the contemplative foundation of ultimate Ati Dzogchen.* Mindful shamatha is indeed the first of the *Four Dzogchen Yogas*, as we shall see. So now let your relative deity

mantra practice recede into its *sambhogakaya* background and *rest* in ultimate, lucid nondual *dharmakaya* Ground of Being itself.

Thus, is mindfulness meditation (*shamatha, zhine, sati, smrti*) the basis of 'penetrating insight', the clear seeing of *vipashyana* (Pali *vipassana*) that together reveal the absence and emptiness/*shunyata* of any *ultimate* intrinsic existence of this *relative* spacetime form. Now *feel* for 60 seconds that selflessness and impermanence of all such appearing yet apparitional phenomena arising from the Ground.

Mindfulness meditation cultures wisdom and love—our indwelling original love-wisdom mind—luminous Buddha heart Buddha mind *Presence* of spacious Primordial Awareness Ground of Being itself, timeless vast *kosmos* whole in whom this all arises, participates, and is instantiated. For Longchenpa the 'omniscient one' (2001 *Chöying Dzöd*):

> With no time frame, this spaciousness is equal to space itself... The Ati Dzogchen approach reveals the absence of [cause and effect], a single state of equalness...inseparable from the [acausal] nondual ultimate...infinite and boundless without fixed depth or extent...supremely spacious expanse that is the primordially enlightened ground of being...beyond the cage of philosophy...you rest in infinite evenness... openness, oneness...natural place of rest.

"Mindfulness of Breathing" bestows upon our human embodied mind the nondual Ati Dzogchen capacity to approach, connect with, recognize, then realize, beyond concepts, this always present Presence of *ultimate* Primordial Awareness "Ground of Being"—Nature of Mind in whom ordinary *relative* mind and its experience unfolds. Because these two seemingly separate dimensions of mind—ultimate and relative—are utterly indivisible this miracle of realization is "Already present and accomplished from the very beginning...To abide here without

seeking is the Meditation." [Middle Way founder Nagarjuna] Human happiness is the always present Fruition of *That*. That is the Tibetan Vajrayana Fruitional View.

We've seen that the Buddha's Two Truths are an ontologically prior, phenomenally present 'innermost secret' *one truth unity*, invariant throughout all human reference frames and emotional-spiritual states and stages. It is via these Two Truths that we know our nondual primordial *dharmakaya* Being Ground. And through the Buddha's Four Noble Truths we enter and exit relative samsara arising within "spacious timeless oneness" of that ultimate "primordially enlightened ground of being"—above and beyond any concept about it.

Therefore, our scattered limited 'ordinary mind', because it is perforce already embraced and subsumed by perfectly subjective Primordial Awareness Ground itself, is inherently limpid, lucid, open and pure, like vast empty space of sky. Yes, that is Vajrayana ultimate 'Fruitional View'. Here this 'ordinary mind' of ours naturally, spontaneously brims with compassionate thought, intention, and engaged action for the benefit of living beings—even as it still clings a bit to its narcissistic sense of self.

Hence, in the great Buddhist Mahayana tradition such compassionate skillful means/wisdom is known as altruistic *bodhichitta*, literally 'heart-mind of enlightenment'. In the Buddhist Theravada tradition this wisdom of kindness is known as "purity of heart". We'll soon see that our Buddha heart Buddha mind pervades all three Buddhist Tenet Systems, and all three of the Buddha's providential Three Turnings of his Dharma Wheel.

That buddha nature is our natural, vivid, timeless indwelling love-wisdom mind, by whatever lofty name. It furthers one to settle into, then *rest* in that mindful, always present Presence (*rigpa, vidya*) of freedom, clarity, and bliss. *What does love-wisdom mind feel like? Peaceful equanimity in face of inevitable human*

*adversity. Happiness and adversity arise together!* "Pain is inevitable; suffering is optional." [Dalai Lama] Our suffering is sufferable. But don't *believe* it! It's beyond belief. Told Buddha, "*Ehi Passika—come and see for yourself.*"

*'Basic Goodness'.* This great *kosmos process* of cosmic phenomenal form arising within its Primordial Awareness emptiness Ground or Base (*gzhi rigpa*) is, in a word, '*good*'. That is for we human beings the inherently positive 'basic goodness' of this wondrous cosmic gift of spacetime reality; great gift (*jinlob, euengelion*) of our body and mind here in relative space and time. It is that *feeling* embodiment in timeless, ultimately illusory but relatively all too real spacetime form in which we learn to open and receive this compassionate mindful open secret of human happiness. Indeed, there is here no 'timeless time' to lose.

Hence, *The Four Foundations of Mindfulness* become 'skillful means' for awakening to our indwelling selfless love-wisdom happiness upon the mindful breath. It is both relative and ultimate remedy for terrible human suffering caused by atavistic 'primal ignorance' (*avidya, marigpa, hamartia*/sin)—adventitious obscuring *Attraction* (grasping desire, greed, pride), and *Aversion* (fear-anger, ill will, hatred) that mortal flesh is heir to.

Our indwelling lucid love-wisdom mind disperses dark 'clouds of unknowing' and ignorance that obscure the all-illuminating sun of our actual nature, very 'clear light' (*ösel*) Buddha Nature of Mind—nondual *dharmakaya* Being Ground personified as 'all good' Adi Buddha Samantabhadra. *There can be no cessation of human suffering without shamatha 'mindfulness of breathing' with its clear bright clarity of vipashyana penetrating insight.*

Our wisdom understanding of the unity of the *Four Foundations of Mindfulness* is, as we have seen, at once the realization of the prior and always present invariant *one truth*

*unity* (*dzög*) of the Buddha's Two Truths, relative and ultimate—Ju Miphan's "coalescence" of relative phenomenal form and its ultimate perfectly subjective Primordial Awareness emptiness 'groundless' Ground of Being. That primeval source is 'groundless' because it too is absent and empty any whit of intrinsic absolute existence. How does that emptiness Ground exist? "Emptiness itself is established by relative human conceptual minds." [H.H. Dalai Lama] Yes. Two Truths of form and emptiness are an 'interdependently arisen' one truth unity.

Just so, Buddha taught the *Four Profundities*: "Form is empty; emptiness is form. Form is not other than emptiness; emptiness is not other than form." *[Heart Sutra]* The Two Truths. Ontic prior and phenomenal always present one truth unity (*dzog/completion*).

From the Buddha's own enlightenment realization of this indivisible prior unity of his Two Truths—relative form and its ultimate emptiness Awareness Ground of Being—arises his teaching on the prior and present unity of his Four Noble Truths, the fourth of which is the Noble Eightfold Path to liberation from the suffering of *samsara* seeking *nirvana* with its endless painful cycle of existence that is "birth, old age, sickness, and death".

'Basic Goodness' of the 'skillful means' of the Four *Satipatthana Foundations of Mindfulness* represent the penultimate 7th stage wisdom yoga—'Right Mindfulness' of Buddha's noble Eightfold Path. That opens into final 8th stage 'Right Wisdom/Samadhi', which itself has four stages of mindful *dhyana* meditation. That all results in ultimate equanimity (*upeksha*) and final fruition of changeless 'unborn, uncreated' buddhahood—our ultimate liberation and enlightenment of all buddhas of the 'three times'—past, present, future. And yes, that great freedom is the open secret of human happiness—Happiness Itself—ultimate harmless happiness that cannot be lost. [Boaz 2020 *Ch. V*]

*What is the Relationship of the Four Satipatthanas to the Buddha's Four Noble Truths?* Mindfulness of Body and Mindfulness of Feeling illumine both *The Truth of Suffering,* physical body and mental-emotional suffering, and as well *The Truth of the Cause of Suffering*. Mindfulness of Mind reveals *The Truth of The Cessation of Suffering*. And Mindfulness of Phenomena—selfless (*anatman*), impermanent (*anitya*), and empty interdependent nature (*pratitya samutpada*) of phenomena—edifies unified *Eightfold Path* to the cessation of suffering that is our ultimate indwelling buddhahood. [Boaz 2020 *Ch. II*]

How does this *ultimate* spiritual metaphysic map onto *relative* objective Science? The Modern Scientific Materialist ideological pogrom against the metaphysics of human spirituality may be seen as a naïve and unlettered 'confirmation bias' that entirely rules out the nonconceptual nondual 'valid cognition' of our great wisdom traditions! *[Appendix A]*

## Buddhism: Two Truths Unity, Three Turnings of the Wheel, Three Tenet Systems, Four Noble Truths, Four Dzogchen Yogas, Six Mahamudra Dharmas

By his own accord Gautama Shakyamuni, the Buddha received his *full bodhi* love-wisdom mind enlightenment while 'sitting quietly', practicing 'mindfulness of breathing', and subtly chanting the Hindu Vedic mantra *OM* (*AUM*). After many trials he realized primordial unity of the Two Truths of the very nature of reality itself—suchness, thatness, *tathata, tattva, noesis, chönyi, quidditas*. The Two Truths, ultimate and relative, are the invariant *one truth unity* and indivisibility of *ultimate* Primordial Awareness—selfless, formless, timeless, spacious, emptiness Ground of Being

innermost *Presence*—with *relative* form and we beings who arise in it; and are never separate from that *dharmakaya* Ground.

Prince Siddartha Gautama of the Nepal *Shakya* clan realized with perfect clarity and yogic bliss our nondual Primordial Awareness Wisdom (*jnana, yeshe,* gnosis) wherein relative form and its ultimate timeless emptiness Ground of Being abide interdependently as a prior and present unity—a relation of identity, equality, and sameness (*samatajnana*).

As Buddhist Middle Way founder Nagarjuna told 600 years later, in such a nondual ultimate view, "There is not the slightest difference between [relative] *samsara* and [ultimate] nirvana." Upon this vast perfect realization Gautama, now the Buddha, gently touched our Mother Earth and exclaimed, "Earth is my witness!" His 'mindfulness of breathing' brings that *kosmic* primordial love-wisdom mind down to earth for us, and providentially, fearlessly grounds it in his own, and our own earth body buddha heartmind—so that relative and ultimate benefit may arise for all living beings. *Emaho!*

A buddha is one who is fully awake (*full bodhi*) to that interdependent *(tendrel)* Two Truths unity that is *relative* appearing phenomenal reality and *ultimate* Primordial Awareness Ground in whom this all arises. Such a one naturally desires to assuage the 'primal ignorance' (*marigpa, avidya*) that causes terrible suffering (*dukkha*) for those human and animal beings who are not awake to that great truth. The bodhisattva—we buddhas in training—assiduously practices that joyous, difficult Path.

*The Three Turnings* of *Dharmachakra Wheel* is the Mahayana reckoning as to how this liberating *relationship* accomplishes its wondrous love-wisdom result. The *Dharmachakra Parvartana Sutra* reveals this great process for the benefit of all living beings. Shakyamuni the Buddha taught his love and wisdom dharma in

different ways in accordance with the spiritual capacity of his human listeners. So he taught both outer exoteric and inner esoteric Dharma. The idea of Three Turnings was first introduced in the *Samdhinirmocana Sutra* of the Third Turning of Middle Way Madhyamaka Yogachara school (*cittamatra*).

What does this mean for all of us being here in this difficult realm of relative, impermanent (*anitya*) phenomenal space and time? It means that we conditioned human beings and our selfless, formless, timeless ultimate Awareness Source Ground—by whatever hallowed name—are not in any way separate from *That* (*tathata, tattva*) innermost already indwelling buddha mind. Bright Presence of That! Who am I? *That* I Am! What is my mind? *That* is my mind! *Mahasukaho*! Direct nonconceptual nondual certainty (*rigdang*) of *That*. Always already present yogi's bliss. Lucid clarity. Great joy!

Just so, in his first teaching following his perfect enlightenment Buddha taught, in the little Deer Park at Sarnath, the *First Turning of the Wheel of Dharma*. The First Turning offered a logical, realist, conceptual, and moral understanding of our selfless (*anatman*), impermanent (*anitya*), interdependent *(pratitya samutpada)* individual human liberation from suffering, and the causes of suffering. The deeper details of noself/*anatman* and emptiness/*shunyata* would be further developed in the antirealist Second Turning of the Wheel. The First Turning transmitted to the Buddha's first disciples his Four Noble Truths, the profound way of happiness for those who would be noble of body, mind and spirit.

*Buddha's Four Noble Truths:* 1) The Truth of Suffering; 2) The Truth of the Cause of Suffering; 3) The Truth of the Cessation of Suffering; and 4) The noble Eightfold Path that realizes that end of human suffering. In short, life is filled with dissatisfaction,

confusion, and physical/mental suffering; suffering has a cause, namely, atavistic egocentric primal ignorance (*avidya, marigpa, ajnana, hamartia*/sin); suffering has a cure, namely freedom from primal ignorance; and that cure is practice of the yogic Eightfold Path. Then told Buddha, "The Noble Eightfold Path is accomplished by living mindfully." [Boaz 2020 *Ch. II*]

Indeed, such a mindful compassionate life is both origin and aim of the entire Primordial Wisdom Tradition of humankind—spiritual archetype and immeasurable metric of a life well lived. Here we surrender, breath by mindful breath, our duplicitous conceptual impedimenta, and our quixotic apocryphal happiness seeking strategies, material and spiritual.

We can now see how it is that 'mindfulness of breathing' with its Four Objects of Mindfulness is the very foundation of the entire Buddhist love-wisdom Path to emotional-spiritual wholeness, the end of suffering, and authentic kind harmless human happiness.

Thus it is, from Gautama Shakyamuni Buddha's final realization of the ultimate *one truth unity* of his Two Truths—ultimate and relative—arises his 'First Turning of the Wheel of Dharma' (*Dharmachakra*), the early Hinayana or Shravakayana (Abhidharma) First Tenet System for personal *individual liberation* that includes the Four Noble Truths. The Fourth Noble Truth is of course the Eightfold Path to the ultimate human happiness that is liberation, then *full bodhi* of enlightenment, and then primordial buddhahood. Always we *rest* in *That* (*tathata, sattva, suchness*), beyond our concepts and beliefs about resting in That. So please stop reading and rest upon your breath now.

And yes, this relative path to ultimate enlightenment is grounded in the compassionate wisdom of mindfulness with its Four *Satipatthana* Foundations; its *Anapanasati* "full awareness of breathing"; and selfless *bodhicitta,* our relative thought,

intention, prayer, and engaged human action/ conduct for the benefit of all living beings.

*Metaphysics of the Three Turnings.* In the First Turning of the Wheel (Hinayana) appearing phenomena are conceptually, *independently* really real. *Ontological Realism*. In the Second Turning (Mahayana) spacetime stuff is *interdependently* ultimately 'empty of intrinsic ultimate existence', utterly beyond human concept and belief. *Ontological Antirealism*. This is the bold path not of mere Arhatship or personal liberation, but of the liberation of all living beings, love-wisdom *bodhicitta* Great Compassion (*mahakaruna*) life world dimension of the noble bodhisattva. Such a one is imbued with *upaya* or 'skillful means/method', and *Prajnaparmita,* the perfection of transcendent wisdom. These two together are *PHAT!* Such beings manifest the 'Four Immesurables' or 'Four Boundless States' (*brahmavihara*): loving-kindness (*maitri*); compassion (*karuna*); empathetic joy (*mudita*)—all three spontaneously arising within boundless equanimity (*upeksha*). The bodhisattva in 10th *bhumi* Perfection Stage is a master of the Buddha's 'mindfulness of breathing' (*shamatha, zhine, sati, smrti*) which is practiced from the very beginning. [*Ch. VII*]

Then, in the Third Turning we see the prior and present *one truth unity* of Buddha's Two Truths—the conceptual dualistic Metaphysical Realism of the phenomenal domain of Relative Truth of the First Turning—with the Ultimate Truth of the inherently empty nonexistence of form and self of the Antirealist Second Turning. The Vajrayana Third Turning reveals a prodigious Middle Way between metaphysical extremes of essentialist Realism and of nihilist Idealism. Here we find a 'Middle Way Idealism'—"Mind Only" Yogachara—of the all-subsuming dimension of that nondual one truth unity. [*Boaz 2020*] And yes, even “mind only” is free of ultimate existence.

We must conceptually approach the nonconceptual nondual one truth of this timeless unified liberation dharma *process*, that we may benefit suffering human and other living beings. We come to understand conceptually that liberation from suffering requires the utter surrender of our concepts and beliefs about it. Thus begins our psycho-emotional freedom and ultimate harmless Happiness Itself—profound happiness that cannot be lost. Thus do we learn to *choose* our realities.

Hence, 500 years after the First Turning arises *The Second Turning of the Wheel*, near Rajgir, India, on Vulture Peak Mountain—Buddha's Mahayana cause and effect teaching on selfless noself/*anatman*, emptiness/*shunyata*, and compassionate *bodhichitta*. From this great teaching arises the compassionate Mahayana Second Tenet System with its bold bodhisattva intention to liberate all sentient beings. Now emerges noble *Prajnaparamita Sutra* on 'wisdom of emptiness', then Middle Way Prasangika, conceptual foundation of nondual Ati Dzogchen. Buddha's very concise *Heart of Wisdom Sutra* ('*The Heart Sutra*') transmits the bodhisattva's love and wisdom of that Second Turning of the Wheel.

From this relative conceptual causal Middle Way (*Uma*) mindful foundation arises, in the Vajrayana Third Turning, definitive ultimate acausal nondual Indo-Tibetan Ati Dzogchen, the Great Perfection view and highest nondual *atiyoga* practice. Dzogchen is sometimes classified by Tibetan Buddhists as a Fourth Turning of the Dharma Wheel.

So yes, *The Third Turning* of the *Dharmachakra* gives us a non-nihilist Metaphysical Idealism, the *Yogachara* 'Mind Only' (*chittamatra*) school with its 'Three Natures' doctrine: 1) conceptual, dualistic, imagined, illusory *imputed nature*; 2) causal interdependent *dependent nature*; and 3) the acausal nondual perfected or *completed nature*—our *tathata*/buddha nature. Here is

revealed the Buddha's *definitive* teaching on our already present indwelling selfless (*anatman*) buddha nature (*tathagatagarbha*). Here, to Buddha's inner selfless 'noself' *anatman* emptiness is added outer emptiness-*shunyata*, the logically sound utter absence of inherent *ultimate* existence. This view utilizes conceptual logic to self-reflexively refute conceptual logic. We here skillfully enlist our prodigious human causal conceptual mind to critique its inherent limit and go beyond into the naked, acausal, 'basic space' nondual *dharmakaya* Ground of Being. Nyingma school nondual Ati Dzogchen and Kagyu Essence Mahamudra both reveal that great selfless dharma truth.

*Brief Review.* The First Turning offers an exoteric conceptual *Realism* path to liberation. The Second Turning offers an esoteric, trans-conceptual, *Antirealism*, potentially nihilist, utterly selfless Path, absent and empty any whit of the intrinsic existence of the First Turning. The Tibetan Third Turning offers the Third Tenet System with its Middle Way completion of the First and Second Turnings. That is the syncretic 'foundation' of nondual Dzogchen—human liberation grounded in depth of Buddha's Ultimate Truth. The Third Turning liberates potential confusion of the First and Second Turnings without losing the selfless nondual 'wisdom of emptiness'. We require the prior and present *unity* of all Three Turnings of the Wheel. The *Dharmachakra Parvartana Sutra* reveals that most profoundly.

Can we really understand that none of this stuff, nor our concepts and beliefs about it, *ultimately* exists? If so how? We surrender our dualistic concepts and beliefs as we turn inward toward pristine, naked, nondual *one truth unity*. Meanwhile, self and spacetime stuff still exists relatively, conventionally. So our causal ethical action/conduct is urgent.

*In the Indo-Tibetan Third Turning, to a Rangtong noself negative absence of existence of anything, including an intrinsic self-ego-I to experience it, is added a positive Shentong always already present living buddha nature essence, an indwelling selfless buddic spirit Ground Presence; 'supreme identity' present in every living being, and attainable by human beings. Yogachara thus synthesized its 'Three Natures' and the Alayavijnana with our innate buddha nature. [Ch. VI]*

[The primary buddha nature sutras are the *Tathagatagarbha Sutra*, *Lankavatara Sutra*, and the *Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra*. Good basic reading indeed.]

Tibetan Vajrayana Indian Buddhist tantras are included, with the *definitive* sutras, in the Third Turning; and are sometimes seen to constitute a Fourth Turning. Nyingma and Kagyu lineages accept both the Second and Third Turnings as definitive. Gelug school accepts only the Second Turning as definitive. Theravada accepts only the First Turning.

Clearly, Gautama our historical Buddha was physically present only at the First Turning of the Wheel. The Second Turning was 500 years later at Vulture Peak. There he turned the Wheel as a *kosmic* Buddha in his Spirit Presence as he appeared to those Buddhist wisdom bodhisattva masters via his timeless omnipresent *buddic* mindstream.

Mindful quiescent shamatha calm abiding directly (*yogi pratyaksa*) connects us to *That* (*tathata*), our always indwelling buddha heartmind essence and nature, quite beyond the frightfully foolish exuberance of our all too human habitual conceptual ideation.

*The Four Dzogchen Yogas.* From the Tibetan Buddhist Third Turning of the Dharma Wheel naturally arises the Third Tenet

System with its Nyingma school *Four Dzogchen Yogas*: 1) *Shamatha* mindfulness; 2) *Vipashyana* penetrating insight; 3) *Kadak* purity of the boundless, formless, timeless, selfless, primordial awareness *dharmakaya* Ground; and 4) *Lhundrub* spontaneously manifest 'pure presence' of that nondual 'groundless' Ground.

*Kagyu Lineage and the Six Dharmas of Naropa.* Now as to the Third Turning of Buddha's *Dharmachakra,* the Tibetan Vajrayana Kagyu Mahamudra lineage tradition has revealed the prodigious *Six Dharmas of Naropa.* The great Nyingma lineage Dzogchen master Longchenpa (1308-1364) learned the *Six Dharmas* from the great Karma Kagyu Third Karmapa Rangjung Dorje, then composed a profound commentarial exegesis entitled *The Refinement of Complete Lucidity: A Condensation of the Six Yogas of Naropa*.

Naropa (956-1040), disciple of Tilopa, learned the *Six Dharmas* in India, synthesized them into a complete tantric dharma system, then transmitted them to his heart-son Marpa, who taught them to Milarepa, then on to *his* disciple Gampopa who further developed the ancient Indian and Tibetan tantric Mahamudra "Great Seal" teaching, the 'highest' of which is direct master-to-disciple Essence Mahamudra—beyond sutra and tantra Mahamudra. The Great Seal is the indelible imprint of prior and present unity of the primordial 'wisdom of emptiness'. Mahamudra and Dzogchen are tantric paths for direct nondual wisdom/gnosis realization of "The Nature of Mind *[sem nyi]* as it is"—just prior to our dualistic concepts and beliefs about it. And that is its 'buddha nature' foundation in the Yogachara buddha nature sutras and shastras, and for the 8th century mahasiddhas of the Indian Pala Dynasty, especially Saraha. Mahamudra practice is also known as *Sahajayoga*. The primary sub-school of Kagyu lineage is Karma Kagyu, headed by the Karmapa. That great Kagyu wisdom has entered all four lineages of Tibetan Buddhism.

Broadly construed, the *Six Dharmas of Naropa* comprise a complete tantric system of six Completion Stage yogic practices: *tummo* yoga and illusory body yoga (*gyulu*) to be practiced during the day; dream yoga (*milam*) and luminous clear light yoga (*ösel*) for the practice of the night; and finally liminal *bardo* yoga and *phowa* near the moment of death.

The Six Yogas provide the prepared yogin direct nondual knowing-feeling (*yogi pratyaksa*) of this illusory dreamlike nature of appearing reality—selfless, egoless, full *bodhi* wakeful clear light clarity (*ösel*) of Buddha's wisdom of emptiness. Liminal *bardo* and *phowa* practice then facilitate the 'transference of the mental body' during the dying process. In Nyingma Nyingthig that may even be "accomplished" before physical death.

Hence, the assiduous practice of Buddha's 'mindfulness of breathing' grounds the entire Buddhadharma by transforming vacuous concepts and negative human emotion into prior truth of our always already present *buddic* love-wisdom mind awareness—*Ultimate Bodhicitta* expressed as *Relative Bodhicitta*—the very secret of human happiness.

Buddha's shamatha 'mindfulness of breathing' founds and grounds nondual Ati Dzogchen and Essence Mahamudra practice as we awaken to our own 'innermost secret' bright buddha mind Presence. Some sunny day we shall all together arise and shine in that spacious unborn place where this wakeful dream of being abides. How wonderful! *Emaho!*

*Buddhist Ontology.* 'Ontology' is a conceptual pursuit of the nature of Being. Middle Way *Uma* ontology is Dependent Arising. 'Ontology', 'Being', 'Reality' are mere Relative Truth conceits in pursuit of fundamental nondual 'Ultimate Truth', the very Gound of Being itself. The Buddha told that such

*concepts* do not further our release from suffering. His Four Noble Truths are what we must practice.

And we shall soon see that that 'pursuit' requires a bit of relative 'conceptual' ontology that then opens into the prior and ever-present *unity* of the Buddha's Two Truths, dualistic relative, and nondual ultimate.

## Meditation: Buddha Nature, Christ Mind, and Selfless I AM Presence

The term 'meditation' in Western Tradition is translated in Hebrew as *haga*, in Greek as *melete*, and becomes *meditatio* in Latin which literally means "murmur softly the name of God", as in deep contemplative prayer—subtle chanting of deity mantra prayer. That quiet 'murmur' of mantra prayer gently vibrates the entire body-mind in peaceful harmonic clarity and bliss of trans-conceptual nondual primordial godhead, above and beyond our dualistic theistic and religious concepts and beliefs about 'God'. Good vibes indeed.

In the East, vocal or sub-vocal *OM AH HUM* upon the Spirit breath—*prana-lung-ch'i-pneuma*/holy spirit—may be understood as a root mantra prayer that is our instant connection to nondual Awareness Ground in whom arises both meditation and meditator.

Such *meditatio* practice is the foundation of Greek *metanoia* and Christian *hesychasm*, transcending conceptual *nous*/reason to engage sublime peace and yogic bliss of indwelling immediate innermost Presence of nondual godhead—by whatever holy name—luminous, numinous, formless, timeless, selfless, empty *ultimate* Primordial Awareness-Consciousness 'groundless' Ground; vast boundless

enfolded whole of all unfolding arising *relative* spacetime form. Buddha told, "Form is empty; emptiness is form." "The threefold nature of our ground [is] empty essence, luminous nature, and all-suffusing love". [Klein 2023]. Such direct *(yogi pratyaksa)* nondual love-wisdom perforce rides the spirit-breath in the belly—Hebrew *ruakh,* Greek *pneuma,* Latin *spiritus*. That life force *prana* spirit energy pervades the whole of the human body-mind, and of Life Itself. Thus do we awaken to the original truth (*aletheia*) as that lucid indwelling Presence.

Jesus the Christ taught foundational mindfulness practice as mindful *kenosis*—'self-emptying' or surrender of self-ego-I via deep contemplative prayer upon the *pneuma* 'Holy Spirit' breath. Here the troubled self takes refuge in *selfless* Hebrew "I Am That I Am Presence" of Enoch, Moses and the Prophets (*Isaiah 41:10*), and the indwelling *christos* Presence of Jesus the Christ (*Luke 17,* and the *Book of John*). That Presence bespeaks selfless *pneuma-prana jnana* love-wisdom 'breath of life', 'holy spirit', divine breath of *Abba*, infinite, all-embracing nondual God the primordial Father of Yeshua, Jesus the Christ. Thus, did he fulfill the Hebrew "Law of the Prophets". [Boaz 2022 pp. 82-85] Indeed, that nondual godhead breathes us all. That *prana holy spiritus* open selfless Presence I AM Now! *Tat Tvam Asi!* That I Am!

The masters of our wisdom traditions have taught this great truth of egoless, trans-conceptual mindfulness meditation—by whatever name or form (*namarupa*)—as skillful means to recognize, then connect to and rest in always present lucid nondual Spirit Presence of the Primordial Deep (*Bathos*) that is our divine human origin, aim, and destiny.

We shall learn in these pages to *realize* that miracle via the simple "placement of attention/awareness" upon our indwelling nondual Buddha mind, Christ nature, *Tao hsing ch'i*, Parabrahman—selfless Presence of the Primordial Ground in

whom naturally arises the positive, compassionate mind states that we *choose*, always embracing our common, fruitless, apocryphal materialist happiness seeking strategies. "It is already present and accomplished from the very beginning. To rest here without seeking; that is the Meditation." [Arya Nagarjuna]

## Primordial Awareness:
## Dzogchen Fruitional View of the Ground

Ati Dzogchen View and practice *directly* recognizes *(yogi pratyaksa)* the essential nature of nondual *ultimate* Primordial Awareness Ground of Being—*tatatha*, thatness, suchness, *gzhi rigpa*—beyond our habitual concepts and beliefs about it. Subtle luminous already present *Presence* of *That*. Dzogchen View of that emptiness/*shunyata* 'groundless' Ground *(gzhi, rang rig yeshe)* transcends all dualistic affirmation and negation, and even the subtlest conceptual fabrication. Dzogchen is present nondual realization of *That* Awareness Ground Nature just as it is *now*—formless, timeless, selfless, perfectly subjective, spontaneous, self-liberating 'primordial purity' *(kadak)* that naturally manifests *(lhundrub* presence*)* as *relative* physical and mental form being here in space and time.

The Buddha of this present *kalpa* told it well: "Form is empty; emptiness is form." Dzogchen is our 'mind' recognizing then realizing *(rigpa)* itself as the primordial 'Nature of Mind', very nondual Ground of Being—always already awake—'essential wakefulness', by any name. Thus, do arising physical/mental appearances 'self-liberate' *(rang drol)* at the very moment of their arising to mind, before a self-ego-I can grasp and cling to them thereby creating alienation and human and animal suffering—and thus negative karma.

It is crucial to conceptually unpack some of these heady terms lest we reify and objectify spacious Primordial Awareness which is innately perfectly subjective nondual.

The term 'Ground of Being' subtly implies that being here in time arises in some kind of a prior existing 'real' ontological substrate. That is to say, such terms risk the reification or fabrication of a dualistic, separate, permanently existing, basal, 'all-subsuming' grand *affirming* 'real' entity worthy of our para-theistic prayer and worship.

So the term 'Ground of Being' *affirms* God-like metaphysical *existence of something* that is, in itself, positive. Such ontic dualism offers hope (and fear) against the spooky *negation* that is our terror of nonexistence. Affirmation and negation. Conceptual dualism.

Such an inherently dualistic, conditional conceptual strategy works for the Neoplatonic causal Orthodoxy of Christian theism; but not for Middle Way Madhyamaka Buddhism, and even less so for acausal, nondual Ati Dzogchen. For both causal Madhyamaka and acausal Dzogchen, phenomena that do exist *relatively* is conditioned by causality—cause and effect. However, *ultimately* none of that intrinsically exists! Stuff exists relatively, but not ultimately.

Thus does the lofty *concept* 'Ground of Being' tend toward *affirmation* of the metaphysical extreme of 'eternalism', while Madhyamaka *(Prasangika)* tends toward the metaphysical extreme of 'nihilism'. Gautama Shakyamuni Buddha discovered a centrist 'middle path' that avoids such metaphysical extremes—if we will *choose* to rest in it.

For apophatic *via negativa* (negation) Christian theology (Paul Tillich) God is not seen as a 'Ground of Being'. Here God is "not being, and not nonbeing". God is thus nondual, beyond our concepts about God. 'Apophatic' (Gr. *apophasis*) means *negation* of any ultimate reality with no *affirmation*—indicating not what ultimate reality is, but what it is not. Yes. "Neti Neti:

not this, not that, not anything at all." Why bother with such a distinction? The human being desires that which is positive and affirming. Apophatic semiotic usage disciplines human habitual concept-mind in its dualistic (either true or false but not both) tendency toward obsessive reification and objectification of all appearing physical/mental reality. This is not to say that the human mind cannot know and feel its experience. It says rather that conceptual mind alone cannot grasp the great whole *(mahabindu, thigle chenpo)* of all our appearing physical/mental realities.

Our Great Wisdom Traditions utilize apophatic cognition in its subtlest nondual teaching: For Western Christian mysticism (Pseudo-Dionysius, Hermetic Christian Kabbalah, Meister Eckhart), as for Eastern wisdom, nondual God is not being, not non-being, not unity, not multiplicity. Nondual Ground is subtler and transcends our dualistic concepts and beliefs about a theistic Creator God.

Just so, for Buddhist Madhyamaka the great emptiness/ *mahashunyata* is not existence, not nonexistence, not both, not neither—utterly beyond our concepts and beliefs. For Ati Dzogchen, ultimate reality is merely the acausal, nondual *Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen*. For Taoism, "Tao that can be named is not eternal Tao." For Advaita Vedanta, "Neti Neti", not this, not that.

For nondual Advaita Vedanta 'Ground of Being' is not a *causal* 'Ground of Being' but nondual Nirguna Brahman, beyond dualistic Creator God that is Surguna Brahman. *That* Awareness is *kham braham*, nondual *Satchitananda*—Being Consciousness Bliss.

For Buddhist Middle Way, especially *Madhyamaka Prasangika*, the notion 'Ground of Being' constitutes conceptual reification of *shunyata*/emptiness and is therefore a metaphysical category mistake. For Ati Dzogchen 'basic space' *(chöying) dharmakaya* 'groundless Ground of Being' (*gzhi*, Base, Ground) is

perforce perfectly subjective, nonconceptual, and nondual—beyond the conceptual duality of negation and affirmation.

So yes, 'Ground' is an apophatic negation of intrinsic existence—*'neti neti; not this, not that'*. The emptiness Ground is *not* an object, thing, foundation, prior "First Cause", deity, or theistic God. Rather, 'Ground of Being' indicates a skillful *process* that directs us inward toward intimate, pure, unborn, uncreated, acausal, nondual *ultimate* Primordial Awareness itself—even as *That* naturally and spontaneously manifests as dualistic, *relative* causal space and time *($E=mc^2$).* Let us then *not* reify a relative affirming *concept about* the nondual Ultimate into an absolute existing emptiness Ground of that nondual Ultimate.

Hence, apophatic discourse is a pragmatic, useful cognitive 'position', but must not become a conceptual absolute upon which our concept-mind proudly stands. Language cannot describe nondual ultimate reality. Yet it points to lucid clarity and yogi's bliss grounding our habitual semiotic 'truth functional' (either true or false) dualistic thinking that desires to fabricate its own conceptual Absolute Reality. Ultimately all cognitive 'positions' must be negated and surrendered into luminous, blissful, groundless emptiness. Wonder of wonders, abiding *now* in *That* (*tathata*/suchness) is nondual liberation ≈ enlightenment.

Should we dare to further conceptualize this inherently nonconceptual mythopoetic metacognitive process, we might venture the conjecture that this nondual 'state of presence' represents the 'one truth unity' of Buddha's Two Truths—relative form and ultimate emptiness.

*The Dzogchen Apophatic View.* We must understand that the Dzogchen View is not a philosophy, and not a metaphysical ontological 'position'. The nondual acausal Dzogchen View is not a conceptual view. Skillful means/method and meta-cognitive *Tathata*

*(*thusness, suchness, *chönyi)* may be less problematic terms than 'Ground of Being' to represent the Nondual Ultimate because it is less likely to lead to fruitless, objectifying, reifying, conceptual metaphysical speculation. The semiotic emotive aura about *tathata/suchness* invites intimacy and 'nowness'. And that is easier to surrender, let go, and dissolve into ultimate nondual boundless emptiness/*shunyata* itself.

Therefore, our terms 'Ground of Being' and '*tathata*/ suchness' need not be metaphysical absolutes which we may worship, grasp and cling, but relative pragmatic cognitive conceptual tools intended to self-reflexively surrender and transcend themselves in that nondual Ultimate that includes this all. Provisional, relative self-liberating cognition that deconstructs itself. Concepts pointing beyond concepts. Transcend and include. Nondual holism; beyond conceptual ontology.

That subtle modality transcends any need for a 'view' at all. Dzogchen utilizes apophatic 'negation' to establish lucid 'clear light' clarity *(salba, ösel),* which is of course emotively and pragmatically affirmative. Thus does Dzogchen teaching *feel* affirmative. So relatively it is. And Madhyamaka, Advaita Vedanta, Taoism, Christianity also use such conceptual negation.

Ati Dzogchen transcends yet includes the conceptual negation/affirmation dichotomy by way of its acausal, groundless, soteriological (salvation) triune liberating nondual 'primordial wisdom' (*yeshe, jnana,* gnosis). That love-wisdom is, as we have seen many times in these pages, *kadak* primordial purity; *lhundrub* manifest spontaneous presence; and *thugs rje* (*tukje*) compassionate 'responsiveness'. This triad demonstrates how it is that arising reality may naturally continue to arise in the absence of our dualistic concepts and beliefs about it. Longchenpa reminds us that while the nondual Ultimate Ground of Being is itself empty of intrinsic existence, "it may appear as anything at all." Relative/Ultimate unity.

Just so, in always already present primordial *rigpa presence,* such conceptual dichotomies as negation/affirmation, true/false, good/evil need not arise in our awareness.

Dzogchen thus moves us beyond 'affirmation'. How so? Affirmation perforce causes dualism by freezing the dynamical relation between relative objective form and its perfectly subjective ultimate 'supreme source'. Nondual original *Presence* of *That*. Dzogchen 'primordial wisdom' does not affirm that the 'Primordial Awareness Ground of Being' is an entity, substance, or all-subsuming *thing*; indeed that such a thing exists at all. "Essential *rigpa* is not established as anything at all." Thus does Ati Dzogchen transcend yet include apophatic negation. Dzogchen does not assert existence or nonexistence, enlightenment or ignorance, affirmation or negation; or any other conceptual false dichotomy.

Exoteric 'outer' religious consciousness desires positive 'affirmation' theologies. Highest Ati Dzogchen View transcends such cognitive dualities. Ati Dzogchen is not a superior conceptual philosophical view over and above all other relative views. Its View is *ipso facto* acausal, trans-conceptual, and nondual, quite beyond the judgments of our common human deep background conceptual "global web of belief". [Quine 1969]

Dzogchen 'Ground, Path, and Fruition' are therefore meaningful conceptual icons that represent nondual realization of pure *primordial awareness itself*, beyond concept/belief.

Thus it is, Ati Dzogchen does not provide answers to questions *about* the ultimate nature of reality. It removes the need and desire for a *conceptual* answer altogether. Meanwhile 'pure perfect primordial presence' of that living process remains now for all of us. That 'clear light' wisdom *process* is concept-mind recognizing, even realizing itself as the lucid, blissful *presence* of its luminous nondual nature. *That (tathata)* is 'basic space' *(chöying)* where our words and concepts *rest* in nondual awareness, the very

'nature of mind'. And *That* is 'positive affirmation' beyond 'name and form' *(namarupa).* When we name it we objectify it and thus lose its essence and nature to mere concepts and beliefs about it.

So nondual 'Primordial Ground of Being' *(kadak)* naturally manifests itself as present indwelling *lhundrub* Presence of our compassionate Buddha Nature of Mind, indivisible from its 'Ground'. That Presence is human Happiness Itself. *Mahasukaho!*

*Dzogchen Active Nondual Nonmeditation.* In the Vajrayana Dzogchen Fruitional View our contemplative path *relational process* is natural, effortless, selfless *Wu-Wei*—non-goal directed, non-trying, non-doing; present "nonmeditation" *(magom)*—indwelling, intimate continuity of intrinsic timeless Primordial Awareness Presence of nondual *dharmakaya* 'groundless' Ground of Being, 'perfect as it is'. No need to fix it. Samsara cannot be fixed! Instead of *trying* to change self and others, "Let being be as it is". Adversity and happiness arise together. We *accept and respond* with *active*, altruistic indwelling love-wisdom Presence.

Here we learn, as Jigme Lingpa told, "Take the fruition as the path." That is to say, we take as the basis of the Path not the Mahayana *causes* of our ignorance and suffering, but the Vajrayana *fruit* of our always present, "already accomplished" liberation and enlightenment. And yes, awakening to *That* (*tathata*) great truth requires a bit of patient practice. Thus do we train unruly concept mind to relax into and *rest (rigdang)* in now present union of bliss, clarity, and the wisdom of emptiness—natural profundity of that View and Presence—luminous 'primordial purity' of formless, selfless 'basic space' (*chöying*) that is our original *invictus dharmakaya* reality 'Base' (*gzhi rigpa*). It furthers one to practice *That*.

[In some Tibetan Buddhist lineages nondual timeless primordial awareness 'truth body' that is *dharmakaya* 'groundless'

Ground is conceptually portioned into *jnanadharmakaya,* 'wisdom truth body', and *svabhavakaya*, all-inclusive 'nature truth body'.]

In any case, that all-subsuming, all-pervasive continuity of essential, nonconceptual, luminous, lucid, intrinsic Primordial Awareness Wisdom Ground (*yeshe, jnana, rigpa,* gnosis) is felt, known, and realized through Dzogchen 'nonmeditation'—active, fluent, direct "meditative stability without support" of useful deity practice and other dualistic relative meditation practice (*lungdang*). That *contemplative essence* is directly experienced (*yogi pratyaksa*) in Longchenpa's (2008) effortless, spontaneous nondual (subject-object union) "meditative absorption" (*rigdang*), beyond meditational objects of support. *Rest* here now.

Middle Way Madhyamaka Prasangika is often seen as the conceptual causal foundation of acausal nondual Ati Dzogchen View and practice. Here our metaphysical plot thickens. The philosophical Subjective Idealism of the Madhyamaka Yogachara Mind Only (*chittamatra*) school has, since the 4th century CE, taught that all appearances arising from *dharmakaya* Ground are essentially subjective illusory emanations and activities of 'mind only', absent any whit of objective solidity. 'Mind Only' ultimately exists! But does it?

In opposition to this view, Madhyamaka Prasangika views even mind itself to be absent and empty any iota of intrinsic existence. Thus do they accuse Yogachara Mind Only school of the philosophical extreme of absolutism (substantialism, eternalism). Just so, Yogachara views Prasangika as falling into the metaphysical extreme of nihilism—*nothing* ultimately exists! Not even our indwelling nondual Buddha Nature of Mind.

We shall in *Chapter VI* resolve this prickly 2000 year old Middle Way false dichotomy as to absolute existence (*svabhava*) *or* absolute nonexistence (*abhava*) of stuff—both of which constitute a falling from Buddha's syncretic centrist Middle Way teaching.

*"Attention, Attention, Attention!"* Mindful shamatha attentional awareness is said to be a proto-conceptual foundation of nonconceptual, acausal, nondual Dzogchen View and practice—beyond rational 'scientific' cause and effect cognition. The overall result of such acausal nondual practice is deep inner subjective and outer objective peace, yogi's bliss, and knowing-feeling contemplative *certainty* of Buddha's *one truth unity* (*dzö*g) of his Two Truths, relative and ultimate. That 'innermost secret', indwelling, always present selfless love-wisdom Presence of Ground of Being is the open secret of compassionate harmless Happiness Itself. That is what we most desire as we arise in this our beloved human form.

Shamatha 'calm abiding' mindfully directed 'attentional awareness' upon the *jnana prana pneuma spiritus* breath in our embodied form greatly empowers the contemplative object of that attention. Nondual Ati Dzogchen is naked, luminous Primordial Awareness consciousness without an object—utterly free of conceptual ideation and elaboration.

*Shamatha 'mindfulness of breathing' may be seen as a relative conscious cognitive finite portal into infinite, ultimate all-embracing nondual Awareness itself—selfless, timeless, naturally arising (non-discursive subject-object unity) 'basic space' of primordial dharmakaya 'groundless' Ground; nonconceptual Primordial Wisdom of emptiness* (*chönyi yeshe*) *of* That (*tathata, thatness, tattva, rigpa, chönyi, suchness, quidditas, metanoia, paramartha, dharmata*). *That is the subject-object unity of bliss, clarity, and nondual love-wisdom, our authentic happiness that passes all conceptual, rational, semiotic/linguistic understanding. That authentic confluent connection is harmless (ahimsa) human happiness that cannot be lost. That lucid Presence is "already present and accomplished from the very beginning", always present at Spirit Heart of the human being. As there is nothing to*

*accomplish and nothing to do (Wu-Wei) that is the basis of effortless, spontaneous, non-trying, non-doing, nondual 'nonmeditation' (ma gom)—fluent, active 'meditative stability' in essential, spacious, timeless, selfless, sublime 'meditation in action' through which we compassionately act in the world for the benefit and happiness of all living beings, including our precious Mother Earth.*

In the radical, utterly nondual view of Longchenpa 'the omniscient one' (2001 p.369), as one rests and moves in such active quiescent *buddic space* the great nondual truth is revealed:

> Even the terms 'awareness', 'dynamic energy', 'display', and 'natural freedom' are merely labels applied to facilitate understanding... Since [timeless] awareness does not exist in essence, how could anything that derives from it—a place in which things arise, the process of their arising, or their myriad display—[ultimately] exist?

So yes. That conscious continuity of natural spontaneous lucid active clarity/bliss is mindful 'nonmditation' (*magom).* Non-action of *Wu-Wei*. 'Letting being be as it is'. Nondual Primordial Awareness Ground of Being is "Perfect as it is." No need to *try* to do anything. No need to *think* about it. No need to *believe* it. You cannot improve it. You cannot fix the stuff that continuously arises within it. Yet we can *choose to respond* with love. So yes. Effortless spontaneous nonmeditation is above and beyond our concepts and beliefs about it. As Buddha told so long ago, "Rest your weary mind and let being be as it is; all things are perfect exactly as they are." Now all that you do is natural, effortless, spontaneous, authentic, and kind.

But wait! For a noble, ambitiously altruistic self-ego-I abiding here on the mean streets of an all too real samsaric *relative* space and time, such an *ultimate* trans-conceptual love-wisdom motif will seem utterly remiss! So meanwhile, as these

prodigious Two Truths reveal their inexorable *process* of unification—in the individual and so in the collective—*be* active love-compassion for all living beings. Include our precious Mother Earth.

The bleak alternative to such a love-wisdom outcome is the dreaded Postmodern affliction that Dr. Andrew Holecek has renamed "PTSD—Post-Truth Samsaric Disorder". The price paid for that atavistic epic cognitive disaster is a compassionate authentic human life free of illusory hope and fear-anger. Let us then *be* here together, awake in this fiery wisdom crucible that abides fearlessly in the constant presence of our physical death.

*Presence of the Ground.* Now there can be no doubt. The profound wisdom *relative* antidote to insidious ego-self-contraction away from our *ultimate* buddha mind Presence is intimate conscious continuity of connection to our always already present indwelling nondual awake *buddic* 'I Am Presence'—selfless, timeless, formless, yes *ultimately* nonexistent 'basic space' (*chöying*) Primordial Awareness Buddha Nature of Mind—unbounded implicate order of the whole, spacious *dharmakaya* Ground of Being embracing this all. That selfless continuity of *magom* nonmeditation is our radical nondual 'supreme identity' here and now. But don't believe it. It's beyond belief. *Feel* it now upon the breath in your body.

That omnipresent formless, selfless Awareness naturally 'manifests' in form as the buddha quality of Longchenpa's "responsiveness"—inherent 'loving kindness' of our precious *Relative Bodhicitta* of intention and engaged action/conduct—arising always in this timeless 'primordial purity' of original *kadak* Ground of Being that is *Ultimate Bodhicitta*—great gift, our 'supreme identity' of that Supreme Source, very Buddha Nature of Mind.

Dear Reader, no boundary nor limit can separate you from *That*. *Why?* Because as Nagarjuna told so long ago, "It is already

present and accomplished from the very beginning." *How?* That luminous Presence of primordial timeless Awareness Ground—beyond hopeful skeptical ideation about its 'existence'—is always present within you by virtue of your incarnation from that all-embracing 'supreme source' Ground of Being into your present embodied physical and mental form. You are perforce an enfolded participating part—luminous numinous Presence—lucid imprint of that vast all-subsuming, always unfolding boundless whole, however one chooses to name it. *Emaho!* How wonderful!

Well, *who* pray tell is that? Yes. *Feel* it—far beyond your present concepts and beliefs about it—via gentle 'placement of your awareness/attention' upon the rising and falling *prana* life force spirit breath in your body (*lungdang*). Now simply *rest* in that bright empty spacious silence (*rigdang*) that you always are, without thinking about it. *Be That Now* for 60 seconds. [*Appendix B*] That is *what* it is to be happy now! Simply *feel* it upon *prana* spirit wind of your mindful breath in the belly, at the Heart, throat, third eye, and crown chakra upon the subtle central vertical channel.

Such a mindful continuity of enlightened awareness is indeed clear, bright, active, peaceful, even blissful wakefulness—'nonmeditation' of the Dzogchen Fruitional View. Rest now in That (*tathata, tattva*, suchness, *rigpa*), even as adverse spacetime stuff continues to arise. Should you be new to such freeing practice, please find a Tibetan Buddhist center, and through that a fully qualified Dzogchen master. You cannot learn highest Ati Dzogchen from reading books, nor from any other conceptual effort. That said, reading dharma books, like this one, may prepare your *approach* to clarity, peace, and authentic happiness.

Sense objects, conceptual activity, fear-anger, self-doubt and the rest cannot negate your intrinsic buddha mind—indwelling already present bright Presence of *That*. Please *feel* now that great truth of who you actually are—your 'supreme identity' of that

'supreme source' Ground. How shall I awaken to That? Lao Tzu told, "The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step." If you have taken that step, take the next step, which is more difficult, and joyous. "The only mistake you can make now is to quit." [Suzuki Roshi]

So "continue in confidence" in realization of that Presence always present. *Feel* it as mantra seed syllable *OM*, formless primordial *dharmakaya* Ground of all form. Feel it as *AH*, *sambhogakaya* deity Voice at Spirit Heart deep within you. Feel it as *nirmanakaya HUM*, your 'supreme identity' of ultimate *OM*, always present here now embodied in your relative form. *OM AH HUM*. Trikaya of the Base/Ground. Use your 108 bead mala. Stop reading and *Be That Now* for a few moments. Great joy! It's who you actually are. *[Ch. VIII and Appendix B]*

So yes. Feel now this present relative unity of *sukha* happiness and *dukkha* suffering. Although we may wish it were not so, *sukha* and *dukkha* arise together. In Interdependent Arising *(tendrel, pratitya samutpada*) of the Two Truths that are relative form and ultimate emptiness, happiness and suffering are perforce interconnected and indivisible. No need to seek it, or fix it. It's perfect as it is. *Give thanks* and enjoy this wondrous dharma *process* that is your own Primordial Presence of the 'Ground of Being—in this bright, timeless lucid moment now, upon effortless breath in your body. You can do this!

Who Am I? *Tat Tvam Asi!* That I Am! What is my mind? *That* is my mind! Ground Buddha Nature of Mind. Give thanks for *That*.

So now upon this *prana* spirit love-wisdom breath *rest* in unborn secret place where wakeful dreams in Love are born. *Mahasukaho!* Ultimate Happiness Itself!

# II

## Mindful Shamatha Becomes Dzogchen Mind Training

> Shamatha calm abiding is the true foundation for advanced Dzogchen teaching.
>
> —Adzom Gyalse Rinpoche

*Mindfulness Meditation: Shamatha Calm Abiding.* In the East shamatha *(zhine, smrti, dran pa, sati)* arose in the Hindu Sanatanadharma tradition. It is present in one of its contemplative variations throughout the esoteric noetic primordial wisdom traditions of our species—Eastern Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, and Western Abrahamic monotheism via its esoteric voice in Judaism, Christianity, Sufi/Islam, and Christian/Hebrew Hermeticism.

Mindfulness meditation in the Western Tradition emerged primarily from its foundation in 12th century CE Hebrew esoteric *Kabbalah/Zohar.* That explicates the mystical basis of the Torah. *Zohar* (radiance, *dang*) is a beautiful spiritual guide to the infinite emptiness of monistic primordial *Ein Sof—arcanum* of unmanifest Hebrew nondual Godhead, ultimate Spirit Ground prior to its emanation into spacetime form via the *Ten Sefirot* of the Kabbalistic *Tree of Life*. [Boaz 2022 *Mindfulness Meditation* pp. 82-102]

Hebrew *Kabbalah* and *Zohar* were accepted by many Christian theologists of the 12th century to become the 'Hermitic Reformation' with its mystical Christian-*Kabbalah* tradition that is source of present Christian Hermeticism, a mysticism—esoteric view and practice of the Hebrew teaching of Jesus the Christ on Old Testament love and wisdom. [Boaz 2026]

In the East Gautama the Buddha adapted mindfulness meditation from his Hindu Vedic Tradition as "mindfulness of breathing". It pervades the entire Buddhadharma; all three Buddhist Tenet Systems (Hinayana/Theravada, Mahayana, Indo-Tibetan Vajrayana); the Three Turnings of Buddha's Wheel of Dharma. Counter-conceptual mindfulness 'calm abiding' begins to provide a contemplative foundation for the Buddha's Two Truths and his Four Noble Truths with the Eightfold Path to liberation; and as well, of *atiyoga* Dzogchen *Seven Mind Training Steps to the Great Perfection*, as we shall see in *Chapter III*.

How then shall we approach highest Dzogchen teaching? Before and during Dzogchen foundational *ngöndro* practices it is wise that the practitioner engage shamatha mindfulness meditation—the 7th yogic discipline of Buddha's Eightfold Path—to pacify scattered concept mind. *Without foundation in basic shamatha mindfulness to tame the 'wild horse' of concept-mind, nondual Dzogchen rigdang view and practice remains all too conceptual.*

In Dzogchen View and practice para-dualistic mindful shamatha ripens into nondual 'womb of basic space' (*chöying*) purity—basal timeless Primordial Awareness—our liberating all-embracing *dharmakaya* Ground. That 'Ground of Being' is present in Buddha's 'noself' *anatman*—sublime selfless, spacious *yingrig* nondual noetic knowing feeling Presence of our Supreme Source. Concepts concretize that empty 'basic space'. Buddhist Nyingma lineage Dzogchen and Kaygu Essence Mahamudra free us from our habitual concept mind to rest in that Ground.

For 14th century Nyingma school Dzogchen master Longchenpa (2001 *Chöying Dzöd Autocommentary*) the "context" of our spacious *dharmakaya* Ground is this:

> The fundamentally unconditioned state of naturally occurring timeless awareness, which abides in its three aspects of essence,

> nature, and responsiveness [compassionate energy], is the ground for all that arises. It is from this timeless awareness that rupakaya [sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya] arises...The teacher is Samantabhadra...The teaching is natural great perfection...the environment is the inconceivable basic space [*chöying*] of phenomena. [p. 406]....Therefore, with the unique state of buddhahood being of 'one taste' with dharmakaya, the two aspects of rupakaya manifest, and so benefit is ensured for beings by spontaneously present qualities of timeless awareness and responsiveness... These manifestations are clearly apparent without truly existing [p. 402].... Whatever manifests, then, is an expression of emptiness, display of awareness... Let whatever manifests manifest...Dharmakaya is the empty essence of being.

Gautama Shakyamuni, the Buddha of this present age, continued his teaching of the Path of Meditation with its wisdom of 'noself' (*anatman*), impermanence (*anitya*), and emptiness/ *shunyata* in his *Satipatthana Sutta—Foundation of Mindfulness Sutra*. These Four Foundations of Mindfulness (Four Objects of Mindfulness) form the 'two limbs' of Buddha's teaching—compassionate *love* ("responsive" *bodhicitta*), and *wisdom*—both relative discriminating *prajna/sherab* and the ultimate Primordial Wisdom of spacious nondual gnosis/*jnana/yeshe* in whom (*dharmakaya* Adi Buddha Samantabhadra) they arise.

All four *satipatthanas* embrace compassion, selflessness, impermanence, and all four are subject to the suffering of our being here in samsara space and time. As we lift the veil of ignorance (*marigpa*) relative samsara and ultimate nirvana are an ontic prior and always present phenomenal *one truth unity (dzog)* of Buddha's prodigious Two Truths—relative form and ultimate emptiness—the two reality dimensions of our lucid bright nondual Primordial Awareness Ground of Being.

Yes. Here Buddha teaches conscious "placement of attention", our nonconceptual immediate 'bare awareness'

upon the rhythmic rising and falling of breath in the body. Our 'bare attention' is here gently focused upon life giving *jnana prana* spirit wind (*lung, c'hi, pneuma/holy spirit*) rising and falling with each breath in the belly. *Prana/lung/pneuma* is subtle esoteric spirit energy voice of physical light-form-matter-energy, the physics of Einstein's $E=mc^2$. Together they constitute the prior (*purva*) and ever-present unity of causal objective *Science* and its acausal, timeless, perfectly subjective nondual *Spirit* Ground. [*Appendix A* below]

From our attentional awareness in the *hara/dō* chakra upon breath in the belly we move our focused awareness to our *feelings*, our *mind*, and our *sense perceptions* of arising phenomena with their corresponding chakra centers upon the 'central vertical channel' in the human physical and subtle body. Thus arises, breath by mindful breath, awareness of these *Four Foundations of Mindfulness* (The Four Objects of Mindfulness), great *jinlob* gift of *body, feeling, mind,* and *phenomena* arising for our sensing feeling embodied experience. These four are an indivisible prior, ever present noetic nondual unity. ['Noetic' is nondual body, mind, spirit subject-object unity.] "Ultimate Truth is One." [Plotinus, Chandrakirti]. And all that a 'progressive' refinement of attention of our "mindfulness of breathing"; surrender of self and its *'Five Hindrances'* to the '*full bodhi*' of liberating enlightenment.

*The Five Hindrances and the Seven Factors of Awakening.* These five Sutra vehicle obstructing simulacra of *full bodhi* enlightened buddhahood are: grasping *sense desire*; *ill will* (anger, hostility); *lethargy* (sloth and torpor)/*agitation*; *fear/anxiety*; and *doubt* or lack of faith. The Four Satipatthanas free us to simultaneously engage Buddha's causal Sutra *'Seven Factors of Awakening': mindfulness* of breathing; *investigation* or study of the emptiness of arising form; patient, diligent *effort*; *joy-bliss* of happy

feeling; *peace*, tranquility of mind and body; *meditation-samadhi (dhyana, jhana*); *equanimity* or loving acceptance of self and others, with compassionate *bodhicitta* for the benefit of both. The *Five Hindrances* and the *Seven Factors* constitute the relative causal 'cause and effect' Mahayana View. What is the acausal View?

Again, this causal dharma plot thickens. In his prodigious *Chöying Dzöd* (2001) Longchenpa reminds us that in the acausal nondual *ultimate* view none of these *relative Hindrances*, nor the *Factors of Awaking*, not even buddhahood, *ultimately* exists! How shall we understand this radical teaching? From nondual wisdom mind of the 'omniscient one':

> Within the essence of basic space [*chöying*] causality is transcended and the ten [Buddha] attributes do not pertain...The ultimate meaning of genuine being involves no effort nor achievement...Pacify all conceptual elaboration of existence and nonexistence!...Buddhas and ordinary beings are equal in [*dharmakaya*] basic space, relative reality and ultimate reality are equal in basic space, flaws and positive qualities are equal in basic space. All things arise equally in basic space. [Longchenpa 2001]

> *From The Way of Abiding (1998):* In the ultimate heart essence, with no [concepts] there is no framework of view, empowerment, mandala, mantra, levels, training, or progress. Rather, there is expansive openness in supreme spaciousness... Great Perfection [Dzogchen]...freedom from bias based on characteristics...beyond the extremes of denial or affirmation.... Emptiness is the absence of subject and object.

We learn to view our habitual, dualistic, limited, relative, conceptual understanding of the Buddhadharma Path by the lights of our already present and awake trans-conceptual, acausal nondual Ultimate Truth primordial love-wisdom buddha mind;

"basic space" (*chöying*) in whom (Samantabhadra) this all arises and outshines. Indwelling Presence of *That* (*tathata, tattva, suchness, vidya/rigpa*) embraces this relative all too real yet ultimately illusory dimension of spacetime Relative Truth. That lofty nondual *ultimate* view is a confluence of *relative* "mindfulness of breathing" as Buddha called it so long ago. Thus do we engage skillful means of Relative Truth to realize Ultimate Truth—one truth unity *(dzog).*

*Mindful Caveat.* Ati Dzogchen natural *rigdang* nondual timeless formless Awareness Ground is not realized by reading books, nor through dualistic *lungdang* Buddhist practice. Authentic Dzogchen view and practice must be directly transmitted and guided by a qualified Dzogchen Vajra master.

**The Four Foundations of Mindfulness Revisited**

*1) Mindfulness of Body* as immediate direct awareness of being physically embodied in human form—"the body in the body". Here we learn, upon each mindful breath to ground airy, heady concept mind in our physical earth body, the spacetime vessel for compassionate, engaged *bodhicitta* activity/conduct, 'heart-mind of enlightenment' arising always in this vast, infinite boundless whole *(mahabindu, tendrel)* that is nondual Primordial Awareness Spirit Ground—for the benefit of all living beings, including our precious Mother Earth.

2) *Mindfulness of Feeling* is being lovingly present, 'mindful and aware' of the "feeling in feelings", our 'felt sense', just prior to our emotional and conceptual responses to being here in form and time. Here we learn to tame, pacify, and ground the habitual busy concept mind in our indwelling always already present nondual *Presence* of noetic, nonconceptual, love-wisdom feeling-knowing

Buddha Heartmind. Through *feeling* we experience great gratitude for the exceedingly rare and precious gift of our human life, and devotion to the treasured *Three Jewels*—Guru seen as the Buddha, his Dharma teaching, and the Sangha spiritual community. We may also experience the '*Fourth Jewel'*—our wise loving Lama/Guru who teaches us how to 'take refuge' in these rare and precious Three Jewels.

3) *Mindfulness of Mind* is mindful awareness of, and non-identification with our fleeting, insubstantial thoughts and the negative and positive emotions that ride them. Our thoughts naturally arise and fall away spontaneously. We need not take them too seriously, nor judge them good or bad. Thoughts have only the power that we as a separate self *choose* to bestow upon them. Grounded in 'mindfulness of breathing' we learn *relative* mantra prayer, deity practice, then direct *ultimate rigpa/vidya* Presence of timeless Primordial Awareness Ground—Ati Dzogchen approach, and skillful engaged 'responsiveness'—kind compassionate *bodhicitta* activity for the benefit of all living beings.

4) *Mindfulness of Phenomena* that continuously appear to the body, feeling senses, and the mind is accomplished by the 'placement of awareness/attention', moment to moment, upon negative and positive physical, sensory, mental/conceptual phenomenal experience. With mindful practice we learn to allow negative appearing stuff to 'self-liberate' (*rang drol*) at or near the very instant of its arising in our body-mind, before we impulsively act on them creating cause and effect negative karma. We come to understand that all appearing phenomena are but the 'play of that vastness', primordial awareness-consciousness 'groundless' Ground of our bright, always

present love-wisdom Buddha Heartmind Presence, inherently pristine, 'primordially pure', always present from the very beginning. Recall that these *Four Foundations of Mindfulness* are in the ultimate nondual View an ontologically prior yet always phenomenally present *one truth unity* (*dzög*).

Now none of this *relativ*e metaphysic possesses a whit of *ultimate* intrinsic existence! In subtlest nondual View such Primordial Wisdom transcends our all=too-common false dichotomy of *either* existence, *or* nonexistence. It is that uncommon 'transcendent wisdom' that we practice on this Path that assumes the Vajrayana Fruitional View. Quiescent shamatha (*zhine, sati, smrti*) with its Four Foundations is the basis of trans-conceptual, nondual Dzogchen teaching *(Ch. VII).*

*As Gautama Shakyamuni Buddha told so long ago, "Mindfulness of breathing is the direct path for purification of the minds of beings...for release from pain...and for realization of nirvana."*

## Mindfulness Meditation in Sutra, Tantra, and Dzogchen

*Sutra.* In Buddhist Sutra (Sutrayana), mindful quiescent shamatha *(smrti, dran pa, zhine, sati)* is "calm abiding". In the Sutra view mindfulness is a conventional, effortful, causal, progressive 'cultivation' *(bhavana)* that occurs in relative time and space. Here the human mind is seen as a cognitive mental entity that may be trained and refined in "renunciation" of its inherent tendency toward conceptual and emotional 'distraction'; to stabilize its attentional capacity; and to pacify its habitual self-referencing ('selfing'). Sutra methodology is one pointed 'placement of attention' on a physical or mental object—the breath, an image or vision of the Buddha, etc.—then a return of that focused awareness following a 'distraction'. Such mindful practice prepares the untrained mind for the

'analytic penetrating insight' of *vipashyana*. This "mindfulness of breathing" as the Buddha called it is 'accomplished' in the relative, progressive *Nine Stages of Shamatha*. *[Ch. VII]* Shamatha remains dualistic in that meditator and its objects of meditation remain separate. Now has the 'wild horse of the mind' accepted patient, disciplined 'mind training'.

*Tantra.* In Buddhist Tantra (Vajrayana) mindful shamatha is enhanced to include a "transformation" into stable lucid clear light clarity *(ösel)* of the Tibetan sacred *yidam* deity Mandala. In the Indo-Tibetan Vajrayana (Mantrayana) the *yidam* meditational deities with their mantras are the core of tantric spiritual practice. Now mental stability and clarity are 'cultivated' together. Attentional awareness placement is 'transformed' to include a unity of subtle vivid *clarity*, and yogi's *bliss*. Shamatha and Vipashyana have become a present emptiness unity of bright luminous lucid *(salba)* mind.

*Dzogchen.* In Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Dzogchen *(atiyoga) relative* mindful shamatha is *ultimate* always already present Presence, *one truth unity* of nondual *rigpa* Primordial Awareness Ground of Being, Buddha Nature of Mind. That *dharmakaya* 'Ground' is intrinsically empty, luminous, and calm. Yes. In Dzogchen Fruitional View such 'calm abiding' shamatha attention is effortless, nondual *rigpa* Awareness subject-object union. It cannot be taught, caught, fabricated, or conceptually known. It is 'pointed out' via the 'secret' Dzogchen *manngag* teaching cycle by the Dzogchen master. While it is dualistically practiced, it can only be recognized directly. Here mindfulness is, and has always been, primordially pure *kadak* Ground of Being as it naturally manifests as luminous *lhundrub* Presence of that Ground. Mindful shamatha as it arises relatively in Sutra, Tantra, and Dzogchen is in an ultimate view unified in Dzogchen *magom* 'nonmeditation'.

*In Sutra the mind abides in 'calm abiding'. In Tantra the mind enters into clarity and bliss. In nondual Ati Dzogchen the mind is known directly 'as it is'. Three views of mindful rigpa Presence of our one singular nondual Awareness Ground. Thus is shamatha the relative foundation of ultimate Dzogchen View and Practice.*

## Human Happiness and Awareness Management

*In the Buddhist Vajrayana taxonomy of Reality, the ultimate nature of relative spacetime appearing stuff is empty (shunya), impermanent (anitya), and selfless (anatman)—the 'interdependent arising' (pratitya samutpada) of empty phenomena (dharmata). That Awareness Ground manifests as compassionate bodhicitta—open secret of human happiness. This boundless emptiness whole of physical/mental phenomena is realized by we human beings via nondual Primordial Wisdom (yeshe, jnana, gnosis) Presence. That ultimate reality is none other than the empty (shunya) 'basic space' (dharmadhatu, chöying) of Primordial Awareness dharmakaya kadak 'groundless' Ground—Adi Buddha Samantabhadra—vast unbroken whole itself in whom lhundrub Presence of relative spacetime form manifests. We simply place our attentional awareness upon That as it naturally rides the prana breath.*

Through such *'placement of attention'* upon Ground Awareness Presence present in quiescent 'mindfulness of breathing', we learn the 'Path' of awakening to indwelling love-wisdom of Buddha's "noself" (*anatman*), and of the 'two selflessnesses' that are 'self' and 'other'. These are the inherent 'selflessness of the person', and the 'emptiness of phenomena' arising to the person. While appearing *relative* reality is often all too real, there is no intrinsically existing *ultimate* self-ego-I, and so no ultimate existing spacetime phenomenal reality arising for such a self. That is peaceful joyous love-wisdom selfless '*samadhi*

of certainty' of Buddha's Two Truths—boundless emptiness, and impermanent physical and mental form arising therein. As Buddha told, "Form is empty; emptiness is form." Yes, these Two Truths are, in the ultimate View, a prior and present *one truth unity*, invariant through all phenomenal reference frames arising as human experience within it.

From that nondual Primordial Awareness Ground arises lucid clarity, compassionate 'original clear light' *wisdom of emptiness*—Mipham's "coalescent noumenal Fundamental Mind" (*chönyi*), pristine lucid mind nature (*ösel yeshe*)—very love-wisdom gnosis Presence (*rigpa, vidya*) that is our all-embracing Ground of Being. In the perfect words of 19th century ecumenical *rimé* Dzogchen master Jamgön Ju Mipham [2006]:

> About this, just this original basal clear light, the primordial mode of subsistence, is the [ultimate] reality of all phenomena. All appearances of cyclic existence and nirvana shine forth from within it...continuously abide within it...Thus, the meaning indicated by the phrases 'fundamental basic mind, the clear light, the Great Completeness' is the *noumenon* of the mind, self-arisen pristine wisdom...empty basic knowledge without object and subject...basal mode of [being], the great equality...immutable and not changing in the three times...[That is] what is to be realized by the View...[The Ground] is empty and pervasive like space...like a jewel, like the sun...Consciousness itself dawns as perfect nondual wisdom, and even phenomena dawn as naturally pure...When fundamental mind abides as the basis *[gzhi],* it is said that 'the realizer realizes emptiness'...At that moment 'realizing mind' has dissolved completely into fundamental mind [Ground Nature of Mind]...This naked basic wisdom is awareness of the present moment, in which you do not follow thoughts of past or future.

Sublime! How is it that we 'accomplish' such deep wisdom while still showing up for work? In acausal 'Fruitional View' Arya

Nargarjuna reveals that "It is already present and accomplished from the very beginning", indwelling deep within us. That uncaused primordial love-wisdom buddha mind is always present now at spiritual Heart (*nyingpo, hridaym, kokoro*) of each human being. It is *That* (*tathata, suchness, chönyi*) to which we awaken upon the Path. So, there is no need to seek the happiness of enlightenment elsewhere. It lies not in worship of past sacred beings, nor in an ideal future liberated mind state. Past is but a present memory. Future is a present anticipation. Longchenpa's "present moment" is being here in 'timeless awareness' of *now*. Future-looking spiritual seeking destroys that 'now'. 'Self-ego-I in time is a *relative* illusion of *ultimate* reality—Ground of Being.

Hence, our indwelling buddha love-wisdom mind cannot be found in habitual apocryphal happiness seeking strategies, not even our future-looking spiritual designs and goals. Thus do we wisely make present here now *practice* of wakeful already present *buddic* Awareness Itself our goal. "Make the goal the practice." [Chögyam Trungpa] Each mindfully aware breath.

We have seen that Buddhist practices are enhanced by the Buddha's quasi-conceptual *shamatha* 'mindfulness of breathing'. How shall we understand this? In the clear words of 16th century *Mahamudra* master Dakpo Tashi Namgyal (2001 p. 29):

> Look directly into your conscious mind. It is a wakefulness for which no words suffice. It is not a definable entity, but at the same time, it is a self-knowing aware emptiness that is clear, lucid and awake. Sustain this without distraction...As a thought or perception arises...look into it directly... Its experience is, in itself, something unidentifiable—it is unobstructedly aware and yet not conceptualizing...As for perceptions, they are a mere impression of unobstructed presence, which is insubstantial and not a clinging to solid reality. Simply rest in this aware emptiness that is unidentifiable awareness...Pure perception devoid of self-nature.

What is my mind? *That* is my mind. Who am I? *Tat Tvam Asi!* That *(tathata)* I Am. Now, naturally aware mindful "unobstructed presence" and your natural love-wisdom buddha mind are one and the same (*samatajnana*), nondual 'wisdom of sameness', balanced equanimity. There exists here not an iota of separation. It has always been thus.

So *rest* now *(rigdang)* in timeless Awareness Ground of Being on mindful wisdom *jnana prana* spirit breath in your belly, heart, throat, 'third eye' medial prefrontal cortex behind your forehead, and your 'great bliss crown wheel' at crown chakra. You have now awakened the energy centers upon your subtle 'central vertical channel' (*susunma nadi*, *uma tsa)*. *[Appendix B]*

That boundless peace is beyond words; beyond hope and fear. *That* is your 'supreme source identity'—bright Presence nondual 'groundless' Ground of Being itself—very Buddha Nature of Mind. Thus is relative *lungdang* practice 'one' in ultimate *rigdang* realization. *Be That Now*, beyond your concepts and beliefs about it. Easy. Rest. Enjoy.

## Buddhist Dzogchen:
## *The Three Statements That Strike the Essence*

Broadly construed, these *Three Essential Statements* of the *Kunjed Gyalpo Tantra* arose as the early *Three Vajra Verses* that comprise the wondrous 'Final Testament' of Dzogchen founder Garab Dorje to his heart son Arya Manjushrimitra. We shall consider these two texts as one.

Garab Dorje's dates are perhaps too often considered problematic. The scholarly view places him circa 665 CE—for historical Manjushrimitra to be the recipient of his 'Final Testament'. Others view him as a mythopoetic figure. Indo-Tibetan Nyingma lineage gives his dates as "360 years after the

Buddha", which places him circa 180 BCE to 60 CE. Nyingmapas Longchenpa, Jigme Lingpa, and Ju Mipham place him in Oddiyana (Orgyen) in that pre-Common Era yet tend to view him as a *nirmanakaya* being whose love-wisdom transcends objective spacetime chronology. Hence are Dzogchen *atiyoga* origins shrouded in the clouds of pre-history. Still, it is our precious acausal nondual luminous, lucid, *active rigpa* awareness wisdom Presence itself that matters most. Thus do we proceed.

The *Three Statements* are early wisdom piths that reveal the Dzogchen Path—*relative* practice that recognizes then realizes the always already present formless, timeless, selfless "awareness presence" of nondual *ultimate* Ground of Being itself *(gzhi rigpa).* That knowing feeling realization of self-reflexive, self-knowing *(rang rig) kadak* Primordial Awareness Ground manifests as *lhundrub* Presence of that Ground, very Buddha Nature of Mind.

That Dzogchen Path is the direct recognition of '*essential rigpa'* Presence through Atiyoga *trekchö* and *tögal* practice while refining and freeing concept mind via Mahamudra shamatha 'calm abiding' and vipashyana 'penetrating insight' into our numinous luminous Nature of Mind *(semnyi).* Shamatha and vipashyana are relative attentional modes that *feel* that ultimate nondual *essential rigpa presence* of our Primordial Awareness Ground of Being. Thus does the lofty idea of "The Ground" embrace three faces: *kadag, lhundrub*, and its dynamical energy emanation that is *thugs rje (tukje)* or *karuna*. Nondual *essential rigpa* Ground Presence, should we dare to further conceptualize "it", is said to manifest as three aspects: its *Essence (ngo bo)* is emptiness; its *Nature (rang zhin)* is *ösel* clear light luminous lucid clarity; it naturally manifests in space and time as *compassionate energy (tukje, karuna)*—'responsive' *bodhicitta* action/conduct of awareness love-wisdom Presence—natural playful display of radiant, awake, nondual Awareness Ground.

That is Longchenpa's active energy of Primordial Wisdom *(yeshe tsal):* "Compassionate energy responsiveness is indivisible from primordial awareness itself." *Karuna* is living, radiant manifest energy, *active rigpa* Ground state, the very Nature of Mind.

That is to say, nondual '*essential rigpa'*—that embraces the '*effulgent rigpa*' of dualistic practice of the Path—is intrinsic Primordial Awareness state of Presence of that Ground of Being itself. *That* (*tatatha*, suchness, *metanoia, gzhi rigpa, chönyi)* essential self-knowing Primordial Awareness Wisdom Ground Presence *(yeshe, jnana)* of nondual 'groundless' Ground is said to be prior yet ever-present unity of the Buddha's emptiness *(shunyata)* with its inherent luminous clarity *(rang zhin, ösel).* Dzogchen *essential rigpa* is "instant presence" recognized via "direct introduction" of that awareness state by the Vajra Master. One then abides in the state of 'pure presence' in uncontrived *buddic* mindstream of non-goal-directed, nondual "non-meditation" (*magom*).

So yes. That *essential rigpa* 'suchness' was first transmitted from primordial Adi Buddha Samantabhadra to Garab Dorje in the earliest Dzogchen text, the foundational *Three Statements.* [The *Six Vajra Verses* are later formulations of Dzogchen View in the *Vima Nyingthig*.] Garab Dorje's 'Final Testament' reveals nondual Dzogchen View of the ultimate Ground of relative practice of the Path. That natural luminous Presence (*rigpa, vidya*) of timeless, selfless "intrinsic awareness"—*chöying* 'basic space' of *dharmakaya* Primordial Ground that we are—is 'supreme identity' of our Supreme Source Kunjed Gyalpo/Samantabhadra that is acausal, nondual primeval Adi Buddha Nature of Mind. [Boaz 2026 *Christianity and Buddhism: Two Paths One Ground*]

Let us now explore the *Three Vajra Verses* of the *Three Statements* to reveal essence/nature of the unity of Ground, Path, and Fruition of sublime nondual Ati Dzogchen View.

*Verse I: The View is the Ground.* "Recognize your intrinsic awareness presence."

That present moment nondual pristine basal Primordial Awareness 'groundless' Ground of Being (*gzhi rigpa; rang rig yeshe*) utterly transcends our thoughts about it, and indeed all conceptual activity related to the 'three times' (past, present, future). That original 'timeless awareness' is spontaneously 'self-sprung' intrinsic Awareness Presence (*rigpa, vidya*) of that Source Ground *(gzhi rigpa)* of all arising inherently 'empty' *(shunya)* spacetime phenomena. "The ultimate nature of all phenomena is nondual, beyond the limits of the mind." From that View of the Ground arises the Dzogchen *Semde* (mind) teaching cycle.

*Verse II: The Path is The Meditation.* "Decide on the state of presence, beyond doubt."

All the arising phenomena of relative samsara and ultimate nirvana are but the play of one's own already present 'intrinsic awareness' (*rigpa tsal*). One must *choose* that primordial state of Presence and understand that nothing else ultimately exists. "There is no concept that defines 'what is', but vision nevertheless manifests: all is good." From that Path that is The Meditation arises the Dzogchen *Longde* (space) teaching cycle.

*Verse III: The Fruition Results in The Action/Conduct.* "Continue in the state of presence with confidence in liberation." The 'Action' manifests as precious *bodhicitta* Conduct.

The untrained dualistic human mind is such that gross and subtle thoughts and negative emotions continuously arise within it. By immediately recognizing their ultimate illusory nature they 'self-liberate' (*rang drol*) at the very instant of their arising and return to infinite expanse of *dharmakaya* Ground whence they arise. In that nondual spacious basal Primordial Awareness

'groundless Ground' emptiness and awareness are always a prior yet present *one truth unity (dzog)*. "Everything is already accomplished, so having overcome spiritual seeking one finds oneself always in the self-perfected state of presence." [Arya Nagarjuna] That is ultimate Fruition of the unity of View, Meditation, and Action/Conduct.

That Fruition/Result arises from Dzogchen *manngag* or *upadesha* Heart Essence (*nyingtig*)—direct master to disciple teaching cycle that altogether constitutes the final 'cause' of liberating compassionate Fruition/Result of the Path. That great relative Path bears ultimate Fruit of Buddha's Three Turnings of the Wheel—Sutra, Tantra, Dzogchen.

In the clear words of living Dzogchen/Mahamudra master Adzom Paylo Rinpoche regarding Garab Dorje's wondrous definitive *Three Essential Statements*:

> The real state of authentic, uncontrived Nature of Mind is the infinite great expanse, without reference, without clinging—enjoyment, like the sky...The key point of the *View* is to settle into Presence of uncontrived equanimity of the *Ground*. The key point of the *Meditation* is to *choose* primordial luminosity, which liberates us from the precarious Path. The key point of the *Action/Conduct* is to 'decide' on self-liberation, the direct transmission of *rigpa* awareness, expressed as kind *bodhicitta.* The *Fruition/Result* is simultaneous instant liberation. *E ma ho!* How wonderful!

Continuing with Longchenpa's Maha Ati Dzogchen "Theme of Ineffability", Jigme Lingpa, author of Nyingma lineage *Longchen Nyingtig Heart Essence of the Infinite Expanse*, on the acausal nondual ultimate Dzogchen View:

> No buddhas, no beings, beyond existence and nonexistence intrinsic awareness itself is absolute Guru—Ultimate Truth. By

resting naturally, beyond fixation in that inherently free perfect bodhi mind, I take refuge in the Guru and actualize bodhicitta.

For Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, translating the perfect words of the Buddha:

> 'All that arises is essentially no more real than a reflection, transparently pure and clear, beyond all definition, conceptual, or logical explanation. Yet the seeds of past action, karma, continue to cause further arising. Even so, know that all that exists is ultimately nondual, empty of self-nature.'

Adzom Gyalse Rinpoche on the *Three Essential Statements* of the Dzogchen View (the *Kunjed Gyalpo Tantra*):

> The View is the Nature of Mind. It is the very Ground of Being. View is very important. Without a clear understanding of the View—the Meditation, Action/Conduct, and the Fruition will be deficient. The correct View opens the way to Fruition of buddhahood. From it arises the Meditation and the Conduct. Dzogchen *Atiyoga* is the ultimate View. It is beyond mere conceptual view; it is the nondual fruitional state itself, the actuality of buddha reality—beyond mind—nondual Ground Nature of Mind itself. The View of Dzogchen is expressed in *The Three Statements* of Garab Dorje. *The Three Statements* are the quintessential teaching of Guru Yoga. When we realize the nonconceptual definitive View, then the Meditation and Action become automatic. There is nothing that is not in this View...It is all-inclusive. We need skillful methods for recognition of *That*. So the Buddha taught Sutra, Tantra, and Dzogchen. In Sutra we study scripture to gain insight. Through Middle Way *Madhyamaka* we reach a *conceptual* conclusion as to the nature of nonconceptual *rigpa* intrinsic awareness. Through Tantra/Secret Mantra and then Dzogchen wisdom we directly encounter naked intrinsic

Awareness itself. Shamatha calm abiding is the relative foundation of ultimate Dzogchen teaching...By receiving the secret pith instruction of *manngag [upadesha]* we can approach that unity. That pith instruction is the quintessential teaching. These *Three Essential Points* accomplish that. Guru/Lama is always within. Inner and outer Guru together result in realization of *dharmata*, buddha essence. Inner Lama is the very Nature of Mind. Inner Lama and outer Lama are a primordial unity...So we begin with the View; then arises the Meditation, then the Action/Conduct. The final Fruition/Result arises from *That*. These four are already a unity... So first relax and release your conceptual mind. Leave it alone; let it be as it is, which then leaves only the luminous primordial wisdom. Like the vast empty sky, no conceptuality can arise here. Not scattered, free of desire and aversion. Now the 'three times' [past. present, future] are free and self-liberated. Only pure Being Itself remains. So, we begin with mindful calm abiding that is the very foundation of Dzogchen. Now we see mind as the Nature of Mind, unborn, non-abiding, and unceasing. Contrived conceptual mind cannot accomplish this. That is the View. Here View realizes the Ground; awareness recognizes pure awareness; non-recognition is now recognition. Rest now in Primordial Presence. *Rigpa* intrinsic awareness is always present. That is Ati Dzogchen. Jamgön Mipham: 'Let mind drop away and rest in that empty space of pure awareness. Whatever arises in mind, let it be in its own place; self-liberated into the Primordial Ground, free of identity and judgment.' Now exclaim a thundering PHAT! That blasts away all distractions. PHAT is the union of skillful means and wisdom. It frees us from bondage of concepts so we may enter in and remain in immediate undistracted meditative equipoise. There is nothing to strive for, nothing to seek, nothing to meditate on. This is known as Dzogchen 'nonmeditation' *[magom];* not doing, simply being. Indeed, for the very rare 'Dzogchen type' there is no meditation, and no

nonmeditation. That is 'liberation through hearing'. For individuals who cannot naturally rest in the Nature of Mind, even though they understand Dzogchen View conceptually, and sometimes directly, they have not yet realized resting here beyond subtle concepts. Antidotes are required, 'brief moments many times'. We practice bringing *dharmakaya* into all situations, beyond our concepts and beliefs about it. Thus, by 'Deciding on that state of presence', we 'Continue in confidence in liberation'. [The second and third Essential Statements.] That is the essence of 'the Meditation' of Garab Dorje's View, Meditation, and Action. The Action/Conduct is *bodhicitta*. The nondual *Ultimate Bodhicitta* buddha reality is embodied in Ati Dzogchen. Patrul Rinpoche told that in the desire realm [form and formless form] we experience typical negative reactivity and so create negative karma. We must be skillful in the various means of liberation to overcome this condition. We discover 'liberation upon arising'. That must be both subtle and gross. Now we allow arising thoughts to self-liberate [*rang drol*] at the very instant of their arising in concept mind. This is much more than simple recognition of an arising thought. Rather, we surrender all thinking into its Primordial Wisdom Ground, so that our concept mind is entirely liberated, leaving no trace whatsoever. That is mastery of *dharmakaya* through 'knowing liberation'; liberation in its own place, continuously. Therefore thoughts, whether subtle or gross, are always only *dharmakaya*, ornaments of the subtle play of primordial *dharmakaya* awareness—intrinsic lucid luminosity of ultimate wisdom that we are—infinite vastness of *That*. Yet, phenomena continue to arise, but in no way disturb this continuity of intrinsic Primordial Awareness. So, first we recognize the emptiness of adventitious thoughts, then they self-liberate at the instant of their arising. It's like meeting an old friend. However, we may know how to meditate—shamatha and vipashana—without the ability to self-liberate. Recognizing our thoughts upon their arising is

not enough. We become caged in a desire realm, for example in a formless god realm. This is a path of delusion. Here we are ordinary meditating practitioners, not Dzogchen yogins. So, 'liberation upon arising' is not Ati Dzogchen. Rather, ultimate liberation from the delusion of samsara occurs in the 'Immediacy of the View' of primordial *dharmakaya* ground state. Samsara need not be suppressed or avoided. We finally realize it to be the play of emptiness of *dharmakaya*. Ordinary meditation is not subtle enough to result in such liberation. Delusion still persists. The duality of meditation and meditator still exists in the Vajrayana teaching vehicle. Yet, in the subtle non-doing *magom* 'nonmeditation' of the Ati Dzogchen View there is *only* self-liberated *dharmakaya*, *Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen* nondual intrinsic Awareness, ultimate unity of Buddha's Two Truths, the unity of form and emptiness. In this peaceful absence of concepts *dharmakaya* Ground is self-evident! Absent concept-mind there is no object, no thought, no delusion, no question, only basic space [*chöying, dharmadhatu*] primordial Ground of Being. That wakeful sublime Presence is pure clarity itself, always present upon the natural mindful breath. *To conclude: The Three Essential Statements* of Garab Dorje are a direct encounter! The Ground is spontaneously realized beyond dualistic practice. It illumines everything. The View is spontaneously realized with no need for dualistic practice. That View is the heart essence and pinnacle of all nine *yanas.* View is sublime nondual Primordial Wisdom. This love and wisdom is the state of buddha nature. The duality of the Mahayana with its *Six Paramitas* and its Two Accumulations is perfectly realized as nondual. Great joy! That fruit is the quintessential instruction, nondual *manngag/upadesha* that exceeds all other teaching. This sacred pith instruction contains the meaning of few words—intrinsic Awareness of pure *dharmakaya*. It is the great treasure of 'enlightened intent'—enlightened mind. Thus does the 'final testament' of Garab Dorje's *Three Essential Statements*

reveal the 'enlightened intent' of Buddha's entire teaching for all of us. Longchenpa's penetrating instruction on *The Three Statements* is our guide to the realization of ultimate buddhahood. He then transmitted that to Jigme Lingpa, then to Ju Mipham. The result is the great treasure that is our precious *Longchen Nyintig*. *Mahasukaho!*

This concludes the 2023 teaching retreat of Adzom Gyalse Rinpoche on Dzogchen View and *The Three Essential Statements* of *Garab Dorje.* [Translated by Lama Eric Drew.]

## Longchenpa on the "Four Divisions of Meaning" of Dzogchen Heart Essence

These are: *Ineffability, Openness, Spontaneous Presence,* and *Oneness*. In the ultimate view these four are not separate but a nondual prior and ever-present unity. "I have written this work in accord with the three categories—*semde, longde* and *manngag*..."

*The Theme of Ineffability.* All phenomena are shown to have no substance or characteristics. The ineffable nature of things is that they are empty by virtue of their very essence...Within the womb of timeless basic space as an infinite sky, however the universe manifests...these forms of emptiness are ineffable by nature. All phenomena—the world of appearances and possibilities—whether samsara or nirvana, even as they manifest do not waver from the scope of awakened mind.

*The Theme of Openness [trekchö].* Having come to an understanding of the way of abiding as ineffability, one reaches the definitive conclusion that it's nature is openness; like space, without limit or center.

*The Theme of Spontaneous Presence [tögal].* Awareness—awakened mind—is always spontaneously present as the basic space, or ground of all phenomena, an infinite expanse, and its qualities are such that its essence has never existed as anything, while its dynamic energy arises as anything whatsoever.

*The Theme of Oneness.* All phenomena are shown to be one in naturally occurring timeless awareness. Awareness—oneness, single source—is the ground of all phenomena. Multiplicity does not waver from oneness.

—Longchenpa 1998 *The Way of Abiding*

## Ground and Fruition of the Three *Kayas*

We abide in complete ease (*galso*) in the 'confluence' of awareness and emptiness. Longchenpa: "It is crucial to distinguish the three kayas and their display." [2001 p. 408]

Dharmakaya [*OM*] is the empty *essence* of being—unobstructed awareness. Its display is the vast reach of completely nonconceptual timeless [*ye*] awareness [*shes* or *chöying yeshe* basic space]. Sambhogakaya [*AH*] is the *nature* of being—the spontaneous presence of lucidity. Its display consists of the buddhas of the five families, resplendent with the major and minor marks of perfection. Nirmanakaya *[HUM]* is timeless awareness as all-pervasive *responsiveness* [*bodhicitta*] in its aspect as a ground for what arises. Its display consists of teachers who manifest in whatever way is necessary to guide [beings] under any circumstances.

From *The Way of Abiding* (1998 p. 205) Longchenpa reveals:

All phenomena have the same source. Awareness—oneness—is the ground of all phenomena...naturally occurring timeless awareness is the single source... Although both samsara and nirvana arise from oneness, self-knowing awareness, their source—ultimate awakened mind—is the same. There is simply the illusion of difference based on whether or not awareness is recognized...Meditative absorption is the supreme, unwavering state...continuous state of natural lucidity...The sacred fruition of the kayas and timeless awareness abides within you.

That open "oneness" of the "basic space" of "unobstructed timeless awareness" is *dharmakaya* Ground. Yet, "The empty essence of being becomes mere labels applied to facilitate understanding...symbols, in light of the fact that there is nothing to label." [Longchenpa]

Dharmakaya, the state of emptiness, is the non-conceptual basic space of naturally occurring timeless awareness...the heart essence of empty yet lucid awareness. It is timeless awareness, empty and without identity, and the state of great perfection, the spontaneous presence of all phenomena... It has never existed as anything whatsoever... [Longchenpa *Chöying Dzöd*, auto-commentary 2001 p. 385]

Since [timeless] awareness itself does not exist in essence, how could anything that derives from it—a place in which things arise, the process of their arising, or their myriad display—actually exist?...Although it is referred to by various conventional designations, ultimate reality—the bare essence of awareness—is beyond any statement that proves or refutes that it is this or that. Therefore, it has never known existence as anything that could be termed 'samsara' or 'nirvana'...[or] 'display', [or] 'the context in which things arise'...Awareness...is free of the extremes of being one

> thing and being many, in fact it transcends any context of conceptual or verbal elaboration...In its very essence, awareness has never existed as anything whatsoever...devoid of substance or characteristics...'free of the phenomena of samsara and nirvana'...The essence of the ground for all that arises and the nature of its dynamic energy are timelessly free...There is no division or exclusion, no union or separation. [Longchenpa *Chöying Dzöd* 2001 pp. 368-372]

Vajrayana Madhyamaka constitutes a Middle Way Path that bestrides and unifies Buddha's Two Truths—dualistic conventional Relative Truth of this interdependently arisen dimension of physical space and time—and nondual Ultimate Truth that subsumes it. Thus are the sublime Two Truths a prior yet always present *one truth unity* (*dzög*); perfectly subjective *dharmakaya* 'groundless Ground'. Nondual truth beyond concepts. Longchenpa pointed out above that ultimately these "are merely labels applied to facilitate understanding". In the ultimate nondual view "there is nothing to label." Middle Way founder Nagarjuna: "Dharma taught by all the buddhas is based upon the Two Truths." That unity is inherently empty and free of our concepts and beliefs about it. Yet, such “labels” offer discursive clarity that enhances certainty of our nondual realization.

## The Three Teaching Cycles of Dzogchen in Longchenpa's *Chöying Dzöd*

*Chöying Dzöd: The Precious Treasury of the Basic Space of Phenomena*—with Longchenpa's own running commentary (2001) is surely one of the great treasures of the spiritual literature arisen in the heartmind of we human beings. *Chöying Dzöd* exalts the *trekchö* teaching of Indo-Tibetan Ati Dzogchen

Great Perfection—acausal Great Completion of the Mahayana Causal Vehicle. In the beautiful prose of Patrul Rinpoche,

> *Chöying Dzöd* is the meaning of the innate nature of mind—dharmakaya. It elucidates naked primordial wisdom without affirming or negating anything. It is the heart essence of the vision of omniscient Longchen Rabjam. It is the most profound of all profound teachings. It is the lucid arising of pure dharmakaya as the teaching. This excellent teaching is a living buddha. It fulfills the Buddha's activities in this world. It manifests the absolute vision of the Buddha.

Middle Way Tibetan Buddhist Madhyamaka Prasangika is often seen as the conceptual causal foundation of acausal nondual view of Ati Dzogchen (*dzogpachenpo*). Prasangika emphasizes the conceptual causal aspect of Buddhist emptiness (*shunyata*) that is a "nonaffirming negation" (*med gag*). Acausal Dzogchen emphasizes prior and present intrinsic Primordial Awareness *dharmakaya* Ground of Being in whom such noble concepts *about* inherently trans-conceptual emptiness arise. Longchenpa told (2001 p. x):

> The basic view of Madhyamaka is of a spacelike empty aspect, while the principle basic view [of Dzogchen] is of primordially pure and naked intrinsic awareness, which is ineffable and unceasing...and everything that arises within it are free from all extremes [e.g. objective existence and subjective nonexistence].

*The supreme noetic nondual (body mind spirit subject-object unity) Dzogchen teaching is here classified into three teaching cycles: mind/semde, space/longde, and the direct pith transmission from Dzogchen master to prepared disciple that is the manngag or upadesha cycle.*

The Mind cycle demonstrates to the prepared Dzogchen practitioner that the Ground Nature of Mind is nondual Primordial Wisdom (*yeshe, jnana*), "just as it is", beyond our concepts and beliefs about it. All that arises in the experience of mind—whether samsara or nirvana. It is infinite display of Ground Nature of Mind. Meanwhile, the space cycle views primordial wisdom as vast expanse of 'basic space' (*chöying*).

Well and good. The *direct* master to disciple teaching cycle that is 'secret' *manngag (upadesha)* reveals the always already present *ultimate* realization of "primordial purity" of the *kadak* nondual Ground of Being itself *(gzhi rigpa),* above and beyond such "labels", and conceptually reified dimensions of our being here in *relative* space and time (2001 p. xi).

*Synthesis of the Dzogchen Three Teaching Cycles.* The Dzogchen '*semde* Mind' teaching cycle is said to fall into the "metaphysical extreme" that everything is Mind, while the '*longde* Space' cycle falls into the extreme that all phenomena are Space.

In Longchenpa's monumental *Chöying Dzöd* the Nyingtig Heart Essence of fruitional Ati Dzogchen View and Practice is nondual *kadak* primordial purity of formless, timeless, selfless, nondual *dharmakaya* 'groundless' Ground of Being. That naturally manifests in quantum spacetime form *($E=mc^2 \approx \Psi$)* as *lhundrub* spontaneous compassionate *rigpa* Presence of that empty luminous (*salba)* Ground. *That* (*tathata, tattva,* suchness, *chönyi*) Awareness Ground Essence is our actual Buddha Nature of Mind and all that arises and unfolds within it. And 'wonder of wonders' *That* is the *Kunjed Gyalpo* 'Supreme Source Identity' of all living beings, including our precious Mother Earth—and indeed of this great gift of Life Itself. Thus, do we abide in perpetual thanksgiving that is harmless human Happiness Itself. *Mahasukaho!*

This peace and bliss of the *one truth unity (dzog)* of the Buddha's Two Truths is revealed through very subtle 'secret' nonconceptual direct pith instruction—*manngag/upadesha*—via the Dzogchen Vajra master.

The *Three Essential Statements* of Garab Dorje as expressed in the *Three Vajra Verses* is the essence of such 'innermost secret' pith instruction. We shall soon further explore that as 'discursive meditation' of the sublime *Kunjed Gyalpo Tantra* of the Dzogchen *semde*/mind teaching cycle.

**The Vajrasattva Mantra in Dzogchen View and Practice**

The Tibetan *Vajrasattva Mantra* is the 100-syllable mantra of purification transmitted to us through Jigme Lingpa's *Longchen Nyingtig* hybrid Sanskrit-Tibetan *diglossia.* I here offer a very brief explanation from the nondual Fruitional View of acausal Ati Dzogchen.

'Vajra' is primordial, unborn, indestructible *kadak* emptiness *dharmakaya* Ground of Being. 'Sattva' is lucid, luminous, knowing-feeling *rigpa* Presence of that Ground. In Sutra relative view Vajrasattva is a 'separate' *Sambhogakaya* Adi Buddha to whom we pray for purification and forgiveness.

*In Ati Dzogchen fruitional ultimate View Vajrasattva is prior and ever-present unity of emptiness and essential rigpa Presence of that buddic Primordial Awareness Ground of Being (rang rig yeshe).*

In 'innermost secret' acausal nondual Dzogchen *Atiyoga* we see that great mantra from the view of immediate, always already present and awake timeless *ultimate* Primordial Awareness Ground of Being *(gzhi rigpa).* No separation. Conversely, from the dualistic exoteric view of Sutra and Tantra of the temporal, gradualist spiritual Path we see 'purification'

as occurring in an ideal future time. *Dzogchen caveat: nondual Dzogchen is not conceptual 'non-duality'!*

In Dzogchen the Vajrasattva Mantra as a *relative* plea for 'purification of obscurations' is indeed *ultimate* direct Dzogchen *kadak* Primordial Purity itself. The Mantra 'points out' *already present* peace and purity of our Buddha Nature of Mind *(semnyi).*

*'Purification' is now!* Immediate self-liberation *(rang drol)* of conceptual 'defilements' happens at the instant of their arising from never defiled stainless primordial Ground of Being itself *(rang rig yeshe). Sambhogakaya* Buddha Vajrasattva *(dorje sempa)* is—in Dzogchen Ultimate Truth—our 'already present and accomplished' knowing/feeling *rigpa Presence* of pristine deeply lucid purity of timeless, selfless Primordial Awareness *dharmakaya kadak* 'groundless' Ground of Being itself.

Yes. In Dzogchen view and practice 'primordial purity' is always already present within heart-mind of the human being—arising upon *jnana prana/lung* spirit breath in the body *(lungsem).* It has never been absent. It does not require correction. It is the very 'self-liberating' nature of our being here in time. That is Vajrasattva nondual '*essential rigpa'*. 'Purification' is here now 'self-liberating' nondual *rigpa* Presence. *'Samaya'* is immediate recognition continuity of *rigpa* Presence. That *samaya* promise has never been broken. Indeed, it cannot be broken. "It is already present from the beginning".

Therefore, in this nondual ultimate view, nothing is missing; nothing needs to be corrected or 'accomplished'; all things 'self-liberate' upon their arising. *That I Am Now!*

*Just so, Ati Dzogchen accepts the Vajrasattva Mantra as Relative Truth provisional Sutra and Tantra practice while reminding us that in the Ultimate Truth view of nondual subject-object unity there is nothing and no one to 'purify', no 'purity' to 'accomplish', and indeed no need to fabricate a conceptual 'view' of*

*the Ground at all. Present rigpa Presence just as it is now. Thus does acausal nondual Dzogchen ultimately transcend, embrace, and pervade all relative dualistic cause and effect Vajrasattva practice.*

That ever present boundless unbroken *rigpa* is Vajrasattva's *samaya* to us. That *samaya* promise is perforce already kept in this timeless moment now. The purity and forgiveness we desire is "already present and accomplished from the very beginning" (Arya Nagarjuna). Bright luminous clarity *(ösel)* and certainty, innermost 'active' *rigpa* Presence of *That*: *tathata, sattva,* suchness*, quidditas, chönyi, neluk, metanoia*. That, our Vajra essence can never be lost, defiled, or destroyed.

Yes. Vajrasattva is *essential rigpa*—indestructible purity of Primordial Awareness Ground itself. 'Purification' is recognition/realization of indwelling *rigpa* Presence of that all-embracing Ground. Thus we recite: "*Samaya* is my ever=present *rigpa* Presence; I promise to remain in it; Vajrasattva is always present compassionate purity of my mind; I surrender grasping desire in *kadak* Ground manifest as *lhundrub* Presence of self-aware *HUM*; Energy display of Mind Nature; *Ha Ha Ha Ha Hoh*; Vajra of all buddhas; *chöying* basic space *dharmakaya* intrinsic awareness Ground of Being That I Am. *AH HUM PHAT!"*

*OM* is *kadak*, pure 'open oneness' of nondual Primordial Awareness Ground of Being. *AH* is *lhundrub* manifest Spontaneous Presence of that Ground. *HUM* is recognition of that Presence. *PHAT* is skillful means/method with nondual wisdom *(yeshe)*—lucid singular unity of That. *AH HUM* is *trekchö* direct *magom* nonmeditatiom that ′cuts through' primal ignorance *(marigpa). Rest now in that Ground.*

*Vajrasattva is rigpa purity recognizing itself. The Vajrasattva Mantra is rigpa hearing itself. ′Purification′ is here now inherent absence of ′primal ignorance′(marigpa, avidya).*

*The Seed Syllable HUM*. It has been told that in Dzogchen, *HUM* is prior ever-present unity of vast infinite nondual emptiness Awareness *kadak* Ground of Being with knowing-feeling *essential rigpa* Presence of that Ground. '*H'* is primordially pure *kadak* Ground. '*U*' is *rigpa* clarity/knowing/feeling dynamical energy display of *kadak*. *'M'* is indivisibility of that boundless whole *(mahabindu, tendrel).*

*HUM* is primeval 'sound' *(sabda, nada)* of the Ground recognizing itself. The sound of *HUM* collapses spoken *sabda* into *nada* 'vibration' which then resolves into nondual empty Primordial Awareness Ground itself. *Rigpa* is ultimate knowing-feeling recognition of *HUM* as unborn, self-arisen, self-reflexive, self-liberation *(rang drol)* at the very instant of its arising to relative mind in space and time.

We are often advised not to visualize, concentrate, or reify *HUM* lest we objectify it wherein perfect subjectivity of innate *rigpa* knowing becomes mere concept and belief.

## III

# The Seven Mind Training Steps of the Great Perfection

There can be no better foundation for practice!
—Adzom Paylo Rinpoche

The great Nyingma lineage *vidyadhara* Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798)—*rimë* ecumenical synthesizer of Longchenpa's great *Longchen Nyingtig*—transmitted to us his precious dharma treasure *The Steps to Liberation* (2016). Here he introduces the universal all-embracing ″Sevenfold Mind Training″ instructions of Longchenpa (Longchen Rabjam 1308-1364), itself based upon Garab Dorje's (c. 665) *Seven Trainings in Bodhicitta*. For Longchenpa, these are the Dzogchen "Essential Instructions on the Preliminary Practices". Longchenpa:

> [These] vital points on the exceedingly profound essentials lead all beings to the state of perfect peace...By meditating in this way experience whatever you direct your attention to...and then rest in a spacious nonconceptual mind state.

Longchenpa unified the two main Dzogchen lineages—*Vima* and *Khandro*—as his profound Nyingma *Longchen Nyingtig*. It pervades all four Tibetan Buddhist lineages. Jigme Lingpa's *Seven Steps* were first revealed in Dzogchen Great Perfection tradition as it arises in 8th century Nyingma school of the "ancient ones". That natural Great Completion ecology of mind with its six singular but essentially same (*samata*) lineages is considered by the wise to be the pinnacle of all Buddhist Sutra and Tantra/mantra enlightenment teaching vehicles. This prodigious 'Sevenfold Mind Training' instantly

reconnects us to our non-judgmental, bias free indwelling primordially present love-wisdom buddha mind Ground Presence. Compassionate *bodhicitta* is present from the beginning in all of them, and indeed in all Buddhist Mahayana Great Vehicle teachings.

While the great masters and mahasiddhas of the later *sarma* 'New Translation' (Rinchen Zangpo) Tibetan Buddhist lineages—Sakya, Kagyu, Gelug—have composed profound texts on mind training (Tib. *lojong*), the 'ancient' Nyingma 'Sevenfold Mind Training' of Jigme Lingpa's later *Steps to Liberation* should not be conflated with the *lojong* mind training of these profound later 12th through 15th century *sarma* lineages.

Thus do these "seven steps for training the mind" offer a definitive liberating phenomenology for awakening our human hearts and minds into the primordial *dharmakaya* Ground that is *Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen*. This foundational seven-point teaching is requisite to all Tibetan Buddhist view and practice. It is foundation of *kadak trekchö* and *lhundrub tögal* practice within secret *manngag* Dzogchen teaching cycle. *Vajra invictus:* ultimate triumph over this inevitable adversity of our being here in relative space and time.

Here Jigme Lingpa's *Seven Steps* bestow clarity as to the prior and present unity of the *Four Dzogchen Yogas*, as we have seen. These are *Shamatha, Vipashyana*, *Kadak* Primordial Ground, and *Lhundrub* manifest Presence of that Ground. Indeed, *The Seven Steps* may be seen as foundation of the entire Nyingma school 'nine vehicles' reckoning.

Jigme Lingpa's *The Steps to Liberation* with its 'Seven Mind Trainings' are steps to the pith instructions of nondual Dzogchen teaching from 2nd century Arya Nagarjuna, to Garab Dorje, to 14th century Longchenpa (*Fourfold Heart*

*Essence*), then to the great *rimé Dzogchen* master Jamgön Mipham (1846-1912), then to *terton* Adzom Drukpa, and Adzom Paylo Rinpoche. These mindful pathways teach the Buddhadharma from foundational *relative* selfless *"anatman"* "impermanence" and "compassion"—to *ultimate* nondual wisdom, the seventh step *dharmakaya* Primordial Wisdom Ground *(yeshe, jnana),* very nature and essence of nondual all-embracing Primordial Awareness-Consciousness itself, ultimate 'basic space" (*chöying*) in whom arises our relative conventional human consciousness.

All too briefly, Jigme Lingpa's Dzogchen mindful *Seven Steps* to liberation are: Impermanence; Karma and Happiness; Suffering and Compassion; The Guru; Meditation; Negativity; and Wisdom—the threefold union of bliss, clarity, and wisdom of emptiness. [Jigme Lingpa 2016; Klein 2023] Thus do we approach Ati Dzogchen View and Practice.

In the curative oracular advice of 14th century Tibetan *Dzogchen* master Longchenpa, the 'omniscient one' [*Chöying Dzöd* with his own running Commentary 2001]:

> The universe of appearances and possibilities arises as the adornment of the ultimate womb of basic space [*chöying, dharmadhatu*]...buddha nature, buddhahood that is spontaneously present by its nature, naturally occurring timeless awareness, utterly lucent awakened mind, primordially and spontaneously present...Everything is wholly pristine, supreme state of spontaneous presence... beyond the extremes of existence and nonexistence... blissful place of rest. Spontaneously perfect is this timeless primordial awareness of the vast expanse of awakened mind, single sphere of being, all-pervasive, unborn and unceasing...The sublime secret of Dzogchen Atiyoga is that of resting in genuine ground of being, just as it is...By this virtue, may all beings without exception effortlessly awaken together in luminous primordial ground of the Great Perfection.

*Buddha Heart Buddha Mind.* Rest now for a minute in that concept-free, compassionate numinous Ground of Being. You will be mostly free of conceptual thinking. Give thanks. Take refuge in *That* suchness, "just as it is". What do you feel? Where in your body do you feel it? Who are you now? What is your mind? Many questions. Simply *rest* and enjoy what is "already present from the very beginning" by virtue of your precious human birth; blissful clear light (*ösel*) lucent Presence deep within you this very moment. *Feel That Now*.

That primordial 'basic space' (*chöying, dharmadhatu*) of all-embracing *dharmakaya* Ground Presence is your 'supreme identity'. Connect to *That* (*tathata, suchness, chönyi, neluk*) and rest one-pointedly, “brief moments many times”. [Lama Anne C. Klein's profound *Being Human and a Buddha Too* (2023) is here most essential.]

## IV

# The Neuroscience of Mindfulness Meditation

> Mindfulness of breathing is the direct path for purification of the minds of human beings.
>
> —Gautama the Buddha

*Mindful Prelude.* Human beings being here in time and space desire, require and deserve some semblance of happiness and well being. We have seen that there are natural happiness mind states already innately present within the human body-mind. We access them through the conscious *choice* of "placement of awareness/attention" upon our always present love-wisdom mind *Presence* of all-embracing Primordial Awareness Ground of Being in whom this all arises. That bright Presence rides life force *prana* spirit breath in our physical and subtle body. Hence, for both neuroscience and religious philosophy, human happiness is a function of one's here now *present* mind state; a blatantly obvious relative conventional truth. As our attentional awareness is *consciously placed* upon our inherent innermost *buddic* peace—subject-object unity (*samadhi*), luminous Ground Presence that we are—we are happy. That is *'metacognition'*, beyond mere thinking. If awareness is mired in worry and anger, we are unhappy.

So, the proper question as to human happiness is this: how shall I 'accomplish' these happy, peaceful mind states? How do I learn "placement of attention" upon such already present happiness states? How do I abide at that bright confluence of my human consciousness simultaneously with my innate clear light (*ösel*) love-wisdom awareness?

We have examined some of the contemplative considerations. Let us now briefly explore recent neuroscientific research on the Buddha's ancient art and science of *shamatha*—"mindfulness of breathing"—quiescent *resting* in non-modal 'great ease' (*galso*).

**The Neuroscience of 'Advanced Mindfulness Meditation'**

Over 50 years of Western neuroscientific research has demonstrated that basic mindful breathing practice supports the following noble objectives: preventive medicine, chronic pain management, stress reduction (recovery from stress induced cortisol production which is known to cause many psychophysical and physical symptoms), psycho-emotional healing, learning, well-being, and harmless human happiness.

*Beyond Basic Mindfulness Meditation.* In the last decade the revolution in the contemplative science of meditation has entered its 'third wave' of research, known to university research programs as "advanced meditation". These programs study the objective neuroscience and even the subjective 'spiritual' mind states and life stages of highly advanced Tibetan and Theravada Buddhist meditators. Leading edge research is centered at the Harvard Medical School, Brown University's Mindfulness Center, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Virginia, and Rice University. [*Scientific American* July/August 2024] To be sure, 'advanced meditation' exceeds the secular "mindfulness" that arose in the mid-20th century 'first wave', and early 21st century *shamatha, sati, smrti, bhavana* mindfulness meditation of the 'second wave'.

'Advanced meditation' research is concerned with what is now described as *"advanced concentrative absorption meditation"* (ACAM)—acausal nondual *samadhi* states of Ati Dzogchen,

Essence Mahamudra, Theravada *jhana, nirodha*—which may cause profound positive psychological transformation, deep and lasting feelings of personal well-being, and healing intervention in mental health; for example generalized anxiety disorder, depressive disorder, bipolar I and II, schizoaffective disorder, PTSD, and many more. 'Advanced meditation' has in hundreds of recent studies correlated specific ACAM brain states to 'felt experience' of enhanced attention, mental clarity, joy, self confidence, emotional ease, enhanced feelings of well-being, and lasting reduction of 'self-referential' ('selfing') self-ego-I cognitive processing. The auspicious result is empathy, altruism and compassionate engaged action/conduct for the benefit of other beings, both human and animal. Other benefits include enhanced immune function, post-surgical healing, enhanced business communication and increased work production.

Advanced meditation research on ACAM intervention has now begun a therapeutic revolution in the domains of medicine, mental health, clinical psychology and psychiatry, but as well in our emerging 'post-empirical' understanding of the theory and praxis of quantum physics and quantum cosmology; neurobiology, and of the prior and present unity of objective Science and its perfectly subjective Spirit Ground. [*Appendix A*]

ACAM "cessation events" as determined by a new investigative protocol that combines objective electro-encephalographic (EEG) and fMRI data with subjective first-person experience reports by the advanced meditative subject are characterized by "alpha functional connectivity", a near complete cessation of 'normal' human consciousness. In this deep trans-conceptual 'meditative absorption', sensory object awareness and the pervasive sense of a substantially 'real' self-ego-I are utterly transcended in their original nondual source condition—perfectly subjective Primordial Awareness-

Consciousness Ground of all arising phenomenal reality—by whatever grand name or concept.

These uncommon supra-cognitive events should not be conflated with the common unconsciousness of deep dreamless sleep, coma, anesthesia, or head injury. Following a 'cessation event' the yogin experiences subtle penetrating insight, clarity, yogic bliss, *kosmic* connectedness and interdependence with all life and life forms—'Great Completion' of our inherently indwelling nondual love-wisdom mind essence (*jnana, yeshe,* gnosis).

Due in no small part to the psycho-emotional profundity of such Buddhist 'advanced meditation', the view and practice must be guided by wisdom beyond that of skilled academic researchers. Indeed, such contemplative mind training must be transmitted and supported by Buddhist meditation masters of the highest possible order.

*The Benefits.* ACAM Advanced Mindfulness Meditation transcends our Western 'taboo of subjectivity'. It supports parasympathetic function (alpha and 'waking theta' brain rhythm "rest and digest" approach behavior), and so enhances immune function, while tending to tonify sympathetic (beta rhythm "fight or flight" aversion/avoidance behavior) activation which suppresses immune function. [Porges 2014; Siegel 2013; Sheng in Hanson 2014]

Neuroscientist Richard Davidson at the University of Wisconsin has shown that beginning meditators in a corporate business setting developed stronger immune systems than controls, as evidenced by statistically significant resistance to respiratory infections. In another Davidson study, novice meditators reported being 'happier' than non-meditating controls, experience more positive emotions, fewer stressful

emotions, and an enhanced feeling of well-being. [Davidson 2014, 2017; Begley 2007; Siegel 2013; Wallace 2009]

The *left and medial prefrontal cortex* of the human brain (*vm*PFC) activated in both beginning and advanced mindfulness meditation has been shown to dampen painful response to negative emotional mind states, while enhancing positive states. Just so, the *right prefrontal cortex* is activated in negative mind states. The amygdala is responsible for such negative internal states as fear and anger, which are then expressed ('projected') through egocentric, often destructive and self-destructive behavior. fMRI often reveals an underdeveloped amygdala in such subjects; especially in the adolescent brain.

In other words, the left and medial prefrontal cortex generate alpha, theta, and 25-42 hertz gamma brain oscillations which mitigate and pacify the negative neural signals from the right prefrontal cortex and amygdala which inwardly manifest as fear-anxiety and its flipside—anger, hostility, judgmentalism, aggression, antisocial pathology—which then manifest outwardly as adventitious human evil: alienation, hostility, aggression, despotism, genocide, and never ending war. [Siegel 2013; Begley 2007; Wallace 2007, 2009, Davidson 2017]

This process of anger and aggression is observed clinically in stroke patients. Patients with damage to the 'happy' left prefrontal cortex are generally more irritable than those with damage to the 'angry' right ventromedial (*vm*) prefrontal cortex who are often relatively calm, even serene. [Sheng in Hanson 2014]

Meanwhile, the *frontoparietal control module network* manages brain's multiple modules allowing it to function as a 'consciousness unity' (executive function and cognitive control), while the *default mode module*, which spans the same lobes as the frontoparietal network, is linked to such cognitive functions as

egocentric self-referencing ("selfing"), introspective thought and subjective feeling, passive emotional listening and learning, emotional processing, memory retrieval and 'theory of mind' (empathetic emotional connection to others). [*Scientific American* November 2014; July 2019]

Yes. Mindfulness meditation meta-research, over hundreds of studies since 2000, has demonstrated the following positive psycho-emotional outcomes: enhanced immune system function, enhanced respiratory function, post-surgical healing, blood pressure reduction, reduced age related brain atrophy, reduced symptoms of dementia and Alzheimer's disease, reduction in symptoms of anxiety, clinical depression, bipolar disorder I and II, schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, attention deficit disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, autism spectrum disorder, sleep disorder, chronic pain, post-stroke symptoms, reduction of prison violence and recidivism, improvement of school grades, and much more. [Begley 2007; Wallace 2009; Siegel 2013]

Meditation research of 'wave one' secular Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) has been shown to be as effective as antidepressants in treatment of clinical depression. [Lancet Vol. 386; Kuyken 2015] I have often observed this in my own psychiatric corrections work.

*The experience of our human sense of self is a function of the ventral medial prefrontal cortex (vmPFC), the fundamental psychological model of a self-ego-I in mental time.* Here Buddhist emptiness/*shunyata* manifests as 'interdependent arising' of phenomena to the self—the 'unity of appearance and emptiness'. How shall we understand this?

## The Neuroscience of Meditation and Our Experience of Self

We have very briefly surveyed the neurobiological influences of mindfulness meditation and advanced 'ACAM meditative absorption' on human conduct/behavior. How do these influences effect our sense of self-ego-I (*ipseity*/selfhood); our brain structure and function; relative human flourishing and happiness (*eudiamonia, felicitas*); and ultimate happiness and freedom of 'spiritual' liberation/enlightenment (*paramananda, mahasukha, beatitudo*)—our 'post-empirical' compassionate harmless happiness that cannot be lost?

Zen masters, Tibetan Lamas, and neuroscientists agree: "mindfulness of breathing" ('focused attention meditation'), 'compassion meditation', and 'advanced meditation' (ACAM) all facilitate 1) a beneficial shift of attention from obsessive, usually fraught self-referential thinking ("selfing") with its overriding concern for 'I, Me, Mine'; which 2) bestows a sense of inner peace, self-acceptance, emotional clarity, and 'cosmic connectedness'; which 3) reduces anxiety and anger toward self and thus toward others; which 4) enhances empathy, altruistic thought, intention and action ('prosocial interaction') for the benefit of living beings (altruism, *bodhicitta*); 5) enhancing feelings of individual well-being and experienced happiness. Both basic 'mindfulness meditation' and nondual ACAM presence promote all-important prosocial behavior. The former is present in nearly all our social institutions.

For Mahayana and Indo-Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhists the self-ego-I is *relatively* an all too real yet *ultimately* illusory conceptually imputed and reified mental elaboration. How shall we understand this in the gloss of neurobiology?

The unfocused ruminating wandering mind, under sway of the brain's 'default mode network'—the medial prefrontal cortex (MPFC) and the posterior cingulate cortex (PCC)—

significantly increase ego self-referential attention—"selfing"—with its often present fear/anxiety, anger/hostility, greed/pride, and negative judgments about self, which are then psychologically 'projected' onto others. The micro-cognitive result in the individual is stress and unhappiness. The macro-cognitive result in the human sociocultural cognosphere is alienation, autocracy, despotism, endless war, and despair.

*The ACC Gyrus*. Meanwhile, in the *limbic system*, the functional connection between the amygdala and the *anterior cingulate cortex gyrus* (ACC*g*)—the frontal aspect of the *cingulate cortex*—functions to regulate emotion and impulse control, morality and altruistic conduct, attention, awareness of experience, "error related negativity", 'self-correction' of ego, and social emotional pain registration. *The ACC functions as a bridge between emotion and mental cognition.* The ventral aspect of the ACC is connected to the amygdala, hypothalamus, hippocampus, and anterior insula of the limbic system which is closely connected to and functionally related to the *prefrontal cortex* but is not itself a cerebral structure. [Bush G, et. el. 2000 *Trends in the Cognitive Sciences* 4 (6): 215-222]

*The ACC gyrus (ACCg) is active in feelings of empathy, compassion and desire to benefit 'other' living beings. It is not activated in decisions that benefit only oneself. Indeed, ACCg is the critical neuroscientific cause of that profound 'prosocial' altruistic bodhicitta behavior. [Patricia Lockwood, Oxford University.] 'Meditation' strengthens ACC function. The ACC is active in contemplative nondual rigpa (Dzogchen, Advaita, Taoist) as selfless altruistic action/conduct.*

With the ACC, the *dorsomedial prefrontal cortex* encodes *empathy*—felt experience of the thoughts and feelings of others—foundational social cohesion of our human interaction. We may *choose* to utilize our empathy, or not. Altruistic prosocial conduct

requires that we do. Thus do we feel more secure, confident, happy, and less judgmental. And it feels good.

Such engaged empathetic, compassionate conduct is for most Buddhists and Christians the primary cause of human happiness. Such 'prosocial behavior'—engaged *feeling* conduct for the benefit of others—is required for our individual and social well-being. Clearly, it has both neurological and ethical components. We may choose to engage in ethical compassionate *bodhicitta* conduct, or not.

Buddhist contemplative experience with its 'advanced ACAM meditation' research has demonstrated that when 'grasping at self' ceases, so does the yogin's ego who chooses to transcend such self-centered cognition. Within the ambit of this profound 'wisdom of emptiness' arises liberating freedom of nondual (subject-object unity) 'enlightenment'.

Francis Crick has argued further that the ACC is also the seat of human free will.

Pathology of the ACC*g* (anterior cingulate cortex gyrus) includes schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety disorder, depressive disorder, schizoaffective disorder, PTSD, autism spectrum disorder, and antisocial behavior. Contemplative mindfulness practice may increase cortical thickness of the ACC through its disquieting quiescence of self-ego-I via capacity to produce peaceful alpha, theta and gamma brain rhythm which all have a healing effect. Increased ACC thickness has also been shown to increase risk of psychopathology. [Siegel 2013; Wallace 2009]

In short, scientific meta-research that syntheses data from thousands of research projects since 1970—but especially the neurophysiology and neuroimaging of 'advanced meditation' ACAM research since the advent of our post-2000 'third wave'—

reveal substantial human benefit through each of the four primary classes of meditation practice.

These classes include 1) *shamatha mindfulness focused attention meditation*, usually upon the breath, or image/vision of the Buddha or of the Christ, or of a spiritual presence; 2) *open monitoring mindfulness meditation*, witnessing whatever arises in awareness without grasping, rejecting, or judging; 3) *loving-kindness compassion meditation,* manifesting our natural empathy, even love for all living beings; 4) nondual 'meditative absorption' of ACAM advanced meditation. [*Scientific American:* November 2014; July/August 2024]

All four of these meditation modalities resulted in beneficial outcomes by conclusively reducing or deactivating neural processing in some brain structures, while enhancing activity in others. Healthy "ego strength" notwithstanding, all four cognitive contemplative modalities function as relative conventional cognitive antidotes to an all too often troublesome, duplicitous, materialist, personal power-hungry self-ego-I. How is this so? And what are the clear, present personal and sociocultural benefits? How will it impact our all too human mass cognitive 'conformation bias' that is our deep cultural background Scientific Realist/Materialist/ Physicalist "global web of belief"? [Quine 1969]

## Review: Scientifically Proven Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation

These are as we have seen: 1) reduced processing in the default mode network (PCC and MPFC) of the "selfing" wandering mind; which 2) reduces self-ego-I self-referential processing—habitual attention and concern about I-Me-Mine with its secondary anxiety, anger and ill-will mind states; 3) reduced activity in, and reduced size of the amygdala which is responsible for fear and anger ('fight or flight') mind states; 4) reduced stress

related cortisol production by the adrenal cortex while blocking its circulation throughout the upper body upon the autonomic vagus nerve (CN-X); 5) enhanced beneficial brain alpha, theta, and medium amplitude gamma band oscillations (25 to 42 hertz), while reducing excessive, often obsessive beta activity; 6) reduced activity in the right prefrontal cortex which is active in fear, anger, and ill-will mind states; 7) increased ACC*g* and dorsomedial prefrontal cortex processing which enhances feelings of altruism, compassion and forgiveness toward self and others; 8) induced beneficial increased long term frontal cortex gyrification (neuroplasticity), which has proved to be permanent, even when contemplative practice ceases. [Siegel 2013; Porges 2014; Begley 2007; Davidson 2017; Wallace 2007, 2009; *Scientific American:* November 2014; July/August 2024]

Hence, the no longer surprising result of this neuroscientific meta-research includes 1) greatly reduced preoccupation with self and its obsessive narcissistic self-narrative; 2) reduced psycho-emotional stress; 3) enhanced feelings of connection, well-being, good will; 4) prosocial behavior; 5) subjective reports of enhanced happiness.

Therefore, mindfulness meditation with its "polyvagal breath"—5 seconds in, 7 seconds out through pursed lips—trains the scattered "wild horse of the mind" in *awareness management*, the *placement of attention*, and continued focus of attentional awareness upon immediate, nonconceptual, present moment to moment positive experience of what is often described as a numinous lucid indwelling infinite Spiritual *Presence*. [*Appendix B*] That all with enhanced production of beneficial alpha, waking theta, and 25-42 hertz gamma band oscillation upon mindful belly-breath—our here now connection to the infinite aspect of our being here. Thus do we shift self-referencing "selfing" attention away from chronic unfocused wandering mind with its

obsessive clinging/attachment to a self-ego-I, and toward ACC altruistic compassionate thought, intention, and action for the benefit of living beings—*bodhichitta, karuna, patheos, charis, hesed,* loving kindness, *rahmah*.

[Mindfulness "polyvagal breathing"—5 seconds in, 7 seconds out—blocks excessive stress inducing cortisol production by the *zona fasciculata* of the adrenal cortex and thus its circulation throughout the upper body along the CN-X vagus nerve. [Porges 2014] Chronic exposure to supraphysiologic levels of endogenous cortisol produces the high ACTH associated with Addison's disease, Cushing's syndrome, 'stress', and other pathology.]

Thus do we begin to realize that conscious *mindfulness is an act of love*, a continuity of the *ultimate* primordial gravitas of the Great Love *kosmic* unity compassionately expressing itself ("responsiveness") in and through this *relative* gift of our human form, for the benefit of all human and nonhuman beings, including our precious Mother Earth.

## Being Happy Now:
## The Physics and Metaphysics of 'Primordial Presence'

Clearly, "mindfulness of breathing" as Gautama the Buddha named it, reduces or suspends habitual, often obsessive *self-referential thinking* ("selfing") that causes terrible suffering secondary to our human too often pervasive sense of a fearful lonely separate self adrift in a hostile, dangerous, meaningless cosmos. Mindfulness is 'accomplished' through a program of 'mind training' in present moment, trans-conceptual *feeling awareness* upon the breath—mindful placement and maintenance of attentional awareness upon the *prana* spirit wind 'breath of life' (*prana, pneuma*, *lung*, holy spirit, *c'hi, ki,* bioenergy) that rides the

breath—which settles our scattered, fearful, obsessively thinking human 'monkey mind'.

Thus does dualistic human awareness enter in, merge and awaken to its own indwelling, always already present Presence of nondual primordial awareness-consciousness whole itself, numinous formless, timeless, selfless Ground of all spacetime form—the very 'Nature of Mind' (*cittata, semnyi, buddhajnana*), nondual love-wisdom Presence of that all-subsuming nondual "Ground of Being", by whatever grand name. Our habitual dualistic thinking is in its essence nondual! Knowing subject and its objects are a unity. We use mantra practice to connect to that Ground. [*Ch. I*] It's useful to notice the subtle excuses and resistance of self-ego-I to *practice* this powerful mindful *cause* of our human happiness.

We've seen that neuroscientific meta-research demonstrates the profound value of contemplative mindfulness meditation (*shamatha, zhine, sati, smrti, bhavana*)—which begins with *shamatha* calm abiding, and loving-kindness compassion meditation—in support of our relative human flourishing and ultimate liberating harmless Happiness Itself. And that foundational meditation opens—under gentle guidance of a qualified meditation master—into mindful continuity of self-liberating non-doing 'nonmeditation' *(magom)* of *Ati Dzogchen* and Essence *Mahamudra* View and praxis. [*Ch. II* above; Boaz 2023 *Mindfulness Meditation*]

We have now, inter alia, witnessed the "mindfulness revolution" now abroad in the Western mind and culture. It's alive and well in its secular guise in our primary institutions—education, medicine, psychology, the social sciences, business, government, military, corrections, even organized religion which has grown apart from its foundation in contemplative mythos of great Primordial Wisdom Tradition of our beloved *Homo sapiens*. Further, 'advanced meditative absorption' (ACAM) is now quite well researched, as we have seen above.

*Awareness Management: Human Happiness is a Choice.* On this neuro-metaphysical view then, human happiness is very much dependent upon an *awareness management* skill set—where, when, and how we choose to place our conscious attentional awareness. Yes. We may *choose* our happiness! We may choose to engage contemplative mind training via "mindfulness of breathing" at will, and so "tame the wild horse of the mind", or not.

Please be advised: the scope of contemplative 'advanced mindfulness meditation' (ACAM) opens and engages cognitive dimensions beyond reach of secular mindfulness approaches. Both are based in historical Buddhist *shamatha* 'calm abiding'. [*Ch. VII*]

In short, human happiness is a result of *conscious placement of our cognitive attention/awareness* in this present moment here and now naturally upon the belly-breath—indwelling bright Presence of primordial Spirit Ground of Being of all arising phenomenal reality. And this can be learned from the wisdom injunctions of those who know—the qualified mindfulness meditation teachers and their kind mentor/masters. Great gratitude!

## Modes of the Self

Contemplative neuroscience has identified two ways of experiencing the self—two modes of self-reference: 1) *narrative focus upon self*, our urgent all-consuming story-drama about ourselves; and 2) *experiential focus upon self*, bodily proprioceptive sense experience, including direct nonconceptual *feeling* of 'spiritual' experience (*yogi pratyaksa*). These two modes are hypothesized by most cognitive scientists to be neurologically distinct. Recent contemplative research with H.H. Dalai Lama's highly skilled Buddhist ACAM meditating monks has shown these two modalities of self-experience are in fact a

neurobiological, phenomenological, and contemplative unity. [Davidson 2017; Siegel 2013; Wallace 2009]

Yes. Volumes of research have demonstrated that in both meditators and non-meditators the *experiential focus* mode involving nonconceptual "mindfulness of breathing" reduced egocentric negative narrative self-referential activity in the MPFC and PCC of the brain's *default mode network* thereby enhancing the benefits of the compassion inducing ACC gyrus (ACC*g*). Again, the reported results were profound 'peace of mind' and enhanced feelings of prosocial, altruistic harmless happiness and well-being.

For highly skilled ACAM meditators habitual fantasy-reverie self-referential thinking of the untrained mind is absent during formal sitting meditation, and for a few hours following it. Here, processing activity of the 'selfing' *default mode network* is nearly quiescent. [Davidson 2017] These skilled practitioners abide in an uncontrived 'nonmeditation' contemplative mind state most of the time. This quiescent state persists through some sleep stages. The subjective experience of such a stable neurological state of mind is known to such practitioners as the clarity, peace and happiness of the 'yogi's bliss'.

In brief, 'advanced ACAM meditators' have demonstrated in hundreds of studies since 2000 (Davidson 2017; Begley 2007; Wallace 2009; Siegel 2013) the capacity to maintain such stable direct nonconceptual contemplative mind states (*yogi pratyaksa*) with their corresponding brain rhythms (alpha, theta, gamma) in post-meditation activities—while "hewing wood and carrying water", and driving, talking, loving, reading and writing, teaching, and even mostly selfless conceptual creative thinking and planning. Yes. Skilled meditators demonstrate a radically decreased presence of a narcissistic self-ego-I. [*Ch. I*]

Therefore, mindfulness meditation practice for established meditators facilitates the *choice* of a fluent cognitive ambulation

from fraught conceptual *self-narrative mode* to a selfless, peaceful, nonconceptual *directly experiential mode* (*yogi pratyaksa*) almost at will. The cause and result of *shamatha* 'calm abiding' quiescent peace of mind, with the 'meditative stability' of ACAM 'meditative absorption', results in a 'felt sense' of harmless happy, blissful connection and interdependence with all living beings; indeed, with the *ultimate* unbroken whole of *kosmos* itself—even as inexorable human adversity continues to arise in the *relative* world of *samsaric* cosmic spacetime conditioned lived experience.

It is 'calm abiding' foundational *shamatha* practice through which the mindfulness practitioner seeds the proverbial Ground for ACAM meditative stability of acausal Dzogchen *Atiyoga*—Great Perfection/Great Completion of the Mahayana Causal Vehicle. [*Ch. II*]

**Mindfulness: Review of the View**

Clearly, the neuroscientific implications of meditation practice for the reduction of human suffering and for harmless human happiness are profound. *Shamatha* calm abiding 'mindfulness of breathing', with *loving-kindness meditation,* offer skillful regulation of our habitual negative emotional responses to life's inexorable adversity by transforming painful narcissistic self-narrative into ego-freeing, quiescent, peaceful, and altruistic states of mind. And *That (bodhicitta)* is the open secret of human happiness, both relative human flourishing, and ultimate liberating harmless Happiness Itself. However, conceptual understanding is only the beginning. Wisdom and bliss require committed patient *practice*!

*We become that upon which we regularly choose to place our attention!* As Gautama Shakyamuni the Buddha of this present age told so long ago, "What you are is what you have been; what you

will be is what you do now." As good a definition of 'relative' cause-and-effect karma as ever there was. Yes. *Human happiness is a conscious mindful choice!*

As we assiduously practice simple "mindfulness of breathing", we learn to place our present moment-to-moment awareness—our *attention*—upon our direct trans-conceptual love-wisdom Buddha mind Christ nature *feeling experience.* Thus do we connect with that aspect of ourselves—subtle lucid numinous *Presence*—that is mostly selfless, profound, and directly experiential (*yogi pratyaksa*), beyond yet including our habitual discursive concepts and beliefs about it. We learn to utilize both voices of our human cognition—our *noetic cognitive doublet*—objective conceptual, and subjective contemplative. And that is the beginning of our individual and collective understanding of the prior and present unity of causal objective *Science* and the acausal, perfectly subjective primordial *Spirit* Ground in whom it arises. [*Appendix A* below; Boaz 2023 *The Prior Unity of Science and Spirit*]

*We can now begin to see that mindfulness meditation is, among other things, quiescent observation of our thoughts without identifying with, or judging them, without following them, or trying to block them. We learn to rest in the Ground of Being; to "let being be as it is", here now.*

We have now come to understand that we need not believe and defend our adventitious, dreary and destructive negative ego-centric thoughts, feelings and closely held beliefs; stress is reduced; human happiness and freedom is enhanced. Thoughts, feelings, and beliefs are now seen to be inherently evanescent, diaphanous, ever changing, selfless (*anatman*) and impermanent (*anitya*). Perhaps we should take them less seriously, with a bit of self-effacing humor. Perhaps after all, our narcissistic self-ego-I is not the egocentric center around which the entire universe revolves. Thus, have I come to call this self-reflexive cognitive process mindful *awareness management*. [*Appendix B*; *Chapter VIII*]

## Beyond Neuroscience:
## Liberating Phenomenology of Primordial Presence

*Post-Empirical Prelude.* Not surprisingly, inherently trans-conceptual, 'post-empirical', nondual, selfless, formless, timeless yet always already present lucid numinous indwelling love-wisdom Buddha nature—Christ mind, *Ein Sof*, Brahman, Tao *hsing-ch'i*—original Presence of all-embracing primordial Ground of Being in whom this all arises is, in a word, '*nonlocal*'. It cannot be objectively located in or reduced to physical brain, heart, gut, or in any local spacetime place, or in any scientific or spiritual concept; no more so than spacious presence of love, or of wisdom, or of happiness can be objectively physically located. Non-local nondual all-subsuming Primordial Awareness Ground Presence pervades everything!

Hence, all-embracing Spirit Presence of the *kosmos* whole *(mahabindu, tendrel)*—bright 'Primordial Awareness Ground of Being' in which, or in whom the stuff of spacetime cosmos arises is nonconceptual, nonlocal, perfectly subjective, contemplative direct experience (*yogi pratyaksa*) Presence, beyond the grasp of our concepts and beliefs—try as we may to objectively reduce it to or locate it in a purely physical thinking brain. And lest we become romantically inured to desire-mind cupidity of human ego, know and *feel* now that Presence of all-embracing Primordial Awareness Ground of Being is untrammeled, nonlocal, and utterly nondual.

But don't *believe* any of this! It's quite beyond belief, and our concepts about it. As Buddha told, *"Ehi passika*—come and see for yourself." So yes, *choose* to be *That (tathata,* suchness*)*!

*Trekchö and Tögal: Two Dzogchen Paths to Buddhahood.* Dzogchen master Longchenpa (2001 pp. 298-299) reveals "the two kinds of minds—those who are involved in effort and those who

are not." Yogins who utilize 'spiritual effort' to "accomplish" the union of subtle body channels, winds, and bright *thigle* orbs of 'rainbow light' practice *lhundrub tögal Presence.*

> [They] rest in their natural state...emotions are purified within basic space without being renounced...self-knowing awareness is unobstructed...In this approach, freedom comes about through the effortful cultivation of the four visions of *tögal*, which manifests in a natural state of rest. Alternatively, freedom comes about effortlessly through the realization of *trekchö*, the bare state of naturally free awareness.

Prepared *kadak trekchö* ('cutting through' concept mind) practitioners "are not involved in effort". Via the Guru's subtle 'pointing out instruction' (*ngotrö*) they ultimately realize relative concept/emotion cognition as it effortlessly self-liberates (*rang drol*) at the instant of its arising to relative mind. "*Trekchö* is immediate direct realization...superior intimate instruction for the lazy." [Vimalamitra] Longchenpa 2001:

> Afflictive emotions are themselves naturally free just as they are...Rest without seeking anything. Supreme bliss unfolds without being cultivated in meditation. One directly experiences it as one's nature....*Trekchö is the ultimate meaning of the ground of being—for those of the very highest acumen—to effortless freedom*... Basic space [*chöying*] is buddha nature—buddhahood that is spontaneously present [the state of presence] by its nature... beyond supreme emptiness and sublime knowing, ancestor of all the buddhas, unborn naturally occurring timeless awareness—utterly lucid awakened mind—marvelous and superb, primordially and spontaneously present...Awakened mind...is ultimate truth, fully evident direct experience of it so there is no need to seek it elsewhere. Vividly lucid, it does not entail dualistic perception and is free of conceptual elaboration...

> and so it is called the 'essence of being'. All arising form and wisdom is the adornment of unborn basic space...innermost buddha nature.

That is the noetic nondual 'innermost secret' Great Perfection Ati Dzogchen *trekchö* view and practice as transmitted through Longchenpa's wondrous *Chöying Dzöd* (2001). *Trekchö* is grounded in all three Dzogchen teaching cycles—*semde* mind series, *longde* space series, and secret *manngag/upadesha* personal pith instruction series transmitted directly from Dzogchen master to the prepared mind of the disciple. *That (tathata)* is considered by Tibetan Buddhists to be very 'heart essence' *(nyingtig)* of all spiritual teaching. "It establishes Base, Ground, Path, and Fruition of all aspects of Ati Dzogchen." [Zechen Rabjam] The *Atiyoga* of Dzogchen (*dzog* means complete/perfect, *chen* means great) is the ninth and subtlest of the nine vehicles of Nyingma lineage Dzogchen tradition. [Boaz 2020 *Ch. V*]

*Tögal.* The prepared *tögal lhundrub* practitioner—'the practice of vision' of subtle body 'clear light' (*ösel*)—assiduously, secretly 'cultivates' subtle body (channels, winds, bright *thigle* orbs) practice of the *Four Visions* that results in "leap over" or ‘direct crossing’, ultimate purification of concepts and afflictive emotions as all *relative* phenomenal appearances resolve in the *ultimate* expanse of their nondual primordial *dharmakaya* 'groundless Ground'. That is the sublime nondual fruition/result of *tögal* vision: direct knowing-feeling realization (*rigpa*) of Ultimate Reality Itself (*chönyi ngön sum*), then its final dissolution therein (*chönyi zésa*).

## The Four Mind State/Life Stage Dimensions of Human Consciousness

Clearly, the perfect subjectivity of our innate love-wisdom mind buddha mind Presence does not admit of objective 'scientific proof'. As if objective Big Science exhausted the human awareness-consciousness processional that constitutes our four cognitive dimensions—mind states and life stages—of the singular whole of human body, mind, spirit knowing/feeling experience. Yes. That dualistic objective human consciousness is always already embraced in its perfectly subjective nondual Primordial Awareness Consciousness 'groundless' Ground, vast boundless whole of *That*. 'Groundless' because it is nonobjective.

Broadly construed, these four state/stages are: 1) pre-conceptual, unelaborated, objective, ordinary direct attention/perception, just prior to concept and naming; 2) dualistic exoteric objective thinking-conceptual, even scientific cognition wherein knowing subject and its objects are separate and divided (*vikalpa, kalpana, prapanca, namtok, doxa*); 3) esoteric subjective contemplative ACAM 'meditation' cognition along with compassionate feeling cognition (*dhyana, samadhi, shamatha, bodhicitta*); and 4) perfectly subjective acausal nondual (subject-object unity), noetic (body, mind, spirit unity), direct yogic experience (*yogi pratyaksa, samadhi, satori, dhyana*) of indwelling love-wisdom mind—nondual Spirit Ground of Being—lucid Presence of *That*; *Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen*. That is supra-cognitive abode of all buddhas and mahasiddhas of the great love-wisdom tradition of humankind. So yes. *The four state/stages are: perceptual, conceptual, contemplative, and nondual.*

State/StageThree may be understood as 'Development Stage' practice—(a) the Spiritual Seeking Stage, and (b) the Spiritual Discovery Stage—followed by 'Completion Stage', the

Spiritual Grounding Stage. Finally, these sub-stages of Stage Three facilitate Stage Four—Ati Dzogchen Great Completion—utterly selfless nondual Perfection Stage practice.

Just so, our deeply subjective love-wisdom mind—indwelling Christ mind Presence (*christos*), or 'clear light' (*ösel*) bliss of our Buddha nature love-wisdom Presence (*rigpa, vidya, buddhajnana*), or nondual Nirguna Brahman (*Kham Brahm*), or primordial *Hsing-ch'i* breath of Tao, or Hebrew infinite unmanifest *Ein Sof*, or purifying Sufi *Dhikr* of *Fitra*—all are our great Primordial Wisdom Tradition exemplars of this all-pervading indwelling instant pure Presence "always present from the very beginning". That all is completed in the crowning love and wisdom of yogic nonconceptual, nondual *buddic* State/Stage Four—our freeing liberation into ultimate Buddha Nature of Mind—formless, timeless, selfless, perfectly subjective Primordial Awareness Ground of Being (*kosmos*) of all arising *relative* physical mental phenomenal spacetime form (cosmos). *That* is acausal, nondual *ultimate* perfect enlightenment: *samyak sambuddha, guang ming*. Indestructible Vajra of Clear Light.

We abide most of our lives in the mind states of life stage one and two. It is inspired practice of the contemplative mind states of Life Stage Three—under the guidance of a qualified Dzogchen master—that opens into the adept mastery of buddhas, saints, sages, and mahasiddhas dwelling in the clarity, bliss, and wisdom of Life Stage Four.

And wonder of wonders, *That* love-wisdom *'samadhi* of suchness' and *'samadhi* of illumination', the lucid mind states of Stage Three are always present and available to the experience of any 'ordinary mind' at any moment, in any life stage! Thus do contemplative *mind states* become skillful, wise personality *mind traits*. This is so because *the cognitive processional of these four cognitive dimensions of our human being are inherently an indwelling,*

*indivisible ontic prior yet phenomenally present one truth unity of our human experience*. The clear light (*ösel*) lucidity and happiness of State/Stage Four is always present to those who choose to access it via conscious constant 'placement of attention' upon our already present Primordial Presence of all-embracing, all-subsuming, all-pervading perfectly subjective ultimate primordial 'Ground of Being' as it rides *prana* spirit breath here in relative objective phenomenal space and time. Great *kosmic* gift. Great gratitude!

To be sure, it is the art and Contemplative Science of the ancient practice of 'mindfulness of breathing' that reveals and grounds the 'relative' phenomenology and 'ultimate' metaphysical ontology of this trans-conceptual, numinous 'primordially pure' nondual Spirit Presence that subtly and gently pilots us through the prior and present unity of these four cognitive dimensions of our being here in space and time. [*Appendix B* below; Boaz 2023 *The Noetic Revolution: Toward an Integral Science of Matter, Mind and Spirit*]

Most human beings can recognize this nameless, selfless, inherently subjective but very real love-wisdom face of ours when it is contemplatively, directly experienced (*yogi pratyaksa*), more or less beyond, or prior to the relentless distractions of our busy, troubled, obsessively thinking and self-referencing ('selfing') concept-mind. We experience that nonconceptual lucid Presence of primordial *dharmakaya* 'groundless Ground' through the lovely face of our beloved spouse, or *devotion* to the Guru, or at the moment of birth of our first-born child. That *process* of recognition, then realization is our inherent indwelling buddha mind 'wakefulness'. Our Heart's desire. [Davidson 2017; Siegel 2013; Begely 2007; Boaz 2023]

Please recall our human consciousness *noetic cognitive doublet*—exoteric objective conceptual cognition, and esoteric subjective contemplative cognition—that together embrace the great enfolded, always unfolding and arising awareness whole of the

above four dimensions of our human cognition. We quite artificially, conceptually separate these two (or four) modalities of mind—these 'labels'—to better understand their prior and present invariant one truth unity. That prior and always present union is the implicate order of the vast expanse of nondual *kosmic* unbroken whole—basal, spacious (*chöying*) Primordial Awareness-Consciousness *dharmakaya* 'groundless Ground' itself in whom (Adi Buddha Samantabhadra) all of this explicate cosmic spacetime stuff, and all of us, self-reflexively arises, unfolds, participates, and is cognitively and physically instantiated.

So many words for this simple *relationship process* of being authentically, ultimately happy in our precious relative human form. And that happiness is always "already present and accomplished from the beginning" (Arya Nagarjuna), deep within us. As H.H. Dalai Lama told, "Just open the door."

*Bodhicitta.* As we open and enter in that propitious cognitive portal we discover, upon each mindful breath, the primary cause of human happiness and well-being. It is known to Indo-Tibetan Buddhists as great *kosmic* gift *(jinlob)* of our being here—*Ultimate Bodhicitta*—manifested and expressed in relative spacetime as the compassionate *Relative Bodhicitta* of thought, intention and engaged ethical action/conduct. *Mahasukaho!*

Yes. Primordial Awareness love-wisdom unity of ultimate and relative *bodhicitta, That* (*tathata*, *tattva*, thatness, suchness, *chönyi,* quiddity) is the open secret of the ultimate human happiness of each one of us. And so we smile. Lucid clarity. Yogin's bliss.

Just so, that engaged *Relative Bodhicitta* is our conscious portal of return to *Ultimate Bodhicitta*—Ground of Being itself—very Nature of Mind in whom this precious life arises for us.

## Ontology: Being Here

*Post-Ontological Minimalism.* The venerable ontic principle of 'Occam's Razor' informs us that "Entities must not be multiplied beyond necessity." The fluffy stuff of spacetime reality may not be as essential, substantial, permanent or as 'real' as it appears to our senses, concepts and beliefs about it. Our human sensory and conceptual experience is all too often deceived.

'Metaphysical Ontology' is but a mere conceptual guide to nonconceptual nondual realization of the very essence and nature of the Primordial Ground of Being itself (*rang rig yeshe, chönyi, dharmakaya*), the very Nature of Mind. Herein dwells a nondual ultimate 'ontology' which we presume to grasp via our dualistic intellectual adventures in mere conceptual philosophical ontology.

*Ontological Monism.* Let us consider for example Monism—that the ultimate vast all-embracing whole (*mahabindu*) is ontologically prior to its relative conventional constituting parts.

Monism conceptually views the cosmic parts as subsumed within the mereological (part/whole relations) prior *kosmic* whole, then as descending 'down' from that numinous nondual "One" (Plotinus, Proclus, Spinoza, Hegel, Longchenpa) as multiplicity of spacetime physical and mental forms. Monism perforce assumes the existence of physical and mental parts that the great whole may embrace them. Yes. The phenomenal parts exist! Neoplatonist Proclus reveals, "The whole is everywhere prior to the plurality...and embraces all separate beings in the *kosmos*." Both wholes and their parts 'exist' in some modality. Monism views the separate parts as interdependent participants in the vast whole. That view of course aids our conceptual understanding (Life Stage Two) which helps to illumine the more fundamental trans-conceptual, contemplative post-ontic great truth of the matter (Life Stage Three and Four).

*Ontological Pluralism.* In the alternative, Pluralism (Bertrand Russell; Atomism; Local Scientific Realism/Materialism) argues that the plurality of the constituting parts—spacetime located micro and macro stuff—is ontologically prior to the whole with physical quantum microparticles (quarks and leptons) as fundamental in fabricating all relative appearing phenomenal reality.

Clearly, Pluralism limits its ontology to purely physical phenomena. How so? Because mental and spiritual phenomena are invariably reduced to purely physical brain structure and function; and that is reduced to the interactions of fundamental quarks and leptons. 'Scientific Reductionism'. Yes, Pluralism is essentially the ontology of Local Realism and Physicalism—as in the classical, pre-quantum ideology of Scientific Materialism. Spirit, Love, Art? Wherefore art thou?

However, the inherently subjective quantum wave function (ψ) has provided abundant reasoned evidence that our quantum physical cosmic multiverse is indeed embraced and grounded in a vast monistic perhaps infinite, interdependent, interconnected, quantum entangled irreducible perfectly subjective ultimate whole (ZPE), mereologically manifested relatively and conventionally as indivisible nominal holonic 'parts' participating in that great whole. That is known as "grounding by subsumption". The *ultimate* prior great whole subsumes/embraces its *relative* parts. *Are* there ultimate parts?

Tibetan Buddhists accept Relative Truth phenomenal existence of parts but deny Ultimate Truth intrinsic existence of anything, as parts perforce partake in formless timeless Ground of Being, all-subsuming boundless whole itself. That provides a centrist Middle Way between the ontic metaphysical extremes of *either* absolute existence *or* absolute nonexistence. [*Ch. I, V*].

## Primal Ignorance: Fearful Pride is the Rub

How is it that we so often fail to *choose* this lucid *Presence* of our indwelling harmless human happiness; that we remain stuck in our all too familiar uncomfortable comfort zones of egocentric judgment of self and others? We are ensnared in 'primal ignorance' *(avidya)* that manifests as fearful egocentric *pride*! Pride is rooted in subtle fear of failure. [Boaz 2025] That includes all of us who have not yet 'recognized' our indwelling 'primordial love-wisdom' nature. Pride is the most hidden and most difficult to recognize of our destructive 'afflictive emotions'—fear-anger, hostility, hatred, grasping desire, greed, pride—even at the 'higher' life stages of spiritual practice. Here the ruinous 'spiritualized ego' skillfully defends its narcissistic self from our natural altruistic happiness.

Pride has several stages, from gross ego to very subtle 'spiritual'. Where are you in this painful hierarchy of evolutionary human development? Now, be thankful for this rather uncomfortable process of 'self-awakening' to Buddha's fearless present selfless 'noself' (*anatman*) indwelling Presence.

What next? Begin by *observing* your unconscious, nearly continuous judgments as to the inferior, even stupid opinions/behavior of others. Observe your narcissistic ideational superiority that subtly compensates for your feared inadequacies of self. Not so easy. Now *feel* your compassion for this prideful self-ego-I that chooses to indulge these destructive compensatory mind states. Love yourself as a loving mother loves her selfish child.

## Primordial Presence in the County Jail

Now, as to my own not especially astute experience in psychiatric corrections, as my incarcerated Psychiatric Acute Care ('The PAC') students came to understand in a nonconceptual

experiential 'felt sense' this profound, no longer so spooky *unity* of their embodied self-ego-I with innermost 'spiritual' love-wisdom Presence that is their actual 'supreme identity'—they began to heal. Their painful sleep disorders often relented, and their 'psychiatric meds' were reduced or eliminated. Many came to directly experience (*yogi pratyaksa*) their own always already present *Presence* of the Primordial Ground of everything—Christ mind, Buddha nature, infinite *Ein Sof, Tao*—by whatever lustrous name deep within their body-mind. [For moving written expressions of such experiences see Boaz 2022 *Appendix D* "Light From the County Jail"; or visit davidpaulboaz.org]

'Mindfulness of Breathing' as the Buddha called such contemplative practice revealed to these troubled folks who it is that they actually are—their 'supreme source identity'—far beyond ego; far beyond their 'pathology' and shaming psychiatric diagnosis; far beyond their not so conscious deep cultural background materialist and religious "global web of belief" (Quine 1969). They came often to realize via their direct mindful *feeling* experience that they are so much more than a suffering, hostile, unruly self-ego-I with clinical symptoms, or a legal problem, or the dispiriting stigmata of 'mental disease'.

My students—and in many instances their staff psychiatrists whom I also trained in mindfulness practice—learned that the ultimate answer to the urgent personal and perennial question "Who am I?", is this: human beings are not just a painful, narcissistic self-ego-I encaged in a material 'bag of skin'. There abides always within each human form a formless, selfless, timeless, perfectly subjective love-wisdom mind *'Presence'* of the nondual 'Primordial Awareness Spirit Ground of Being'—by whatever grand name—that is inherently clear, peaceful, happy, and utterly beyond materialist Big Science. The Buddhas, *mahasiddha* masters, saints and sages of the great Primordial

Wisdom Tradition of our kind have taught this great truth through the compassionate example of their lives.

Some of my good doctors learned to teach inmates in both the PAC and in General Population the prodigious benefits of contemplative 'mindfulness of breathing' as an antidote to long standing pathology, transient pathology secondary to the emotional shock of incarceration, and habitual antisocial behavior with its all too human lonely despair.

Many of my students, both inmates and their doctors, came to recognize this indwelling happy Presence that is their 'supreme identity' of that timeless, selfless Primordial Ground of Being here in spacetime. Some of my inmate students went well beyond it. Some have became meditation teachers. Some are now teaching mindfulness in Buddhist, Christian, Jewish and Islamic settings—both in prison and upon their release.

Well then, how does one come to recognize, then realize in one's everyday life world this psycho-emotional spiritual miracle? For my incarcerated students mindfulness meditation and contemplative prayer and mantra became the *choice* of each one for peace and happiness in an otherwise dreadful world of unrelenting adversity.

These courageous 'students' of mine have taught me, and some of the prison psychiatrists responsible for their care, the happiness potential of we human beings being here as providential heirs of this rare and inconceivable gift of a precious human life on the Earth.

## The Emerging Noetic Revolution in Science and Spirit

Most philosophers of physics and most Buddhist scholar-practitioners understand a holism wherein there exists no innate dimensional separation between our phenomenal regimes of

appearing microcosmic quarks and leptons, and macrocosmic trees and stars. These dimensions of physical spacetime appearing cosmic reality, with the recent global quantum holonomy of Relativistic Quantum Field Theory is perforce always already unified and subsumed in the formless, timeless, selfless, indivisible, nondual Primordial Awareness-Consciousness boundless *kosmic* whole itself. That original ultimate 'groundless' Ground, transcends and embraces all human cognitive frames of reference in whom our relative spacetime realities arise and play. A Dzogchen practitioner might term that relational unity "cognitive nonconceptual, non-causal, non-reifying non-duality".

That minimalist nondual metaphysical understanding must now be integrated into the metaphysics of Schrödinger's inherently subjective random quantum Ψ-wave function with its objective mathematical formalisms. This all toward a post-doctrinaire, unifying Integral Noetic Quantum Ontology that transcends yet includes the seven 'interpretations' now on offer. [*Appendix A* below; Boaz 2023 *The Noetic Revolution pp. 417-421*]

In such a metaphysical union lies an Integral Noetic Quantum Ontology of our emerging paradigmatic 'Noetic Revolution' in matter, mind and spirit now abroad in our global mind-sphere. Here we skillfully engage and manage our human objective cognitive capacity that includes 'alternative' deductive logical systems of Kurt Gödel and others, to *quantitatively* explicate the always present unity of objective quantum form and its subjective nonlocal entangled 'quantum emptiness' Zero Point Vacuum Energy (ZPE) ground of the physical stuff of cosmos.

Meanwhile, remain present to prior *qualitative*, 'post-empirical' nondual truth of the matter as it arises in its timeless all-embracing *kosmos* Ground of Being.

In short, we learn a conscious wakeful 'continuity of awareness' of the nondual 'invariant throughout all cognitive changes' *one truth unity* (*dzög*) of our perennial intrinsically indivisible Two Truths—*relative* form or Science, and its' perfectly subjective nondual *ultimate* Spirit Ground of Being. Buddha's relative form and its ultimate emptiness. Told Shakyamuni Buddha: "Form is empty; emptiness is form. Form is not other than emptiness; emptiness is not other than form." *Monistic Ontological Minimalism.* Naked nondual truth of the matter.

Thus do we establish our Dzogchen panpsychic Integral Noetic Quantum Ontology *(Appendix A)* that illumines our ontic prior and phenomenally present unity of objective *Science* and the perfect subjectivity of its nondual *Spirit* Ground of Being—primordial *dharmakaya*; Tao; infinite *Ein Sof*; nondual *Nirguna Brahman*; Abba nondual 'God the Father' of Jesus the Christ.

There is great joy in this seemingly fortuitous gift of our lives being here in quantum space and time as it emerges from all-embracing *kosmos*—widening gyre of timeless, original Primordial Awareness-Consciousness Being Itself—Hegel's 'Absolute Spirit', vast formless, timeless Ground of Being in whom this all arises, participates, and is physically, mentally, and emotively instantiated in spacetime form. [*Appendix B* below; Boaz 2023 *The Noetic Revolution Ch.V; Mindfulness Meditation: The Complete Guide Ch. VIII*]

*Nonduality.* Should you choose to pursue further this 'ontic minimalism' of the 'logic of the nonconceptual' please visit again the lucid nondual teaching of omniscient Longchenpa [1998]:

> The [nondual] Vajra Premise...The four vajra themes...
> The consummate meaning of the heart essence of natural great perfection is...all phenomena are by nature *ineffable*. They are timelessly and *spontaneously present*. They are

> *openness*, in that they are not defined by restrictions or extremes. And they are encompassed within *oneness*—naturally occurring timeless awareness.... Awareness, empty yet lucid, without limit or center, is dharmakaya as an uninterrupted openness—*atiyoga*, the spacious mind of Samantabhadra—like space in that it is not defined by restrictions or extremes. It is 'the supreme and inexpressible state beyond ordinary consciousness'...All phenomena are shown to be one in naturally occurring timeless awareness. All phenomena have the same source. Awareness—oneness—is the ground of all phenomena... naturally occurring timeless awareness is that single source...Although samsara and nirvana arise from oneness, self-knowing awareness, their source—ultimate awakened mind—is the same... Everything is of one basic space... primordially pure single sphere, naturally occurring timeless awareness...The emptiness of awareness and that of apparent phenomena are indivisible, of one taste in the unique nondual sphere of uninterrupted emptiness. This is referred to as 'having the same source within the basic space of dharmakaya'... Dharmakaya is not to be sought or achieved elsewhere, since it abides within you, and such [conceptual] factors as view, meditation, conduct, and fruition may obscure unobstructed awareness. [2001 p.324]

*Immanuel Kant.* Perhaps the most cogent Western mind to explore this nondual 'post-empirical' view is German European Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)—"the father of Modern philosophy".

In his ontic minimalist centrist holistic *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant introduced to the Western mind his 'Transcendental Idealism" wherein he reveals that our spacetime appearing realities are but "forms of human intuition" that cognitively structure most of our human experience. In Kant's "Transcendental Aesthetic" of *The*

*Critique of Pure Reason,* appearing space and time are "empirically real", yet "transcendentally ideal". Relative space and time are absent and empty any *ultimate* existence yet appear as "subjective forms" of our human intuitive cognitive experience. We knowing human subjects perceive and conceive the objects arising to our experience not as they are ultimately, but only relatively, as they appear to our perceptual sense experience, and our limited, superficial and dualistic concepts and beliefs *about* that great nondual "transcendental" *relationship process*.

Human reason is perforce limited to 'knowledge' filtered through the cognitive reticulum of our deep background sociocultural "global web of belief". [Quine 1969] Arising phenomenal objects that appear as objectified, reified, ultimately 'real' "categories of experience" are but *relative,* ineffable fleeting "appearances" that are absent and empty of *"noumenal"* or *ultimate* essence—just as Shakyamuni the Buddha of this age has told.

Therefore, with Leibniz but against Newton, Kant's spacetime objects appearing to mind, and to the empirical sciences are not objective "*things in themselves"*, but subjective *relations* descended from perfectly subjective, formless, timeless Awareness Ground of Being that is his nondual, all-subsuming "*noumenon*". The ultimate identity of relative phenomena, and of all of us, are that formless, timeless, selfless primordial *noumenon* ultimate Ground.

Tibetan Buddhist ecumenical *rimé* master Jamgön Mipham Rinpoche (1846-1912) told of the same nondual "*noumenon"*—formless, timeless, selfless, perfectly subjective, nondual ultimate Awareness 'Ground of Being'—utterly beyond our relative linguistic, semiotic "pure reason" human concept and belief *about* any such Ultimate Ground.

Well, how may we human beings come to know, to feel, and to be *That (tathata, suchness, chönyi, quidditas, noumenon)*? After all, that is our 'supreme identity'—who we are now.

That singular, trans-conceptual, nondual *noumenon* is timeless Source Ground of Being Itself—including all of us. It is known and felt by our human *ultimate* Primordial Awareness Wisdom (gnosis, *jnana, yeshe, metanoia*) to transcend the *relative* phenomena of sense experience. *Noumenal* "things in themselves (*ding an sich*)" are unknowable, mere "apparitions" of our human concept mind. *Noumenon* itself cannot be ultimately known by ordinary, relative human mind. Human beings can see and *be* that ineffable numinous *noumenal* reality *rigpa vidya* essence through "receptive intuitive", contemplative cognition as it rides the mindfulness *(shamatha) prana/pneuma* 'holy spirit' breath in the human body.

For Kant we do indeed possess such ultimate *apriori* (prior to experience) "intuition" that transcends yet embraces our habitual, objective dualistic "determinate concepts" and sense experience of temporal objects arising in this relative dimension of sociocultural space and time. Our spacetime dimension of *relative truth* is subsumed and pervaded by *noumenal ultimate truth* in which, or in whom it arises and appears. Moreover, these perennial Two Truths are perforce an ontic prior yet phenomenally present indivisible, nondual *one truth unity*. We conceptually divide and 'label' them to facilitate our relative, conventional understanding.

Our two reality dimensions? 1) *Relative* arising spacetime *phenomena*—physical sense experience, and mental and emotional experience. 2) *ultimate* primordial all-subsuming, sense-transcendent, perfectly subjective *noumenon*—nondual Primordial Awareness Ground itself. Dualistic spacetime phenomena arising in utterly nondual ultimate *noumenon*—beyond mere concepts and beliefs about nonduality. Noumenal Ground is absent and empty of any iota of relative or ultimate existence. Yet, we may feel its nonconceptual Presence upon prana pneuma spirit breath in our

embodied form. Indeed, a profound paradox to human conceptual mind; but not to our Ground Buddha Nature of Mind.

These two realms of being are Kant's Western Two Truths, and Buddha's Eastern Two Truths. And yes, in both the West and the East these two voices of singular Primordial Reality Being Itself are ultimately an inseparable *one truth unity (dzog)*—above and beyond our all too human concepts and beliefs about it. *Noumenon* is not a vast all-inclusive objective *thing. It is nonconceptual, nondual perfectly subjective dharmakaya emptiness cipher of everything.* Two Truths, one Ground of Being.

In his *Critique of Judgment* Kant again reveals that there exists an *apriori* foundational "supra-sensible substrate of humanity"—timeless, formless, selfless, ultimate nondual Primordial Awareness-Consciousness *noumenal* Ground of Being of all relative dualistic spacetime form arising therein. We come to know/feel *That* via contemplative "intuition".

And yes, that perfectly subjective *noumenon* is bright, indwelling 'supreme identity' Ground *Presence* of we human beings. Without a single exception. We learn to *feel That. To rest* in *That (tathata, tattva,* suchness*, quidditas, metanoia, rigpa)*.

Who am I? *Tat Tvam Asi*! That I Am! Both Gautama the Buddha and Jesus the Christ have told it in the same words: "*I Am That I Am Presence.*" Human Happiness Itself!

*Mahasukaho!*

## V

# The Physics of Mindfulness Meditation

*Wholeness in Physics.* What does 'hard science' Modern/Postmodern quantum physics make of our soft 'spooky' subjectivist, spiritual noetic wholeness metaphysic? Let us now very briefly survey some of the greatest Nobel laureates of 20th century physics.

In the words of quantum theory pioneer Max Planck (Physics Nobel Prize 1918): "I regard immaterial consciousness as fundamental...matter is derived from it."

Werner Heisenberg (Nobel Prize 1932) on his great quantum *Principle of Uncertainty*:

> Subject and object are only one. The barrier between them does not exist.... There is a fundamental error in separating the parts from the whole. Unity and complementarity constitute reality itself... Causality can only explain later events by earlier events, but it can never explain the beginning.... It will never be possible by *pure reason* alone to arrive at absolute truth... Scientific concepts cover always only a very limited part of reality; the other part that has not been understood is the infinite.

For Niels Bohr (Nobel Prize 1922), creator of the monumental quantum *Principle of Complementarity*: "Opposites are complementary....Truth and clarity are complementary." For Bohr, subject and object, self and other, existence and nonexistence, quantum wave and particle, quantum particle position and momentum are relational, interdependent complementary, 'nonlocally entangled', nondual prior and present unity. Again Bohr:

> We must turn to thinkers like Buddha, or Lao Tzu....I go into the Upanishads to ask questions.... Our description of nature is not to disclose phenomena, but to describe our relations with it.

Erwin Schrödinger (Nobel Prize 1933, with Paul Dirac), creator of the seminal subjective *Schrödinger Quantum Ψ-Wave Equation*: "Consciousness is absolutely fundamental. It cannot be accounted for in terms of [matter], or anything else."

Paul Dirac (Nobel Prize 1933, with Erwin Schrödinger), discoverer of the prodigious *Dirac Equation* which fully unified Einstein's breakthrough 1905 Special Relativity Theory (SRT) with the monumental 1928 Quantum Theory of Bohr and Heisenberg, opening the way for Dirac's and Richard Feynman's profound Quantum Electrodynamics (QED). Dirac's sublime equation also predicted the physical reality of antimatter. For Dirac:

> All matter is created out of some imperceptible substance not accurately described as material since it uniformly fills all space and is undetectable by any observation...It appears as an empty nothingness—immaterial, undetectable, omnipotent...out of which all matter is created.

As good a definition of basal universal ZPE 'quantum emptiness' as ever there was.

Legendary physicist David Bohm, who received 60 nominations for a Nobel Prize, expresses this matter of wholeness beautifully in his *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (1980):

> The vast implicate order of the unbroken whole is the ground of existence of everything...In this flow mind and matter are not separate substances. Rather, they are different aspects of one whole...Wholeness is what is

> real...The notion that these fragments are separate is an illusion. The world is an undivided whole...All the parts unite in one totality.

Albert Einstein (Nobel Prize 1921), the founder, with his pal Max Planck, of early Quantum Theory:

> A human being is part of a great whole. We experience ourselves as something separate from it...This delusion is a kind of prison. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in all its beauty.

In the "spooky" (Einstein's *spukhaft*) conceptual explanatory gap of subjective nonlocal (faster than light) quantum chaos abides the non-objective 'one taste' "wisdom of uncertainty", the ironic and paradoxical, subtle, profound, trans-conceptual, direct experience (*yogi pratyaksa*) of timeless perfectly subjective contemplative certainty—for those with good taste anyway. Its flavor is subtle, and quite satisfying. It is indeed a mindful contemplatively acquired taste. As Buddha told in his early *Pali Canon Udana*:

> Just as the great ocean has one taste,
> the taste of salt, so also my teaching
> has one taste, the taste of liberation.

*The Ground.* For practitioners of the prior and present unity of Science and Spirit it is in that profound 'post-empirical' nondual certainty that we arouse our compassionate *bodhicitta* for benefit of living beings, engage mindful *shamatha* to ease our fearful weary concept-minds, and effortlessly rest in ultimate nondual Ground Nature of Mind. That essential mind nature of ours is not but the nondual vast boundless whole of Reality Itself, our innermost love-

wisdom mind *Presence* of 'basic space' (*chöying*)—trans-physical, *kosmic,* formless *ultimate dharmakaya* primordial emptiness Ground of Being of all this arising *relative* quantum world of spacetime form. Told Buddha, "Form is empty; emptiness is form."

*Relativistic Quantum Field Theory (QFT/QED) describes non-zero quantum emptiness of the Unified Quantum Vacuum energy ground state, the ultimate zero point energy field (ZPE)—Dirac's 'zero womb'*. About as close as dualistic Big Science can get to the nondual perfectly subjective 'supreme source' Ground of its objective, arcane quantum mathematical formalism. [Appendix A below; Boaz 2023 *The Prior Unity of Science and Spirit*]

## Contemplative Science and Quantum Cosmology

*Contemplative Science.* Adzom Paylo Rinpoche (2002 Santa Fe, NM Retreat) has told regarding the calm abiding of mindful *shamatha* meditation (Translated by Lama Dr. Anne C. Klein):

> We must have peaceful 'calm abiding' of mind but not be attached to it! Attachment to this blissful meditative state of mind stalls our practice...*Shamatha* does not see the ultimate nature of reality, the Nature of Mind. If you think it does, it's false Primordial Wisdom. When we have attachment to our meditation we cannot be liberated. Meditative stabilization without liberation is pointless. *Uma*, the *Madhyamaka* Middle Way meditative state that follows from *shamatha* yields a powerful certainty and equanimity. The meditative state that arises from *that* is a state of being that has no ego self-attachment whatsoever.
>
> If this View of *Uma* is not realized one cannot proceed on the Path to enlightenment...Therefore, the View of the Ground is the Meditation Path to Fruition of union of the Buddha's Two Truths of the Middle Way. That Fruit is two bodies/energy dimensions [*rupakaya*] of *dharmakaya Ground.*

And so, this is the way one should practice the profound transcendent perfection of wisdom, the *Prajnaparamita* of the Buddha. Without this practice there can be no realization of nondual Primordial Awareness Wisdom.

Now all the buddhas of the three times rejoice. And the very Ground Nature of reality naturally rejoices with us. And so we smile.

*Quantum Cosmology.* The universal quantum vacuum zero-point energy field (ZPE) is the primary candidate for the mysterious 'dark energy' that accelerates our already expanding universe, the end of which, a few trillion years hence, is a quite chilly "Big Chill Heat Death" wherein physical subatomic motion-energy peters out entirely. No worries. Stuff still arises via rare utterly random ZPE quantum puffs. [Boaz 2023 *The Noetic Revolution Ch. IV*]

This highly speculative, 'post-empirical', purely metaphysical, paramystical quantum emptiness 'zero-point vacuum energy' ZPE ground state is hypothesized by cosmologists to be none other than our old friend Einstein's Cosmological Constant *lambda* $\Lambda$, which in 1917 he inserted into the field equations of his great 1915 General Relativity Theory (GRT) to explain an expanding universe which that sublime theory predicted.

Yet, Einstein was certain that the cosmos was static; the prevailing cosmological ideology of the time. Thus did the great physics master dare to tweak his wondrous expanding universe GRT with his *lambda* $\Lambda$ constant "to hold back gravity" and remain true to the "perfect cosmological principle" alternative to the new 'spooky' Big Bang cosmology. That old ideological principle was the timeless, ageless "steady state universe" model of his esteemed cosmologist peers Hermann Bondi, Thomas Gold, and Fred Hoyle.

In any case, let us give thanks that $E=mc^2 \approx \Psi$ *wave* light-energy-matter stardust heavy elements that bestow life on our little

blue planet has arisen from its formless, timeless Primordial Ground as stable matter and not fluky weird self-destructive antimatter.

Alas, Einstein came to regret his *lambda* $\Lambda$ Cosmological Constant. In 1929 Edwin Hubble demonstrated that the universe was far from a static 'steady state' but was indeed expanding. Adding factual insult to Einstein's ideological injury, in 1998 it was discovered independently by the Perlmutter and Schmidt teams that Hubble's 'expanding universe' was accelerating! And wonder of wonders, mysterious nonzero *lambda* dark energy is the probable cause. The very slightly positive value of Einstein's Cosmological Constant *lambda* is the primary suspect for that dark energy acceleration of cosmos. Discomfiting outcome for Herr Professor Einstein, to be sure. Steven Weinberg told, "Perhaps Einstein should have taken his mathematics more seriously."

Yes, the foundational Primordial Awareness-Consciousness Ground of our great Wisdom Tradition is alive and well in recent objectivist classical relativistic physics; and even more so in post-classical 'nonlocal entanglement' quantum physics and cosmology with their 'spooky' proto-mystical acausal universal ZPE quantum emptiness ground.

But this is far from a demonstration that such edgy objective Science "proves" the subjective nondual wisdom teaching of Buddhist nondual emptiness/*shunyata* Ground of Being. Better perhaps to view it as a dualistic metaphor for an inherently nondual, trans-conceptual truth. That truth of emptiness is invariant through all human cognitive reference frames; *one truth unity* (*dzög*) of perfectly subjective ultimate nondual primeval Ground of all-embracing whole of this perfect *Ati* sphere of *kosmos* itself in whom physical cosmos arises and plays.

Unfortunately, in spite of what we have just heard from our quantum pioneers, lesser minds of recent relativistic quantum

physics—the culture *imaginaire* of Big Science—are still trying to reduce the random acausal, *observer-dependent*, nonlocal entangled subjectivity at the very heart of the quantum theory to the bygone classical *observer-independent* paradigm causal bias that is ideological objectivist, reductionist Scientific Local Realism/ Materialism/Physicalism. Philosophers of physics and cosmology, including myself, are tearing their hair out. Let Physicists, philosophers of physics and Buddhist Lama scholar-practitioners dialogue over pizza and ale. Why isn't that happening? Old Big Science hyper-objectivist physicalist paradigm doctrinal 'confirmation bias', perhaps?

It may be useful in this regard to understand that the global cultural mindscape of objective Science cannot give us the whole picture even of objective physical cosmos, let alone the trans-physical perfectly subjective Pythagorean *kosmos*—boundless whole, nondual Primordial Awareness-Consciousness Spirit Ground itself in whom, on the view of some of our quantum pioneers, not to mention Gautama Buddha, spacetime physical stuff arises, participates, and is providentially instantiated. Great, phenomenal gift for we curious human beings.

As Bertrand Russell suggested in 1927, and cosmologist Arthur Eddington later told, *"Physics describes what matter does; not what matter is."* What this appearing spacetime reality *relationship* ultimately *is* abides beyond objective physics, in the now recently respectable domain of academic, scientific, and Buddhist metaphysics. Here we begin to understand the prior and ever-present unity of causal objective Science and the acausal perfectly subjective 'basic space' (*chöying*) Spirit Ground of Being (*dharmakaya*) in whom that all arises. Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Ati Dzogchen View and praxis provides an acausal cognitive aperture to that supreme nondual wisdom pinnacle. [*Appendix A* below; Boaz 2023 *The Prior Unity of Science and Spirit Ch IV*]

## Quantum Thermodynamics and Dzogchen

Quantum thermodynamics offers a relativistic *(E=mc ≈ Ψ wave)* quantum theory as to how *energy* as heat, entropy, and information behaves at its micro-physical scale; how irreversible classical macro behavior emerges from reversible quantum micro behavior.

Indo-Tibetan Dzogchen *Atiyoga* ontology and practice reveals how formless, timeless, selfless *ultimate* Primordial Ground of Being *(gzhi rigpa)* of this *relative* quantum phenomena manifests as dynamical energy display *(tukji, rolpa, tsal)*—nonlocal 'entanglement' in 'local' space and time.

Quantum mechanics is an objective causal scientific view of interdependent *(tendrel)* entropic subjective 'quantum entanglement' *relationship*—ontic prior yet phenomenally present unity of *relative* form manifesting as dualistic *(marigpa)* samsaric thermodynamic 'arrow of time' arising within its timeless nondual *ultimate* Ground of Being. That is union of dualistic Science with its nondual emptiness *(shunyata)* Spirit Ground, by whatever grand name. As Buddha told, "Form is empty; emptiness is form." Already present union of our two modes of being here. *One truth unity (dzög)* of Buddha's Two Truths. Indwelling *Presence (rigpa, vidya)* of *That (tathata,* suchness*, chönyi, noesis, quidditas)*—our great Refuge Source.

Thus, we are perforce required to utilize both voices of our human cognitive processional; our *noetic cognitive doublet*: objective, conceptual, 'scientific'; but also subjective, contemplative, 'spiritual' human awareness. Our unifying *rigpa* Presence is present in both at once.

In Relativistic Quantum Field Theory objective 'observer consciousness'—quantum measurement—'collapses' Erwin Schrödinger's subjective 'quantum Ψ-wave function' potential into 'real' objective spacetime stuff. As Ati Dzogchen boundless

whole our *rigpa* knowing-feeling *Presence* recognizes this objective quantum appearance to be the 'empty' yet lucid energy display *(rolpa/tsal)* of timeless, perfectly subjective luminous clarity *(ösel)*—'basic space' *(chöying)* primordial pure *kadak* radiance *(rigdang)* of *dharmakaya* Ground of Being—*lhundrub* manifest Presence of *That*. Hence, the nature of *relative* spacetime phenomena is absent and empty any iota of *ultimate*, inherent, 'intrinsic existence'—even as that "collapses" into this all too real *samsara* reality of quantum form. *Avidya (marigpa)* is 'primal ignorance' that conceptually reifies our formless, timeless nondual Ground of Being into dualistic absolutely existing spacetime phenomena. Grasping, clinging attachment of self-ego-I to the trappings of that *ultimately* illusory *relative* quantum reality is of course the main cause of our human suffering.

At 'absolute zero' any quantum system ground state is 'quantum emptiness'; thermodynamic equilibrium at near zero entropy. Particles are still. Analogous to Dzogchen 'primordial purity'—formless *kadak* luminous empty Ground—*ösel, stong pa nyi* in whom energy *lhundrub* presence naturally manifests.

Thus does the objective *Science* of the quantum thermodynamic ground state metaphorically map onto perfectly subjective Ati Dzogchen *Spirit* Ground state. Prior and present unity of Science and Spirit (Boaz 2023). Here *gzhi rigpa* primordial nondual *kadak dharmakaya* Ground of Being is analog of subjective quantum thermodynamic ground state—'quantum emptiness' of phenomenal reality. 'Spontaneous presence' (*lhundrub)* is analogous to utterly random 'quantum fluctuations' of 'zero-point energy field' (ZPE) of the quantum vacuum ground state. 'Interdependent Arising' *(tendrel, pratitya samutpada)* is quantum entanglement—*tsal* entropy increase.

Nondual indwelling *Rigpa Presence*—by whatever holy name—knows and feels all *That*. [*Appendix B]*

# VI
# Buddha Nature and Emptiness: *Shentong* and *Rangtong*

> When your mind is in calm abiding you may then approach Buddha's primordial wisdom.
>
> Adzom Paylo Rinpoche

## Relative Mind and Ultimate Buddha Nature of Mind

Ultimate Ground of Being, the 'Nature of Mind' is empty, like space. Yes. That 'Big Mind' is inherently empty—no boundary, no limit, no center, no edge. For Tibetan Buddhists that mind nature is 'empty in essence', like 'basic space' (*dharmadhatu, chöying*). Just so, our *relative* human 'Small Mind' is spacious and ephemeral. Yet unlike empty space, empty 'mind essence'—our *ultimate* Buddha Nature of Mind—is 'cognizant and aware', lucid formless, selfless 'timeless Awareness'. Two minds; two truths. *One truth unity*. For recent Dzogchen master Tulku Urgyen:

> The empty essence itself is like the vast space of sky. Our cognizance is like sunshine. The sky itself never changes whether it's sunny or cloudy...We train in recognition of mind essence. [*As It Is Volume II*]

For 20th century Dzogchen master Dilgo Khyentze Rinpoche:

> The mind is free of any true inherent reality...To recognize the ultimate Nature of Mind is to recognize its selfless emptiness... That is a realization that occurs in the realm of direct experience. It cannot be expressed in words.

The great 19th century ecumenical *rimé* master Shechen Gyaltsap Rinpoche (2020), root lama of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, unfolds the self-reflexive Ati Dzogchen Great Perfection View of this everyday miracle of spacious vast expanse that is our selfless, all-embracing *dharmakaya* love-wisdom Primordial Awareness-Consciousness Spirit Ground of Being:

> Self-cognizing awareness is beyond verbal expression. It is the union of primordial purity [*kadak*] and spontaneous presence [*lhundrub*], the sole sphere of self-arisen primordial wisdom... the actual nature of ordinary mind. It is unaltered by dualistic subject-object cognition. It is beyond thought, word and conceptual formulation. It is the great state beyond the ordinary mind...It is the Nature of Mind...free of any arising and cessation throughout the three times [past, present, future]...Empty luminosity, beyond all movement...ultimate reality, the unconditioned, uncompounded dharmata, the state of great equality...by nature stable, peaceful, unmoving, ever-lasting...one and only sphere... perfect ground beyond movement and change... indwelling primordial wisdom that purifies the mind's defilements… nondual, beyond identity or difference...This is why it is called *perfection*. And because the ground, path, and result is primordial wisdom, it is *great*...the Great Perfection [Ati Dzogchen]...It is the union of appearance and emptiness, the fourth state of the mind, free of past, present, future...It is wholly untrammeled, beyond extremes of existence and nothing.

Yes. Our human mind is like space. Our nondual Buddha Nature of Mind may be *felt* as nondual *dharmakaya* 'groundless Ground' in whom our spacious 'ordinary mind' arises, participates, and is instantiated. The 'basic space' (*dharmadhatu, chöying*) of that indwelling luminous primordial *dharmakaya* Ground of Being is our innermost buddha mind, our buddha essence buddha nature which we shall further explore in this chapter.

We have thus far engaged many words for that deep love and wisdom *unity* that "cannot be expressed in words". *That* is singular essential truth of the great mystery of liberated human happiness—"That flower absent from all bouquets." [Mallarmé]

Gautama Shakyamuni the Buddha of this present age simplified his vast wondrous teaching in a force of few words. Indeed, we discover in the early *Pali Canon* that entire perfect teaching of all that was to come. The precious *Dhammapada* reveals it thus:

> First do no harm.
> Practice what is skillful
> In benefiting living beings.
> Train and purify your mind.
> That is the teaching of all the buddhas.

In these 25 words we are given the heart essence of 25 centuries of that wonder that is the prodigious primordial love-wisdom teaching of Gautama Shakyamuni Buddha.

## Discovering Nondual Dzogchen Truth in Buddhist Middle Way

In the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist tantric wisdom View and Practice the Mahayana Madhyamaka Prasangika Middle Way (*Uma*) is said by those who know to be the conceptual causal foundation of the Great Perfection that is itself acausal nondual Maha Ati Dzogchen Great Completion of the noble Mahayana Causal Vehicle.

Broadly construed, the Mahayana teaches cause and effect. If you desire *that* future result, first practice and accomplish *this* cause. However, the non-causal or acausal *Ati Dzogchen* 'Fruitional View' teaches—as Middle Way founder Arya Nagarjuna told twenty

centuries past—"That which you seek is already present and accomplished from the very beginning; to rest here without seeking, that is the meditation." So, there is no need to seek liberation elsewhere, in past enlightened beings, or in some future enlightened mind state. That great nondual truth is revealed in the Indo-Tibetan tradition via Guru Yoga, as we saw in Chapter I.

The Fruit or Result that we seek is our always already present love-wisdom Buddha mind (*buddhajnana*)—indwelling knowing-feeling Spirit Presence *(rigpa, vidya*) of *That* (*tathata, tattva)*. It has many names. It is peaceful Presence of nondual ultimate primordial Spirit Ground (*gzhi rigpa*) that is both origin and aim of all our fruitless happiness seeking strategies—whether or not this timeless wisdom is part of our present system of concepts and beliefs.

That nondual Primordial Wisdom (*jnana, yeshe,* gnosis) is 'self-reflexive, self-arising, self-perfected', nondual unity of Dzogchen View, Meditation, and Action/Conduct that realizes unity of "already present and accomplished" Ground, Path, and the Fruition-Result that is Buddhahood.

And yes, that *metacognitive mythopoetic* noetic understanding abides beyond the conceptual reach of our human semiotic (logical syntax of language, semantic meaning, pragmatics) discursive cognition. Thus are the "central meanings" of the great Secret Mantra fruitional teaching—the Buddha's subtlest and 'highest' nondual teaching—grounded in the *Atiyoga* fruitional path, and 'pointed out' through subtle, skillful guidance of the Dzogchen Vajra master. We instantly unify our mind with bright primordial mindstream of Intrinsic Awareness that is present union of outer and inner Guru thus: *OM A HUM* on our mindful breath in the body.

### The Sublime Power of Bodhicitta

Training the mind in loving kindness of *bodhicitta*—compassionate 'mind of enlightenment'—frees us from painful

grasping at, and clinging to narcissistic, too often self-destructive self-ego-I. Yet selfless compassionate *bodhicitta* of the Mahayana Middle Way (*Uma*)—uncontrived, spontaneous, effortless thought, intention, prayer, and engaged human action for both the relative and ultimate benefit of all living beings—requires the cooperation of our self-ego-I, that unruly, apparitional non-entity that is concerned mostly with, yes, I-me-mine. A bit paradoxical to our dualistic concept-mind because selfless *bodhicitta* is, well, selfless. To assuage the suffering of living beings naturally arises the *ultimate* fruition of *relative* Mahayana Buddhist practice. That is *buddic* union of love and wisdom. As to this gracious 'wisdom of kindness'—Buddha told, "This cannot be taught." It utterly transcends causality—concept and belief. It cannot be authentically contrived or fabricated. Effort and goal directed activity shall not accomplish it. William Shakespeare has told it well:

> The quality of mercy is not strained. It falls as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed; it blesseth him that gives and him that takes.
>
> —Portia, *Merchant*

Our all too often duplicitous self—as we refrain from denigration, denial, and pathologizing of it (self-loathing)—becomes our love-wisdom ally. Now self-ego-I 'takes refuge' in selfless prior and present noself *anatman* Primordial Ground. Bright indwelling Presence of That (*tathata,* suchness, *chönyi)*, mirrored always by the Guru in clear lucid context of Guru Yoga—utterly "beyond hope and fear". [*Ch. I*]

*Hence, selfless bodhicitta becomes the open secret and primary cause of human happiness, both relative happiness (eudiamonia, felicitas) and supreme ultimate harmless Happiness Itself mahasukha, beatitudo).*

Failure to launch that great spirit gift of *bodhicitta* is the primary cause of human suffering. All the avatars, *mahasiddhas*, saints and sages of the wisdom traditions of humankind have taught this love-wisdom union of *bodhicitta* (*hesed, charis, ahimsa, patheos*). We do have this mindful ethical choice—the second (*sila*) of the Buddha's Mahayana *Six Paramitas/Perfections*. Good karma indeed.

## Our *Kosmic* Process: Involution, Evolution, and Refuge in Ground of Being

Within empty 'basic space' (*chöying, dharmadhatu*)—formless, timeless, selfless Primordial Awareness *dharmakaya* Ground, vast expanse of boundless *kosmic* whole, Ground of Being itself perforce naturally and spontaneously arises an ultimately illusory timeless time, then an oxygen rich environment for living sentient beings to evolve. Geology becomes Biology. Some of these beings evolve into human beings with indwelling if not yet fully awakened buddha nature buddha heart-mind; and then, in due course and by grace we may *choose bodhicitta* of the bodhisattva to become *'full bodhi'* awakened buddhas.

The natural clarity and bliss of that Buddha Nature of Mind (*semnyi, cittata*) is too often bewitched by pernicious dualistic thinking and the grasping desire-mind of we deluded human beings, mired in 'nonrecognition' or 'primal ignorance' (*avidya, marigpa, ajnana, hamartia*/sin) with its destructive afflictive emotions—fear-anger, hatred, random desire, greed, and pride of an atavistic personal self-ego-I. That rude awakening begets this veil of tears—grief, despotism, ethnic hatred, endless war and despair—root causes of our individual and collective suffering, negative karma, death and endless rebirth.

Now the good news. Upon Buddha's 'mindfulness of breathing'—foundation of our buddha nature connection—such adventitious destructive thoughts and negative emotions arising in unruly mostly untrained human mind are surrendered and so 'self-liberated' (*rang drol*) at the very instant of their arising into vast empty space of sky, like a cloud leaving no trace. That happens at the bottom of each conscious mindful breath, on the out-breath. *[Appendix B]* "Let your indescribable awareness remain undistracted in the naked state of basic space...That dissolves our negative karma and disturbing emotions." [Tulku Urgyen] That refuge *choice* is the open door to human happiness, both relative and ultimate. "Just open the door." [Dalai Lama]

More good news. Wherever there is such an afflicted suffering body-mind there is as well the luminous clear light Nature of Mind that embraces, pervades and subsumes it. *That* (*tathata,* suchness, *metanoia*) inherent, indwelling, love-wisdom ecology of mind is our spacious primordial buddha nature/essence (*buddhadhatu*, *buddhajnana*). Indeed, relative mind and the ultimate Buddha Nature of Mind are always already a prior and present one truth unity (*dzög*). We are told by the buddhas and mahasiddhas that deluded human mind and the very Nature of Mind in whom it arises—nondual Ground of Being—abide as this blissful confluence in awakened primordial state of relational equality and identity (*samatajnana*). That is authentic provenance of this *kosmic process* of our human being.

Yes. That love-wisdom *shentong* buddha nature of ours subsumes and pervades the body-mind of all sentient beings arising within the vast expanse of 'basic space' (*chöying*)—ultimate primordial *dharmakaya* 'groundless Ground'—infinite boundless emptiness whole in whom we all arise and participate. The original imprint of that 'I AM That I AM' is always already present as indwelling primordial 'noself' (*anatman*) Presence

(*rigpa, vidya, christos*) of that formless, timeless, selfless Ground. We 'take refuge' in *That*. *A La La Ho!*

Well, how shall we realize that great truth of clear, lucid, selfless, indwelling Being Itself Presence in our busy lives? Here again the proverbial dharma plot thickens. What at first blush seems like a really bad show of the impossible task of killing off our self-ego-I now becomes our soteriological liberating saving grace. Although, at the beginning of the 'Path' we are scarcely aware of this *kosmic* miracle, we may still make some rather unlikely providential choices. *[Ch. VIII]* The prepared mind somehow finds a 'spiritual' mentor, teacher, or master. He/she then directly introduces us to our indwelling luminous buddha nature Presence and we begin the happy, quiescent calm abiding of *shamatha* 'mindfulness of breathing' practice that begins the great process that bears this luscious fruit. *[Ch. VII]*

As Buddha told so long ago, "Now I am breathing in; I am happy and at peace. Now I am breathing out; I am happy and at peace." That is simple, mindful, basic *shamatha* that Shakyamuni Buddha adapted from his ancient Hindu Vedic *Sanatanadharma,* then revealed it to humankind. No need to complicate it. Our teachers remind us: *shamatha* is dualistic causal foundation of acausal nondual Dzogchen View *(Ch VII).*

In this our evolutionary *kosmic process*—as the karmic winds of the movement of mind in space and time cause the fabrications and imputations of dualistic concept-mind (*namtok, doxa*) with its deep cultural background materialist 'global web of belief'—we have 'forgotten' (*amnesis, marigpa, avidya*) our actual 'supreme identity' of that 'supreme source' Ground and fall under sway of a narcissistic self-ego-I with its odious habitual obsessive 'subject-object split' between knowing subject and its objects known. The result is terrible suffering for living beings; and for our precious Mother Earth. What to do?

Should you be so lucky as to have found your spiritual mentor, he/she subtly points out ('pointing out instruction', *ngotrö*) that the nondual nature of your often deluded and ultimately illusory *relative* mind with its all too real phenomena, is your *ultimate* Buddha mind/Christ nature itself—bright, lucid, luminous, numinous indwelling Presence of That!

That is the soteriological (salvation) grace of Indo-Tibetan Vajrayana 'Fruitional View'—propitious 'completion' of the noble Buddhist Mahayana Vehicle. That fruitional view, the "immediacy of the view" is "already present and accomplished from the very beginning", deep within us. [Nagarjuna] So there is no need to seek it in some grand ideal future mind state. Past and future are "gone gone beyond." In Mahayana we seek future happiness through present practice. Cause and effect. Ati Dzogchen of the Vajrayana is non-causal direct happiness now.

Take refuge in *That.* Take refuge in the prodigious Three Jewels—Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. Take refuge in the Fourth Jewel, your precious 'outer' Guru/Lama. As Nyingma Dzogchen master Jigme Lingpa has told, *"Primordial intrinsic awareness itself is absolute Guru—Ultimate Truth."* Your outer Guru mirrors your indwelling inner Guru which is none other than pure blissful clear light (*ösel*) original timeless Awareness-Consciousness Ground of Being itself. That is who you actually are! That is your 'supreme identity' of this basal 'supreme source' that you always already are now. Numinous bright *Presence* of That! Count these many blessings, breathe, give thanks, and be happy here and now! That happiness you seek is already present and accomplished now.

## On Refuge, Karma, and Awakened Mind

For *Dzogchen/Mahamudra* Master Adzom Paylo Rinpoche (Dzogchen Retreat 2006):

> Refuge is the foundation of all dharma practice. Refuge is viewed differently in Sutra and Tantra. The Mahayana Sutra view is the Causal Vehicle—cause and effect. We engage now the causes that result in future enlightenment...But *Sutra Refuge* actually separates us from that final result, the fruition of your already present enlightened *bodhi* mind. *Tantric Refuge* is the Secret Mantra Fruitional Refuge. It is taking refuge in the 'Immediacy of the View'. This fruitional state is our always present enlightened state, our buddha mind free of causal conceptual elaboration. It is the authentic way that is the swift path of non-causal Dzogchen. It occurs here and now, the nondual primordial love and wisdom directly realized upon this very seat! In taking Fruitional Refuge in the Immediacy of the View enlightenment is present here and now! No contrived spiritual effort or seeking is required. Immersion in the nondual authentic Fruitional View of Dzogchen is inseparable from the natural effulgence of *bodhicitta*, spontaneously present in the luminosity of the View as we rest in primordial state of equanimity—nondual *essential rigpa*—state of pure perfect Presence.

### On Cause-and-Effect Karma: Adzom Paylo Rinpoche

We live in two worlds at once! There is an outer and an inner world. In these two worlds there is an interdependent action of cause and effect. In this causal dimension we act from our egocentric view and desire and thereby sow seeds of karma. Yet there is also an innermost secret fruitional world. This too is the result of prior causes and conditions that we have created by our

> thoughts, intentions, and actions. A positive cause reaps a positive effect or result. A negative cause reaps a negative result. A negative cause cannot yield a positive result. Such a View and its corresponding ethical Action must go together... The cause of all suffering in the six realms of existence is explained by the nonrecognition of this outer and inner cause and effect relationship...Inner negative emotions always reflect in our outer world. So mind your mind. That is your great work for the benefit of the world. [Translated by Lama Rigzin Drolma Anne C. Klein]
>
> —Dzogchen Retreat (Santa Fe, NM 2002)

*The Nondual Nature of Awakened Mind.* "Because ultimate truth has never existed as anything whatsoever from the perspective of spacelike awareness, neither has there ever existed any view, meditation, conduct, or fruition, or stages of development and completion...Timeless awareness—empty and without identity—is in its very essence beyond all characterization or description...effort and causality are transcended." [Longchenpa, *Chöying Dzöd* 2001 *p. 91.*]

**Human Happiness, Buddha Nature, and Bodhicitta**

Compassionate loving *bodhicitta* conduct is our primordial, intrinsic, indwelling buddha nature expressed through engaged action/conduct for the benefit of living beings.

> All beings desire happiness. Peace and happiness arise from your present mind state. So to have happiness and peace we must first *train the mind* in shamatha calm abiding so as to express skillful means for the benefit of the world. That training is the gradual surrender of our sense of self. This natural antidote stops the negative afflicting emotions and places us at ease so that we may benefit others through bodhicitta... Bodhicitta is the one teaching that includes the

> whole of Buddha's teaching. There are two relative aspects of bodhicitta—intention and engaged action/conduct. We need both. We utilize *Relative Bodhicitta* to realize the gift of *Ultimate Bodhicitta*. Nonrecognition of our bodhicitta that is ego clinging is the true demon. The causes of our dissatisfaction and suffering are not outside, in others, but in our egocentric ignorance and afflicted emotions.
>
> —Adzom Paylo Rinpoche

Please consider this well. As our hearts and minds begin to open through compassionate bodhicitta, we again and again—'brief moments many times'—profoundly connect with our always already present love-wisdom buddha nature buddha essence (*tathagatagarbha, buddhadhatu, buddhajnana*); all-embracing primordial Buddha Nature of Mind (*semnyi, cittata*), very Ground of Being itself. Happy bright Presence of *That* (*tathata*). The Great Vajra Guru Mantra: *Om Ah Hum Benza Guru Pema Siddhi Hung.* Connect to your Buddha Nature through *That*!

### Buddhist Emptiness: Buddha's *Wisdom Heart Sutra*

Our intrinsic buddha nature is profoundly revealed in the very familiar, very brief *Perfection of Wisdom Heart Sutra,* the Sanskrit *Prajnaparamita Hridaya Sutra,* known simply as the *Heart Sutra*. It bespeaks Buddhist emptiness as the 'Dependent Arising' of the Mahayana Vehicle. *"Dependent" refutes intrinsic ultimate existence. "Arising" refutes nihilistic ultimate nonexistence.*

The *Heart Sutra* is a concise summary of the *Diamond Sutra,* itself a summary of first century BCE Indian *Perfection of Transcendent Wisdom Sutra* (8000 lines), the foundation of Buddhist Mahayana Causal Vehicle of vast *Prajnaparamita* corpus in 100,000 lines. These Indian *PP* sutras arrived in 8th century Tibet with Shantarakshita and Padmasambhava.

Here we begin to discover that "The mind does not exist as an object but is by its nature, clarity and luminosity." Clear light luminosity (*prabhasa, pabhassa, 'od gsal* (*ösel), guang ming, komyo*) may be seen as intrinsic *kadak* purity of all-embracing 'basic space' (*dharmadhatu, chöying*) of nondual *dharmakaya* Primordial 'groundless' Ground, wholly positive all-pervading 'basic goodness', undefiled and untrammeled by negative afflictive emotion and habitual conceptual elaboration, imputation, and reification. *Mahasukaho!*

Immediately the *Heart Sutra* reveals that the ultimate nature of our experience of all relative conventional spacetime phenomena—the '*Five Skandhas'*—is utterly empty of *ultimate* intrinsic existence. However, this does not preclude *relative* existence. Relative phenomenal appearance does appear after all. Yes, "Form is empty, emptiness is form."

*Buddhist emptiness is so much more than a mere "non-affirming negative". It is as well the positive affirming clear light luminosity and clarity (ösel) of light-matter-energy-form (E=mc²) continuously arising from its timeless, selfless empty nondual Primordial Awareness Ground as this great gift of our phenomenal spacetime realities. H.H. Dalai Lama has referred to these two faces of emptiness as 'objective emptiness' and 'subjective emptiness' respectively. [More below.]*

And what is the ultimate nature of boundless emptiness itself? We saw in Chapter I that Buddhist Vajrayana *shunyata*/emptiness is, as with relative form, itself also empty of any iota of *ultimate* intrinsic existence. This is termed the "emptiness of emptiness" (*shunyata shunyata*). Well then, how *is* emptiness itself established? Yes. On the accord of His Holiness Dalai Lama, "Emptiness is established by human relative conceptual minds."

The five *skandhas* of our human experience are: 1) physical form, 2) sensory feeling, 3) perception/conception, 4) mental formation and volition; and 5) personal consciousness, our

relative human awareness and memory. These are 'form aggregates' or 'heaps' that comprise our arising phenomenal spacetime realities. From the five *skandhas* arise human deluded self-sense of a separate independently real self-ego-I—our all too human ego consciousness (*manas, vijnana*). That 'primal ignorance' (*marigpa, avidya, ajnana, hamartia*/sin) is the primary cause of our human dissatisfaction, 'dis-ease', and the horrible suffering of despotism, genocide, and endless war. That 'self' learns to take refuge in Buddha's 'noself' *(anatman).*

Only the first *skandha*, physical form, empirical spacetime light-matter-energy-form ($E=mc^2$) is objective. The other four *skandhas* are inherently subjective mental/emotional states and processes. These four subjective *skandhas* perceive and interpret objective form. Thus, from the five *skandhas* does illusory self-ego-I arise—and take over our lives. So, primal human ignorance—*avidya, marigpa, ajnana*—is expressed in relative spacetime form as such a narcissistic 'self' that begets terrible human and animal suffering (*duhkha, dukkha*).

Quiescent 'mindful introspection' is a love-wisdom critique of our unruly, mostly negative concepts and beliefs of the self—our unexamined deep cultural background "global web of belief". [Quine 1969] Buddha told, *"You must go beyond your belief in what you see, so that you know how to see it as it is."* From that understanding arises *Atiyoga* Dzogchen View, Meditation, and Conduct that bears immediate 'fruit' of liberation from suffering—Vajrayana Fruition/Result of the Meditation Path that is self-liberated harmless human Happiness Itself *(mahasukaho).*

The practice of that Buddhadharma Path reveals nonconceptual direct experience of inherent ultimate emptiness of form and of our innate buddha nature manifested as this relatively real compassionate *bodhicitta* for benefit of all living beings—

including our precious spaceship Mother Earth. And yes, *That* is the open secret of human happiness.

How is it that the *relative* five *skandhas* of form and formless form are empty of inherent *ultimate* existence? We see in the *Heart Sutra* the Buddha's "Four Profundities": "Form is empty (*shunya, stongpa*); emptiness (*shunyata, stongpa nyi*) is form." Then we are told, "Form is not other than emptiness; emptiness is not other than form." 'Form' here includes all arising appearing objective and subjective spacetime phenomena—all five *skandhas*.

We've seen that Ultimate Truth of the Buddha's teaching on emptiness is that the Relative Truth of appearing spacetime form and its primordial boundless emptiness *dharmakaya* Ground are an ontic prior and phenomenally present *one truth unity*! That unity (*dzög*) is invariant throughout all relative human reference frames.

*We must learn to see that sublime prior and always present nondual one truth unity of Buddha's Two Truths—our singular already present buddha nature—in all of our dualistic relative perceptions.* The natural adversity that mortal flesh is heir to is always now our 'innermost secret' love-wisdom buddha mind clarity and bliss.

It is crucial that we not construe Buddhist emptiness as nihilistic nothingness. Form is empty of any whit of absolute or *ultimate independent* 'intrinsic existence', while yet causally fully *interdependently* existent ('dependent arising' or *pratitya samutpada*) as relatively real causal conventional phenomena. *Form and its emptiness Ground are a prior metaphysical and phenomenal identity. Buddhist boundless emptiness is not the nonexistence of spacetime stuff, but the 'interdependent arising' of all physical and mental phenomenal process.* From that perfectly subjective emptiness Ground arises the fullness of vast boundless whole of everything that objectively appears in space and time. Indeed, it is this wondrous all-subsuming Ultimate Truth that grounds the very cause and effect 'interdependent arising' of the Relative Truth dimension of our human experience in spacetime

form. Once again, form exists relatively, conventionally, but not ultimately. "Form is empty; emptiness is form." [Buddha]

Quantum physicists and Buddhist philosophers agree. Causality—the 'interdependent arising' of a multitude of prior causes and conditions, the scientific and karmic Law of Cause and Effect—is the vital process of our being here in space and time.

Physical and mental phenomena do not simply arise *independently*, fully formed. Spacetime forms in themselves do not have an uncaused intrinsic existence by their own power, from their own side. That they do is known in our Eastern wisdom traditions as the delusion (*moha*) of *svabhava*—impossible independent, unconditioned, uncaused magical arising of ultimately real inherently existing appearing phenomena. The Buddha denied such an unexamined extreme materialist metaphysic. Here lies a Kantian, centrist middle path wisdom cognitive space that gently embraces the destructive false dichotomy of the metaphysical extremes of eternalist, substantialist *absolute existence* (Scientific Local Realism/Materialism), and of nihilist *absolute nonexistence* (Absolute Idealism).

Thus, our being here in *relative* form is ultimately selfless 'noself' buddha nature (Buddha's *anatman*). Form is change and so impermanent (*anitya*) and empty (*shunya*) of any *ultimate* intrinsic existence. Because of impermanence, and our egocentric insistence upon a permanent self-ego-I, we experience suffering and these adventitious causes of suffering. In the Buddha's Middle Way *"Selfless noself is the true refuge of self."* Self-ego-I and its selfless buddha nature together at last! As if they were ever separate at all. Buddha told we must learn to kindly befriend the duplicitous ego and make it an ally. Yes, it requires a bit of mature 'ego strength' for such a bogus 'self' to gradually deconstruct itself. The historical burden of

credulity for any metaphysical system that denies the relative conventional existence of form (nihilistic metaphysical Absolute Idealism), or that affirms the absolute intrinsic existence (*svabhava*) of form (eternalist, substantialist Metaphysical Materialism) is heavy indeed. May dualistic objective Big Science, and our *concepts* about subjective Spirit discover Buddha's centrist Middle Way between such false dichotomies, and all other physical, metaphysical, cognitive, and political extremes.

Therefore, because appearing spacetime phenomena arise *interdependently* within their emptiness Ground of Being as a cause-and-effect process, "Form is empty." And because form and emptiness are a prior unity, "Emptiness is form." Yes. Boundless emptiness *is* the Interdependent Arising (*pratitya samutpada*) of this stuff of reality that we call spacetime form—$E=mc^2$.

Assiduous Mayayana/Vajrayana practice of the Path—that choice—makes this conceptual understanding certain via trans-conceptual nondual direct yogic experience (*yogi pratyaksa*). That interdependent *process* of awakening begins with Buddha's *shamatha* "mindfulness of breathing". *[Ch. VII]* That is the providential beginning of the counter intuitive truth of indwelling always present Presence of our buddha nature Primordial *dharmakaya* Ground of Being. Like vast empty space, *dharmakaya* is empty in essence, clarity by nature, and compassionate in its energy 'responsiveness'—beyond concept and belief—*ultimate* ’supreme source' Ground of all *relative* phenomenal arising which is its dynamical display as *tukje bodhicitta* energy.

So, we take outer, inner, and innermost secret refuge in the precious Three Jewels that includes our *Dzogchen* master via the profound process that is Guru Yoga. [*Ch. I*]

Our always present indwelling buddha heart buddha mind is our 'innermost secret' Source of Refuge, prior and present unity of clear, luminous, boundless emptiness Buddha Nature of

Mind (*semnyi*). From that primordial love-wisdom Ground Presence spontaneously and effortlessly arises our compassionate *bodhicitta* heart-mind—thought, intention, prayer, and engaged action/conduct for both relative and ultimate benefit for all living beings. Our all too human negative afflicted thinking and emotion now begins to 'self-liberate' (*rang drol*) at the very instant of its arising, freeing us to practice *bodhicitta* conduct in earnest. And *That* dear Reader is the open secret of your own human happiness.

This concludes our all too brief exploration of the Buddha's *Heart of Wisdom Sutra*.

*A Very Brief History of Buddha Nature.* By the end of the second century CE several 'Buddha Nature' sutras had arisen in India. They revealed generally that early Buddhist notions of nirvana, far from a mere "blowing out" of concept mind—like extinguishing a flame—were indeed the luminous primordial Buddha Nature of Mind that is our 'supreme identity' of the very Ground of Being itself. Bright, lucid indwelling Presence of *That* (*tathata,* suchness, *chönyi*).

The Buddha told his disciples that his nirvana was not like the extinguishing of a flame of 'self' but a continuity of this profound love-wisdom clarity-bliss that abides as 'basic space' (*dharmadhatu*) of *buddhadhatu,* our spacious buddha nature whose heartseed is always present within every living being. That is our essential buddha nature buddha heart-mind. With the advent of Indian, then Tibetan tantra, our buddha nature is revealed as already present inherent indwelling Primordial Presence of what was to become the Tibetan Fruitional Vehicle that now pervades the view and practice of much recent Buddhist tradition.

So, let us now explore in some detail the rather difficult scholastic history of Buddhist emptiness and its buddha nature.

## **The Buddha Nature/Emptiness Controversy**: *Shentong* **and** *Rangtong*

The living history of our precious 'buddha nature' in Tibet was not without controversy. The scholastic *Shentong/Rangtong* debate over our indwelling buddha nature in the face of the radical emptiness among Vajrayana high lamas has raged for a thousand years. As we surrender the habitual conceptual dualism inherent in such critical dialectics, we shall see that this false dichotomy has a clear centrist 'middle path' resolution.

Early Indian and Tibetan texts viewed 'buddha nature' in accordance with the two primary schools of Buddhist Mahayana doctrine—Middle Way Madhyamaka Prasangika *Rangtong* or 'empty of self' of Tsongkhapa's 14th century Gelug School; and Middle Way Svatantrika Yogachara *Shentong* or ʼempty of other' phenomena that began with Indian Shantarakshita's 8th century enhancement of 4th century Yogachara teaching of Asanga and Vasubandu—a Kantianesque 'critique of pure reason' of radical conceptual Prasangika *Rangtong* emptiness.

There is a great variety of the protean esoteric Shentong view that now pervades all of the extant Tibetan Buddhist lineages: 8th century Nyingma, 12th century 'New Translation' (*Sarma*) schools Kagyu, Sakya, Jonang; but decidedly not the Rangtong 14th century Gelug school of Je Tsongkhapa, and of the present H.H. Dalai Lama. How is this so?

As Indian Buddhism reached Tibet in the 8th century the various interpretations of 'buddha nature' and of 'emptiness' became even more contested. By the 14th century Tibetan Buddhism was split between two differing views of emptiness and buddha nature, namely Rangtong "intrinsic emptiness" or "emptiness of self" (Gelug lineage), and Shentong "extrinsic emptiness" or "emptiness of other" phenomena (Jonang lineage).

Broadly construed, Shentong polemics argued that buddha nature is our inherent indwelling luminous, selfless nondual ultimate Buddha Nature of Mind (*semnyi*) complete with all inherently existing buddha qualities and attributes, yet empty of all "other" delusional qualities of a Hindu *Atman Self*. Here, our innate indwelling buddha nature truly *ultimately* exists beyond our relative human reason, our concepts and beliefs about it. For Shentongpas *That* (*tathata*) alone cannot be reduced to Gulug Madhyamaka Prasangika Rangtong nihilist ultimate nonexistence. Is there a centrist Middle Way?

*Thus is Shentong ultimate buddha nature selfless, yet decidedly not empty of its own self-reflexive innate nondual buddha essence (buddhadhatu) or buddha wisdom (buddhajnana, buddha gnosis) replete with its awakened enlightened buddha qualities/attributes. For Shentongpas buddha nature ultimately exists!*

Ju Mipham's defense of Shentong (*Lion's Roar Exposition of Buddha Nature* 2002):

> Thus, the ultimate is not empty of its own essence, because the ultimate has both a nondeluded subject and a nondelusory object, because what exists there cannot be invalidated (*gnod pa*) by a valid cognition that proves otherwise...Since the ultimate is true and nonmistaken from its own side, it is never empty of dharmas that exist in that way...This ultimate reality that is the nature of things truly exists primordially in this way, but the deluded perceptions that do not realize it are validly established as untrue and deluded in this context, are called 'deceptive' [*samvrti, kunzob*]...obstruction. So, the ultimate is empty of that deception, it is empty of the very subject and object that comprise the deluded perceptions... Thus, one is very much compelled to accept [this Shentong position over against Rangtong Gelug Prasangika]...So emptiness, which is the absence of subject and object...is perfectly complete in this

> [Shentong] system...So, the ultimate expanse of phenomena...is not empty of the inseparable buddha bodies and gnoses, and abides in the primordial, spontaneously present essence body [*ngo bo nyi sku, svabhavakaya, Vajrakaya*]...nondual wisdom itself.

Jamgon Ju Mipham Gyatso considered these two opposing views of Prasangika Rangtong and Svatantrika Yogachara Shentong to be complementary (though he is often considered a Rangtongpa), but in his above *Lion's Roar* defense of the Shentong view he clearly favors the *chittamatra* "mind only" mentalist subjective Idealism of the Svatantrika bent of Indian Buddhist philosophy as expressed in the Yogachara school (4th-5th century) of Asanga, and in the 8th century refinement of that Yogachara by the great Shantarakshita.

Ju Mipham (1846-1912) considered Shantarakshita's 8th century masterful *Madhyamakalamkara* an important text in this regard. Mipham's profound commentary on that great text emphasizes the syncretic "coalescent" unity of the two schools of Mahayana Madhyamaka Middle Way, namely Prasangika and Yogachara, as we shall soon see.

Mipham praised Shantarakshita's Svatantrika Shentong view as to the "conceptual ultimate truth" because it aids Development Stage practitioners to understand the trans-conceptual nondual Ultimate Truth that is not expressed in the *reductio ad absurdum* view of Rangtong Madhyamaka Prasangika. Thus, is Shantarakshita known in Tibetan doxography as a Yogachara-Svantantrika-Madhyamika—an unwieldy epithet suitable perhaps for the great Dzogchen ecumenical *rimé* mahasiddha Mipham himself.

*Svatantrika Yogachara Madhyamaka Shentong.* The 4th century Yogachara of Asanga matured into a profound Buddhist Kantian-like centrist Subjective Idealism—Svatantrika Yogachara Madhyamaka (*chittamatra*)—refined by Shantarakshita in his

lapidary *Madhyamakalamkara.* It was he, with Padmasambhava, who brought Indian Tantric Buddhism to Tibet in the 8th century.

Bhaviveka (6th century) was critical of Buddhapalita's refusal to use Prasangika logical syllogistic reasoning. With Bhaviveka and other Svatantrikas, Shantarakshita utilizes the logic and epistemology (*pramana*) of Nagarjuna, Dignaga and Chandrakirti to establish the Svatantrika "conceptual ultimate truth" that functions as a *relative* correction of our all-too-common belief in the intrinsic *ultimate* existence of appearing phenomena (*svabhava*) to a real self-ego-I. Madhyamaka Prasangika Rangtong is grounded in an *essentialist ideology* of complete reliance on '*prasanga*'—logical pure reason—the 'logical consequence' of *reductio ad absurdum* argument used to refute the putative absurd consequences of any essentialist view!

By the end of the 8th century the basics of critical Indian dialectical philosophy—*pramana* logic and epistemology, Madhyamaka, and tantric mysticism—were well established in Tibet. However, Mahayana Madhyamaka scholasticism did not truly arise before the 12th century with vigorous critical dialectics of 8th century 'ancient' Nyingma school over against the New Translation (*Sarma*) schools of Kagyu, Sakya, and Gelug. Our Shentong/Rangtong critical dialectic is part of that evolutionary Buddhist historical process.

Shentong Yogachara 'mind only' (*chittamatra*) or 'consciousness only' is usually seen nowadays as an ontic and epistemic response to potentially nihilistic *apophatic via negativa* of the Madhyamaka Prasangika *Prajnaparamita* Rangtongpas—to wit, *absolutely nothing ultimately exists!* Not even Buddha's great truth of our indwelling buddha nature. But Yogachara Madhyamaka is much more than that. Still, 14th century Nyingma Dzogchen master Longchenpa told that Madhyamaka Prasangika Rangtong is the subtlest "highest" view of Tibetan Buddhist *scholastic* philosophy.

How so? Prasangika is most akin to radical acausal nondual Dzogchen *ultimate nonexistence* of all physical and mental phenomena.

Broadly construed, for 'mind only' (*chittamatra)* Yogachara nothing exists *except* mind/consciousness who conceives that nothing exists. All illusory spacetime phenomena are 'Mind Only'. Yet, with the Yogachara of old, and with the other Madhyamikas, mind and all other phenomena, remain absent and empty of any *essential* nature. So even *that* perceiving mind does not *ultimately* exist. That 'mentalist' view is Svatantrika Yogachara, the noble Shentong Buddhist ontic Transcendental Idealism. Well, is that our Middle Way?

*Prajnaparamita.* In Tibetan traditions the ultimate meaning of Middle Way Indian Buddhist *Prajnaparamita* is revealed in the 'Five Paths' to liberation and full enlightenment. All five paths (*lam, marga*) of the steps to realization of ultimate enlightenment (buddhahood)—Ground, Path, Fruition/Result—are here seen as 1) accumulation, 2) preparation, 3) pure vision, 4) nondual direct meditation, 5) the stage of 'no more learning' or buddhood itself, *full bodhi* realization of the first four paths. The first two are paths for beginners who have not yet realized the nondual nature of emptiness. They experience our appearing realities only via concept and belief 'discursive meditation', including the nine stages of mindful *shamatha* (*Ch. VII*), while "sublime beings" experience their realities mostly through nondual yogic direct perception (*yogi pratyaksa*). [Pettit 1999]

That is the basis for Longchenpa's (2001 p.223) urgent distinction between 'ordinary mind' dualistic "meditation with support" of a conceptual dualistic "frame of reference" (mantra, deity practice), and nondual "meditative stability" without support (Ati Dzogchen)—"the ongoing and naturally settled state that is the true nature [Ground] of phenomena." These two cognitive modalities constitute an ultimate prior unity because causal dualistic

'meditation' is in a syncretic ultimate view embraced and subsumed in acausal, nondual *Atiyoga* Great Perfection 'meditative absorption' as active but nonconceptual 'nonmeditation' *(magom).*

*The Great Perfection.* Jamgon Ju Mipham (1846-1912)—Jamgon Manjushri himself—was a Dzogchen master, syncretist and systematic epistemologist of the highest possible excellence. He developed the philosophical tradition of the Nyingma school 'ancient ones' (8th century) to a remarkable level of sophistication through his epistemic and gnoseological wisdom exposition and defense of the Nyingma Ati Dzogchen Great Perfection teaching in his great works *The Beacon of Certainty (*2002*),* a product, with his *The Lion's Roar (2002)*, of the *rimé* ecumenical renaissance of 19th century Tibetan Buddhism.

*The Lion's Roar* is an exposition of our Shentong buddha nature. *The Beacon* is a very early profound guide to certainty of the view of the unity of appearance and emptiness. It is a scintillating elucidation of the Great Perfection View. Exoterically it is commensurate with conceptual Rangtong Prasangika emptiness; and esoterically it is consistent with nondual Ati Dzogchen, and with Shentong buddha nature ultimate existence. Indeed, we've seen that Prasangika is often considered a causal conceptual foundation of acausal nondual Dzogchen.

In these texts Mipham argues—against critics of the Great Perfection who believed that the nondual fruitional immediacy of the acausal Dzogchen View is incommensurable with the causal, conceptual, polemical critical dialectics of inherently gradualist approach of the Mahayana Causal Vehicle—that soteriological (salvation) certainty is a function of *both* critical causal Madhyamaka logic *and* the perfect liberating nondual acausal primordial wisdom-gnosis (*jnana prana*) of Dzogchen highest *Atiyoga,* which transcends yet includes critical philosophy.

Dzogchen is acausal nondual direct samadhi experience *(yogi pratyaksa)*, transcending yet embracing its foundational conceptual Rangtong Prasangika. Thus, may Dzogchen be seen as a critique of Prasangika pure reason, as we have seen.

Therefore, the View of Dzogchen, the Great Completion, is not a critical philosophy at all, but direct samadhi 'meditative stability' of ultimate nondual Primordial Wisdom (*yeshe*, gnosis) itself that is so pragmatically useful in healing relative human suffering. Madhyamaka critical philosophy sees 'valid cognition' as conceptual logical inference (*anumana*) augmented by the calm abiding of *shamatha* and the penetrating 'analytic' insight of *vipashyana*.

On the other hand, Dzogchen utilizes 'valid cognition' as *pratyaksa* or nonconceptual direct yogic experience via *magom* 'fruitional nonmeditation'. Together these two voices of wisdom—relative and ultimate valid cognition—result in timeless nondual ultimate realization of all the buddhas. The assiduous practice of *That* (*tathata*), with relative *bodhicitta*, is the open secret of human happiness, in this case, *your* happiness. Without these two complementary cognitive modes—objective conceptual and subjective contemplative—your *buddic* love-wisdom mind remains mostly dualistic and conceptual, and so cannot flourish as the fruition of loving kindness *bodhicitta*.

For Ju Mipham, without this rare 'coalescent' cognitive unity, the valiant attempt to establish Buddha's emptiness/ *shunyata* through a human reason absolute negation of everything—the Madhyamaka Prasangika Rangtong orthodoxy—is problematic, to say the least. We require *direct experience* of nondual Primordial Wisdom gnosis to realize our ultimate Buddha Nature of Mind. Yet, in order to understand *that* extraordinary dialectical process we require a bit of conceptual *anumana.* Wisdom gnosis requires nondual direct samadhi *yogi*

*pratyaksa* tempered and unpacked via 'valid reasoning' of *anumana*. We need both. Indeed, we already have both.

In his very early *Beacon of Certainty* Mipham agrees with Gelug school's Rangtongpa Je Tsongkhapa that the 'extrinsic emptiness' of the protean Shentong view of Jonang school's Dölpopa does not fully comprehend Buddhist emptiness. And this view seems to contradict his vigorous defense of Shentong in his sublime later polemic, *The Lion's Roar*. Does that render Mipham's view as to ultimate essence of our buddha nature ambiguous? Is he finally a Shentongpa or a Rangtongpa? Buddhist scholars do not agree.

As we have seen, Rangtong Gelug scholars are critical of the Shentong view that while relative conventional phenomenal appearance is delusory and so finally nonexistent, trans-conceptual Ultimate Truth with its buddha nature and inherent buddha qualities and buddha body kayas (Vajrakaya) do indeed ultimately exist and so cannot be negated and reduced to Tsongkhapa's Prasangika 'absolute negation'—an ostensibly nihilist view of emptiness. *Well, is our inherent buddha nature finally a delusory Relative Truth; or is it a truly existent Ultimate Truth? Neither? Both?*

*Supreme Head of the Nyingma school, the late H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche 1991), has told that the Shentong view of 'extrinsic emptiness' is the highest and most profound view of this Tibetan dialectical scholastic tradition, superior even to mainstream Gelug Madhyamaka Prasangika.*

Meanwhile, antecedents of Shentong may be found in the early *Pali Canon*, as well as Mahayana buddha nature sutras and shastras. And yes, Shentong is often considered exemplified in Middle Way non-nihilist Svatantrika Yogachara Buddhist Idealism.

Be all that as it may, Nyingma school Longchenpa (14th century), while sympathetic to extrinsic emptiness, was decidedly not a Shentongpa. Although he was a contemporary of Dölpopa and thus familiar with his Shentong view, we saw that Longchenpa never used

the epithet 'Shentong'—at least not in his extant works. He clearly stated that the highest of the limiting *scholastic dialectical* conceptual views was Madhyamaka Prasangika, the causal conceptual foundation of acausal nondual supreme Maha Ati Dzogchen, the Great Perfection. As Plato told regarding a similar Greek dialectic, "No small matter is at stake here; the question concerns the very way that human life is to be lived." *[The Republic, Book I]*

Ju Mipham was of course acutely aware of all this. His ostensible ambivalence is palpable. John Pettit (1999 p. 113) reveals Mipham's early cognitive process of *The Beacon*:

> [Mipham] wanted to preserve the crucial position of the Shentongpas—and the Great Perfection—that the tathagatagarbha was intrinsically possessed of the qualities of enlightenment. On the other hand, if these qualities are asserted to exist ultimately, as the Shentongpas supposedly maintain, then they would have to be immune to an ultimate analysis. This would contradict the reasoning of Nagarjuna and Candrakirti. Therefore, Mipham used the concept of conventional valid cognition of pure perception in order to validate a type of perceptual content—the spontaneous presence of enlightened qualities in all their diversity for enlightened meditative perception [meditative absorption].

So, *The Lion's Roar* defends Shentong and the Great Perfection; and the much earlier *Beacon* appears to defend the radical intrinsic conceptually reasoned emptiness of the Prasangika Rangtong view, which underpins the trans-conceptual nondual Ati Dzogchen View. Hence these two views are not inherently incompatible. By utilizing the two voices—objective and subjective—of our human cognitive capacity we win a complementary conceptual Relative Truth *and* nondual Ultimate Truth unitary understanding. Or do we?

John Pettit suggests that Mipham may have composed *The Lion's Roar* at the behest of his Shentong teacher Khentse Wangpo Rinpoche (1999 p.114). Perhaps. But Mipham's passionate and brilliant defense of Shentong principles also appears elsewhere in his 32-volume oeuvre, in for example his sublime *White Lotus (2007).* Moreover, contrary to Pettit's view, Mipham does indeed state that putative Shentong 'extrinsic emptiness' is 'superior' to Rangtong Prasangika 'intrinsic emptiness'. [CF *Lion's Roar* quote above]

*Further, in both* The Beacon *and* The Lion's Roar *Ju Mipham implies his preference for Shantarakshita's Svatantrika Yogachara Shentong vis à vis Chandrakirti's Prasangika Rangtong. That said, we must remember that false dichotomies are based in 'nonrecognition' of a prior unity; and poorly considered dualistic 'comparisons are odious'. Are Rangtong and Shentong in the ultimate view a prior and present complementary unity? I believe that was indeed Ju Mipham's view.*

Just so, it remains my own opinion that the later Mipham was, in his Heart of hearts, probably a Shentongpa, even as his master Patrul Rinpoche and most, but certainly not all, of the Nyingma school were not. A more nuanced view is that Ju Mipham did not fall prey to any falsely dichotomous view but understood the subtle inherent complementarity of the Rantong and Shentong views. We shall consider such a "coalescence" below.

We have seen that the Great Perfection is usually seen as acausal nondual Dzogchen Great Completion of the inherent causality of the noble Mahayana Causal Vehicle. With that in mind, Ati Dzogchen, The Great Perfection—considered by many to be the subtlest and highest nondual spiritual teaching of any tradition—may be seen as a *mythopoetic, metacognitive,* acausal, nondual teaching founded in an inherent complementarity of *both* of the causal Mahayana schools—Rangtong Prasangika and Shentong Svatantrika Yogachara.

*Buddhist Emptiness and Dzogchen.* So yes, Mipham viewed Yogachara *buddha nature* and Prasangika *shunyata/emptiness* not as inherently contradictory, but as complementary approaches to nondual Ultimate Truth that always embraces this Relative Truth spacetime dimension—a *one truth unity* (*dzög*) of Buddha's prodigious Two Truths that are *relative* form arising in formless 'basic space' (*chöying*) of its *ultimate dharmakaya* emptiness Ground of Being. Both views understand enlightened Primordial Awareness Wisdom (*rigpa'i yeshe*) to be inherently self-liberated *(rang drol)* from duplicitous atavistic dualistic human cognition—perception, conception, and even para-conceptual 'meditation with support'.

*Therefore, the "non-affirming negative" that is Prasangika Rangtong 'objective emptiness' and the positive clear light luminosity and clarity of Shentong 'subjective emptiness' constitute a natural complementary unity*. This view has arisen several times in the scholastic history of the dialectic. Still, we must choose and commit to a syncretic post-conceptual strategy as to how this is so. We shall further pursue that below in "Toward a Unifying Synthesis".

Yes. Buddhist emptiness is so much more than a mere negative nihilistic void dictated solely by human reason *(prasanga).* It is as well the bright luminosity of energy, light, matter, relative quantum spacetime form (Einstein's $E=mc^2 \approx \psi$ *wave)* arising as awakened enlightened human yogic awareness—pure joy of *That*. *That is Mipham's profound nondual "coalescence" of appearing form and its boundless emptiness dharmakaya Ground.* Told the Buddha, "Form is empty; emptiness is form." That is ontic prior and phenomenally present one truth union of Buddha's Two Truths that are relative form and its ultimate emptiness Primordial Awareness Ground of Being (*gzhi rigpa*). That ultimate *one truth unity* is invariant through all human relative reference

frames as it arises, outshines, and is perforce instantiated in human cognition as our *selfless* intrinsic *shentong* 'buddha nature'.

Therefore, phenomenal spacetime stuff—the dimension of Relative Truth arising in its Ultimate Truth Primordial Ground—is relatively conventionally real! *Buddhist shunyata emptiness is an* affirmation *of relative conventional phenomenal existence! Yet, it is a* negation *of the intrinsic ultimate existence of form*. Relative phenomena are absent and empty any whit of Ultimate Truth *intrinsic* existence. Phenomena exist relatively but not ultimately! That is the one truth unity of *Uma*, the Mahayana Madhyamaka Middle Way that bestrides the metaphysical extremes of absolute existence and absolute nonexistence (*medpa*). The Dzogchen nondual *one truth unity (dzog)* abides beyond any affirmation or negation, or any other conceptual view.

As a brilliant proponent of that Dzogchen View, Ju Mipham, with Longchenpa before him, understood well that enlightened naturally indwelling ultimate buddha nature/essence is an undivided "oneness", unbounded whole *(mahabindu)* "perfect as it is", utterly beyond the subject-object split of tedious conceptual dialectical cognitive gymnastics of scholastic critical analysis. Our ultimate buddha nature with its wondrous qualities and 'three *kayas* of existence' is thereby perforce *ultimately* established. That *Ultimate Bodhicitta* naturally and spontaneously manifests in spacetime form through the luminous Presence (*rigpa, vidya*) of *definitive* primordial love-wisdom gnosis (*yeshe, jnana*) as *Relative Bodhicitta* of intention and engaged human action/conduct for benefit of all living beings, including our precious Mother Earth. All *That* beyond our concepts about it.

Just so, *Relative Bodhicitta* conduct is a cognitive entry portal to *Ultimate Bodhicitta*—very Ground of Being itself. That this definitive, selfless, nondual one truth unity is ultimately inherently the truth of the matter need not entail provisional assent to any

species of conceptual dualistic philosophical idol of Absolute Self existence. Longchenpa reminds us that in nondual "naturally occurring timeless awareness nothing has ever existed as anything whatsoever, while arising as anything at all."

*We must maintain a nondual awareness of dualistic linguistic semiotic false dichotomies without habitually conflating them—while realizing the outshining perfect 'sameness' (samatajnana) and 'oneness' of nondual Primordial Ground in whom they arise. Our usually preconscious habituation to the causal objective* relative *existence of spacetime stuff is dishabituated via acausal perfectly subjective yogic samadhi direct awareness of its inherent* ultimate *absence.*

Please consider this. The conceptually fabricated dimension of inherently dualistic relative 'provisional' reality, and the 'definitive' nondual ultimate dimension of 'Reality Itself' are both marked by an empty (*shunya, stongpa*) absence of *either* sameness *or* difference. That such a surprisingly positive understanding is absent in the contemplatively untrained mind is due to the continuous error ('primal ignorance', *marigpa, avidya, ajnana, hamartia*/sin) of human dualistic cognitive reifying perception and conception. To rest in nondual, quiescent, blissful, naked clarity *(ösel)*—that is bright lucid moment-to-moment continuity of 'non-doing' Dzogchen *magom* 'nonmeditation'. *[Ch. VIII]*

Noetic nondual (body mind spirit subject-object unity) acausal primordial love-wisdom gnosis (*yeshe, jnana*) may be seen as the recognition, then ultimate realization of utterly absent empty nature of such seductive conceptual false dichotomies as provisional/definitive, true/false, relative/ultimate, form/ emptiness, appearance/reality, existence/nonexistence. To fully understand this cognitive *relational process* requires wisdom surrender of that pernicious adventitious split between a perceiving subject and its perceived objects, revealing prior and present emptiness *and* radiant clear light unity of such gratuitous worrisome dichotomies. Our

enlightened, indwelling love-wisdom buddha mind knows the duality of 'appearance and reality' as the perfect bright clarity, bliss and equality of ultimate nondual sameness (*samatajnana*)—Longchenpa's ontic primordially open 'Oneness'. Meanwhile, we may appreciate a bit of self-effacing humor in this inherent delusional duality of all our conceptual, discursive semiotic (logical syntax, semantics/ meaning, pragmatics/usage) 'labeling' attempts to understand and verbally express such nondual wisdom—sublime *samadhi* of certainty of *That* (*tathata, tattva,* suchness, *chönyi*).

As to this nondual Fruitional View, Arya Nagarjuna told, "It is already present and accomplished from the very beginning; to rest here without seeking, that is the meditation." And yes, the compassionate *bodhicitta* continuity of that union is the open secret of our own human happiness.

Thus does the truth of the matter require both voices of our human *noetic cognitive doublet*—both objective conceptual cognition, and subjective contemplative cognition, even perfectly subjective nondual noetic gnosis (*yeshe, jnana*). That is continuity of easeful *magom* 'nonmeditation' as Heart Essence of the Nyingma school *Longchen Nyingtig* of linage masters Garab Dorje, Longchenpa, Jigme Lingpa, and Adzom Paylo Rinpoche.

In *The Beacon of Certainty* Ju Mipham distinguishes between these two voices of wisdom—relative discriminating analytic wisdom (*prajna, sherab*) grounded in nondual Primordial Awareness Wisdom gnosis (*yeshe, jnana*) of ultimate Ground Nature of Mind as transmitted in Dzogchen *Atiyoga* highest *manngag/upadesha* pith instruction teaching cycle.

*Ati Dzogchen Instruction Classification and Practice Levels.* We have seen that the Great Perfection is classified into three teaching cycles. Let's briefly review. The three are Mind (*semde*), Space (*longde*), and direct master to disciple pith instruction (*manngag* or

*upadesha*). That 'innermost secret' instruction cycle is direct 'mind to mind' transmission of nondual Primordial Wisdom (gnosis, *yeshe, jnana*) directly, nonconceptually via very subtle "pointing out instruction" *(rigpa ngo sprod)* by the Dzogchen master. That is 'direct introduction' to nondual Buddha Nature of Mind (*cittata, semnyi*), trans-conceptual love-wisdom nature of Primordial Awareness gnosis (*yeshe, jnanaprana*) upon *prana* spirit belly breath, beyond our habitual concepts and beliefs *about* Buddhist clarity and emptiness.

The *longde* space class teaches the essential emptiness that is awareness and clarity of mind which 'corrects' emotional clinging to peace and 'clear light' lucidity *(ösel)* of our Primordial Awareness *dharmakaya* Ground that the *semde* teaching has not yet expunged.

Great contemporary Dzogchen scholar Tulku Thondup Rinpoche—who introduced me to Tibetan Buddhism so long ago—has told it well. As to the foundational *semde* (mind) instruction class: "All appearances are mind, that mind is emptiness, emptiness is intrinsic awareness, and emptiness and intrinsic awareness are in union."

Still, profound *semde* instruction does not liberate our habitual attachment to this great treasure of mind nature. Thus does the practitioner proceed from *semde* to *longde,* to *manngag,* all under the bright love-wisdom guidance of the Dzogchen Vajra master.

The Great Perfection contains two practice strata of formation within the pith instruction of the *manngag* (*upadesha*) cycle: 1) *kadag trekchö* or "cutting through" conceptual obscurations to reveal the nondual primordial wisdom Nature of Mind (*chöying* 'basic space' of *dharmakaya*), and 2) *lhundrub tögal*, manifest Presence of that all-subsuming Ground which reveals through its "four visions" the essential nature of the other two buddha bodies of reality, *rupakaya* (*sambhogakaya* and *nirmanakaya)*. Altogether that *Trikaya of the Base/Ground* may be, in direct relation to the capacity and commitment of the disciple,

fully realized in this life—prior to the death of this impermanent physical body.

Meanwhile, the prepared Dzogchen practitioner assiduously engages, before, during or after the daunting *ngöndro* 'preliminary practices', the earlier stages of the Nyingma Nine Vehicles of Enlightenment. This is often done in one year solitary meditation retreats practicing Development Stage and Completion Stage yoga. In Perfection Stage *tögal* retreat the Dzogchen yogi or yogini is said to surrender hitherto attractive but dualistic practice ritual and now rests alone in great silence of the primordial Deep as habitual phenomenal appearance naturally returns to its infinite Source Ground of Being.

In short, Ati Dzogchen View and Practice offer the *prepared* yogin nonconceptual (*nirvikalpa*) wisdom gnosis immediate recognition, then nondual realization of our Buddha Nature of Mind, always already present indwelling Ati Presence of Primordial Awareness 'basic space' (*chöying, dharmadhatu*) nondual ultimate *dharmakaya* 'groundless' Ground of Being of all this arising phenomenal reality. And yes, that Fruition/Result is, in the prepared mind of the yogin, directly proportional to the capacity and commitment thereof. And yes, that uncaused buddha nature is "already present and accomplished" prior to its causal practice.

*Ju Mipham's Dzogchen: Unification of Shentong and Rangtong.* Mipham Rinpoche affirms our need to go beyond the critical dialectics of dualistic conceptual Madhyamaka Prasangika Rangtong logical epistemic tradition (*pramana*) and enter in the direct (*yogi pratyaksa*) certainty of nondual Dzogchen View that is Awareness Ground of Being Itself. That view must be realized, not through exoteric critical concept and belief, but via esoteric direct nondual spiritual 'experience'—*essential rigpa*. Such a view

represents a profound centrist 'middle path' between the conceptual false dichotomy of the two "metaphysical extremes" (*medpa*) of *either* Prasangika Rangtong absolute nonexistence, *or* Shentong existence of our ultimate buddha nature. Yes. The truth of the matter requires a subtle "coalescence" of these two cognitive modalities—as I have struggled to do in these pages.

Thus does Ju Mipham affirm the pragmatic utility of limited human reason with its deductive, inductive and even alternative 'paraconsistent' logics, yet he points out the inherent wisdom limit of human conceptual cognition. He self-reflexively utilizes our concept-mind to deracinate and critique its own inherent limit. I have noted above a correlation of this holistic wisdom to Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*.

For Buddhist scholar John Pettit (1999):

> *The Beacon* is meant to show that reason, as employed in critical philosophical study [Madhyamaka], and personal intuition of wisdom gnosis [*yeshe, jnana*] as the principle of the Great Perfection, are complementary paradigms that converge on the same soteriological goal.

*So, it is clear that for Ju Mipham, while reason alone cannot personally realize Dzogchen nondual Primordial Wisdom, the proto-Shentong view of the Great Perfection must be subjected to the critical analysis of Rangtong Madhyamaka. On that both Mipham and Tsonkhapa agree.*

As to Indo-Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhist view and praxis these two great minds have profound epistemic and ontic differences. Yet they agree that 1) Madhyamaka reductionist critical analysis is necessary to a complete understanding of both

Indian Mahayana and Tibetan Vajrayana, which of course includes Ati Dzogchen; thus 2) conceptual philosophical view supports and guides nonconceptual contemplative practice; therefore 3) both conceptual discursive logical reasoning and trans-conceptual contemplative practice are both necessary qualities of the liberating Buddhist Path. [Pettit 1999]

Opposing the Shentong view, 'intrinsic emptiness' or 'self-empty' Gelug Rangtong views all arising phenomena, whether relative or ultimate, including our essential buddha nature, as *equally* absent and empty of intrinsic existence. And that is a Dzogchen Approach. Thus, *both* Relative Truth and Ultimate Truth here share the same ontic reality status—*ultimately* deceptive and deluded. Shentongpas often see this as extremist nihilism.

*In other words, in the Shentong view, while phenomena of the spacetime dimension of "concealer, deceptive, delusory" Relative Truth (samvriti satya) are empty of svabhava or inherent existence, all-subsuming ultimate reality or the dimension of Ultimate Truth (paramartha satya) cannot be empty of its own inherent existence. Our ultimate buddha nature ultimately exists!*

However, that multiform Shentong view was often incorrectly seen by Gelug Rangtongpas as affirmation of an ultimately existent Hindu/Vedic *Atman Self*, proscribed by the Buddha who rejected the Hindu Vedic permanent transmigrating "Supreme Self" in favor of selfless *anatman* that is his empty 'noself'. Yes, Buddha told, "Selfless noself is the true refuge of self."

Clearly, there are several ways that this Shentong/Rangtong dialectic may be understood. For the sake of brevity, we shall herein mainly consider Tibetan Buddhist Shentong as per the great Tibetan Buddhist master Dölpopa Shérab Gyeltsen (1292-1361) of the Tibetan Jonang lineage. He argued that our nondual Buddha Nature of Mind is finally ultimately existent and

so not empty of its own inherent existence, while all other deceptive relative-conventional phenomena, including our concepts and beliefs *about* buddha nature, are entirely empty of inherent intrinsic or absolute existence (*svabhava*).

*So yes, for Shentong the Buddha's Ultimate Truth (paramartha satya) or primordial ultimate reality dimension embraces and subsumes the spacetime dimension of Relative Truth (samvriti satya) arising therein. Our spacious ultimate inherent buddha nature (buddhadhatu) cannot be absent and empty of its own nondual intrinsic existence. Told Mipham, "The ultimate reality is not empty of being the ultimate reality, but it is empty of deceptive [relative] reality."*

Once again, buddha nature, our precious buddha love-wisdom mind (*buddhajnana*) is indeed empty of the *conceptual* 'concealer' phenomena of Buddha's Relative Truth dimension, but decidedly not empty of the *nonconceptual* awakened qualities of a buddha—of our innermost nondual *ultimate* buddha nature; indwelling bright Presence of *That*. *That* (*tathata*) is so much greater than any mere relative existence. That alone cannot be denied, negated, or reduced to Gelug Rangtong ultimate nonexistence. In any case, that is Mipham's compelling Shentong view in *The Lion's Roar* (2002), his *Sword of Wisdom,* and his *Fundamental Mind.*

Thus it is, so the Shentong argument goes, that our inherent buddha nature truly ultimately exists! We've seen *That* cannot be ultimately reduced or negated by the opposing Middle Way Prasangika Rangtong *reductio ad absurdum* ontic reduction/*epoche* which argues that *both* relative phenomenal arising *and* our ultimate buddha nature and buddha body *kayas* of existence and precious *buddic* qualities are all equally empty of intrinsic existence. For Rangtong, our buddha nature is not finally an ultimate reality but—along with all other phenomena—merely a nominal Relative Truth conceptual imputation. Prasangika arrives at this ambitious conclusion by way of dubious, capricious

dualistic *conceptual* human 'pure reason' alone! Curative unifying *Atiyoga*, wherefore art thou?

For this broad understanding of the protean Shentong view of all-embracing Ultimate Truth, the nondual Primordial Wisdom Ground (*kungzhi yeshe, kungzhi nomshe*) of all relative arising phenomena is unborn, uncreated and unconditioned. It embraces even the phenomenal chain of relative causal Interdependent Arising *(tendrel, pratitya samutpada)* that is the Buddha's *shunyata*/emptiness. Ultimate Truth is thus ultimate Ground of Being itself, vast boundless whole that embraces all of samsara and nirvana. Indeed, that is 'coalescent' one truth unity (*dzög*) of these two truth reality dimensions. That luminosity, that 'basic space' (*chöying*) ultimate Primordial *dharmakaya* Ground, very buddha nature buddha essence (*tathagatagarbha, buddhajnana, buddhadhatu*) Presence is intrinsically present in all living beings—indeed in Life Itself. *That* (*tathata*) cannot be relegated to a Prasangika Rangtong realm of *conceptual* nonexistence. *Our relative concepts and beliefs about buddha nature do not ultimately exist. Yet our nondual ultimate buddha nature is very groundless Ground of Being itself.* A denial of an existence requires some form of that existence. That is the Shentong View.

And the Madhyamaka Prasangika Rangtong 'empty of self' view? Dölpopa considered it the common *provisional* view of Tibetan Middle Way Madhyamaka of those apostate Rangtongpas who would soon enough include Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), founder of the Gelug lineage of Tibetan Buddhism. On the accord of Dölpopa, by practicing that *provisional* conceptual Rangtong lesser view it becomes possible for the yogin to finally accomplish the profundity of the *definitive* trans-conceptual nondual esoteric Shentong ultimate view.

So, Dölpopa's syncretic view considered even the "provisional teaching" of the Prasangika Rangtongpas on an ultimately

nonexistent buddha nature as a mere relative truth. It is the very same buddha nature as the definitive Shentong teaching and so the two traditions share in the truth of buddha nature while differing substantially on its precise interpretation, and on its final ontological status—nominal relative, or nondual ultimate.

Several Kagyu and Nyingma lamas have told, while rejecting Jonang Shentong as eternalistic, that Rangtong and Shentong are not ultimately contradictory, but are in one way or another commensurate. That prior and present complementary unity is our repeating underlying theme in this heady prolix scholastic Shentong/Rangtong critical dialectic.

So, for Shentong, although the causal dimension of phenomenal Relative Truth (*samvriti*) is surely illusory, yet there is nondual, acausal ultimate Ground which somehow 'exists'—always present primordial love-wisdom gnosis Presence of our indwelling nondual transcendent Buddha Nature of Mind, ultimate *dharmakaya* Ground of Being.

*Yes. While our concepts and beliefs* about *ultimate buddha nature are indeed delusory, nondual timeless, formless, selfless ultimate Buddha Nature of Mind—bright indwelling primordial love-wisdom Presence of Ground of Being—is always already present and awake at the human spiritual Heart, whether or not we choose to accept it. That vast reality is nondual Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen.*

While not the primary view the Nyingma School, many great Nyingma lamas have embraced Shentong. Among them are 20th century Nyingma Supreme Head the late H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, Kalu Rinpoche, and Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche who also offered an integration of Shentong with Rangtong Prasangika. We have seen that the great 19th century *rimé* master and polymath Jamgön Mipham composed texts both in praise of, and critical of some

interpretations of the Shentong view. We shall address further his putative ambivalence below.

We saw above Mipham's penetrating defense of Shentong in *The Lion's Roar.* I dared to argue there that Ju Mipham was, like his master Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, finally a Shentongpa who managed a prodigious "coalescence" of reconciliation of views of tantric nondual Dzogchen with sutric conceptual, logical Madhyamaka Rangtong. That synthesis is decidedly not a traditional Nyingma school view which conceived nondual Dzogchen as superior to its foundation in causal conceptual Madhyamaka Prasangika Rangtong.

We can now see the possibility of a coalescent unity of nondual Dzogchen View and its direct *rigpa* gnosis wisdom Presence of intrinsic Primordial Awareness Ground itself, with the clarifying conceptual critical 'pure reason' of Madhyamaka Prasangika. Do we not require both? Does not a full human understanding require both voices of our *noetic cognitive doublet*—both objective conceptual cognition and perfectly subjective 'spiritual' cognition; both knowledge and wisdom; both Science and Spirit? *[Appendix A]* The great ecumenical *rimé* mind of Ju Mipham has demonstrated that *ultimately* Buddha's Two Truths are embraced and subsumed in a prior and present indivisible *nondual one truth unity* while remaining *relatively* conceptually distinct. Yet, Longchenpa has told that *nothing* in this display of samsara and nirvana arising in 'basic space' *ultimately* exists! *[Chöying Dzöd]*

Ju Mipham's esoteric unification of these ostensibly opposed philosophical views is grounded in his profound "*Gnosis of Coalescence"* (*yuganaddha*), prior and present nondual *one truth unity* of the Buddha's Two Truths—relative and ultimate reality dimensions—and of Primordial Wisdom (*yeshe*, gnosis) and its emptiness/*shunyata* primeval Ground of Being. Thus did Ju Mipham support the 'coalescent' nondual *one truth unity* of the

Buddha's "form and emptiness"—phenomenal form and its primordial emptiness Ground—boundless *kosmos* whole itself.

From the *Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra* arises Buddha's 'Fourfold Profundity': "Form is empty; emptiness is form. Form is not other than emptiness; emptiness is not other than form." Far from emptiness as an absolute negation of all phenomena, as in the Gelug Prasangika Rangtong view, Mipham's emptiness is a fluent complementary "coalescence" of Buddha's Two Truths that are form and its emptiness Ground. Mipham thus brings a refreshing non-sectarian ecumenical *rimé* clarity to that *one truth unity* of these foundational Two Truths of Buddha's great nondual teaching as it arises in tantric Ati Dzogchen View and Practice.

*Mipham's penetrating wisdom synthesis represents a union of the Second Turning of Buddha's Wheel of Dharma, Rangtong Prajnaparamita sutras, and the Third Turning, Shentong Buddha nature in the Yogachara sutras. Both of these views may be seen as definitive, and together they provide a centrist 'middle path' between the 'metaphysical extremes' of nihilistic absolute nonexistence of phenomena (Absolute Idealism), and the 'eternalism', substantialism and essentialism of absolute phenomenal existence (Metaphysical Scientific Realism/Materialism).*

Yes, many Kagyu and Nyingma lamas have embraced forms of the Shentong view, often a syncretic view that integrates Rangtong Prasangika with Shentong Svatantrika Yogachara. These include the Karmapas, Jamgön Kongtrul, Dilgo Khentse Rinpoche, Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, Kalu Rinpoche, and Adzom Paylo Rinpoche.

*Jamgön Kongtrul told that "Shentong Madhyamaka" is the ultimate and highest view—the Vajrayana Third Turning of Buddha's Wheel of the Dharma.* It best represents Buddha's

highest teaching and "the primordial wisdom of emptiness free of defiling conceptual elaborations". In Shentong ultimate wisdom of all the buddhas is finally fully established. If that is not so, Ultimate Truth essence and nature of our appearing Relative Truth spacetime realities would amount to little more than a conceptual absolutist nihilistic nothingness.

*Some Difficult Scholastic History.* The Jonang school Shentong view of Dölpopa and other Shentongpas was banned by the prevailing Rangtong Gelug School authority in the 17th century. Vigorous suppression of Shentong was also practiced by Kagyu and Nyingma acolytes. Most fortunately the 19th century ecumenical *rimé* Tibetan Buddhist renaissance witnessed a renewal of centrist Shentong view, now being taught by high lamas in Nyingma, Kagyu, and Sakya lineages, but not Rangtong Prasangika Gelug lineage of Tsongkhapa. Gelug H.H. Dalai Lama (2000) has now embraced that *rimé* view.

Both sides of this vital but too often tedious Buddhist scholastic dialectic understand the *concept* of the ultimate Buddha Nature of Mind (along with relative appearing phenomenal existence) as always deceptive while still relatively conventionally existent. Yet, Svatantrika Yogachara Shentong accepted a *nondual metaphysic* that affirms an ultimate intrinsic buddha nature that is not negated in the radical emptiness *epoche* reduction or 'absolute negation' by Rangtong Madhyamaka Prasangika philosophy, as we have just seen. We have also seen that Madhyamaka Prasangika Rangtong (Gelug School) views buddha nature, along with everything else, as ultimately empty of intrinsic existence. And yes, Middle Way Madhyamaka Shentong (e.g. Svatantrika Yogachara school) often sees this as flagrant 'nihilism', while Rangtong sees the Shentong Ultimate

Truth existence of buddha nature as blatant substantialist, essentialist para-Hindu 'eternalism'.

*Review of the View.* Rangtongpas—Gelugpa School of Tsongkapa—hold that not even our innermost nondual buddha nature is *ultimately* existent. Empty Shentong buddha nature is not empty enough. Even our intrinsic buddha nature and our metaphysic of the unity of the *Trikaya of the Base* that is the three buddha bodies of Reality, and of Primordial Wisdom (*yeshe, jnana,* gnosis) are as well in the correct ultimate View merely delusional conceptual Relative Truth imputations. Not even buddha nature survives the radical Gelug Rangtong emptiness *reductio ad absurdum* reduction to a nihilist ultimate nonexistence. That *reductio* position denies that it takes any position of its own. Its goal is merely to show that its opponent's view is contradictory. No additional existential statement may be ventured.

Well, asks Lama Mipham, "Do the Madhyamikas [Prasangika] have a position or not." Mipham here defers to Longchenpa's rescue of Prasangika. During meditation and during debate with philosophical adversaries Prasangika asserts no position of its own as to the existence or nonexistence of anything at all; but in 'post-meditation' it affirms the relative-conventional realities of common-sense logic and ordinary human perception.

Still, for Ju Mipham, the nondual dimension of Ultimate Truth transcends the conceptual false dichotomy of relative form separate from its ultimate Ground; and of metaphysical extremes of absolute existence or of absolute nonexistence of all phenomenal reality.

*For Shentongpas the Rangtong View entirely misses the point that the ultimate wisdom gnosis of buddha nature cannot be deceived.* In the final analysis it ultimately abides as the very nondual Primordial Buddha Nature of Mind that it is *ipso facto*. Here, once again, only as a *conceptual object* of human inference can our inner

buddha nature, or its emptiness, be authentically reduced to an absolute negation of nonexistence. Yet the authentic *subject* of these two concepts can be directly experienced by the buddhas and *mahasiddha* masters. Recall that for Longchenpa, "Ultimate emptiness is the absence of subject and object."

*Therefore, the Mahayana emptiness of Buddha's Second Turning of the Wheel of Dharma constitutes for Shentongpas a profound 'provisional' teaching, while nondual buddha nature of the Third Turning is seen as the Buddha's 'definitive' ultimate teaching.*

Thus, broadly construed, Shentong 'extrinsic emptiness' sees the precious qualities of our indwelling buddha nature, *full bodhi* of primordial buddha love-wisdom mind, with the three *kayas*, as empty of *phenomenal* essence yes, but not empty of its own trans-conceptual nondual buddha nature or buddha essence, as we have herein so often seen.

*Buddha nature cannot be empty of its own primordial basic space dharmakaya Ground! How so? In the ultimate View it always already* is *that very Ground. Buddha nature* is *the nondual primordial purity (kadak) that cannot be empty of its own manifest spontaneous presence (lhundrub). These two are ipso facto an ontic prior and phenomenally present one truth unity.*

Hence, for Shentongpas buddha nature cannot be logically or metaphysically negated and reduced to ultimate nonexistence via Nagarjuna's *conceptual absolute* Prasangika Rangtong emptiness *epoche*/reduction. Ju Mipham understood this well.

Just so, for Shentong 'extrinsic emptiness' the precious qualities of our buddha nature exist ultimately, while the apparitional phenomenal realities of our relative conventional samsaric being here in space and time exist only relatively and are indeed ultimately nonexistent. Once again, Rangtong 'intrinsic

emptiness' sees everything—all arising reality, even our intrinsic buddha nature itself—as ultimately nonexistent.

Perhaps I belabor that point. The false dichotomy: does buddha nature *ultimately* exist at nondual spiritual Heart (*hridyam, nyingpo, kokoro*) of the human being, beyond our *relative* concepts and beliefs about it; or is it mere Relative Truth established, imputed, and reified by human relative conceptual minds? No small matter is at stake here.

*The highest or subtlest nondual views of 'metaphysically identical' 2nd century through 8th century Nyingma Dzogchen and 11th/12th century Kagyu Essence Mahamudra rise above such scholastic dialectical ultimately false dichotomies and altogether transcend our much-belabored dualistic scholastic critical concepts and beliefs* about *existence and nonexistence (medpa).*

In Tibetan Secret Mantra View of Ati Dzogchen our indwelling buddha nature buddha mind—far beyond our concepts and beliefs about it—embraces, subsumes, pervades, and is not other than 'basic space' (*chöying*) of nondual primordial *dharmakaya* 'groundless' Ground of Being, self-liberated self-arising knowing-feeling awareness of *That (tathata);* the Path which reveals *That*; and Fruition/Result, compassion Energy/Action of *That.* That is ultimate View of 'highest', subtlest acausal nondual Buddhist teaching: Dzogchen, Essence Mahamudra, Madhyamaka of the Definitive Meaning, Saijojo Zen (*mujodo no taigen*) which are, on the accord of H.H. Dalai Lama, all equal with respect to the *ultimate* Fruition/Result that is buddhahood—while they differ a bit as to their *relative* practices that may realize it.

It is told by Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche and many other lamas that Nyingma nondual Ati Dzogchen and nondual Kagyu Essence Mahamudra are 'metaphysically identical', and perforce transcend yet embrace the conceptual dualistic doctrinaire dialectics of the Rangtong/Shentong deliberation. Indeed, we

have seen that the Rangtong causal Madhyamaka Prasangika view is the causal conceptual foundation of acausal nondual Maha Ati Dzogchen view and praxis which transcends and embraces it.

*The truth of the matter is directly experiential. "Primordial intrinsic awareness itself is absolute guru—Ultimate Truth" [Jigme Lingpa] That utterly acausal nondual noetic Presence of the Ground dwells at the subtle human Heart, above and beyond our dualistic cause and effect concepts and beliefs about it.*

This 'highest' subtlest trans-conceptual, nondual, non-causal, non-deceptive definitive teaching is in its essence free of dualistic concept and belief. It deracinates often misleading relative causal conceptual cognition. It admits no logical or scientific proof, and so is not subject to logical nor hermeneutical refutation. Highest *Atiyoga* transcends yet includes dualistic objective Physical Science. It abides in realm of Contemplative Science, an integral aspect of our emerging East-West Science of Consciousness. Contemplative Science does not limit itself to mere empirical cause and effect objective conceptual 'scientific' knowledge. *[Ch. IV]* Rather, it utilizes both voices—objective conceptual and subjective contemplative—of our *noetic cognitive doublet*—Mipham's two "coalescent" voices of wisdom.

Direct *rigpa* transmission (*yogi pratyaksa, manngag/ upadesha*) from the luminous mindstream of the Vajra master to prepared mind of the disciple transcends all conceptual elaboration and so cannot be known through a discursive thinking mind. Yet we may *feel,* then conceptually unpack and integrate it into the whole of our compassionate View and Conduct—boundless whole of human cognitive potential. Within that nondual perfectly subjective 'dimension' we *experience* dualistic contemplative practice, which grounds the nondual direct yogic samadhi experience. As Guru Rinpoche told so long

ago, "You shall realize nondual ultimate truth only through dualistic relative truth. Practice these two as a unity."

As to the prior unity of Rangtong conceptual emptiness and Shentong nonconceptual buddha nature, we have seen that for Yogachara Shentong the conceptual reason and analysis of Rangtong Madhyamaka Prasangika is not adequate to the non-conceptual nondual direct realization of our ultimate Buddha Nature of Mind.

*The radical 'absolute negation' of inherent existence of all aspects of appearing physical and mental reality by Prasangika Rangtong—including our selfless indwelling ultimate buddha nature with its kayas and buddha qualities—is here established by 'pure reason' alone!*

O human hubris! What shall we make of a world spiritual philosophy grounded entirely in the capriciousness and coarseness of our dualistic conceptual human mind? Nondual Dzogchen View with its effortless *Wu-Wei, magom* 'nonmeditation' practice (*Ch. I*) offers a Kantianesque 'critique of pure reason' of conceptual Prasangika Madhyamaka.

Thickening the plot, we've seen that Rangtong Prasangika argues that the normalizing buddha nature of Shentong Svatantrika Yogachara, sometimes referred to as a 'Buddha Self', is but an apostate return to a metaphysical commitment to an ultimately existing Hindu *Atman* 'Supreme Self' that the Buddha rejected in favor of his selfless *anatman* 'noself'. Will this pesky scholastic dialectical conceptual conundrum never end?

## Toward a Unifying Synthesis

Yogachara Shentong Middle Way Madhyamaka Indian Nalanda University Abbot Shantarakshita (725-788) in his lapidary *Madhyamakalamkara* accomplished a remarkable synthesis of these ostensibly opposed Rangtong and Shentong

views—a kind of 'middle path' between Nagarjuna's Madhyamaka Rangtong metaphysical *ontology*, and the metaphysical Idealism of Svatantrika Madhyamaka Shentong, the *chittamatra* 'mind only' *phenomenology* of Shantarakshita's 8th century Yogachara Madhyamaka refinement of the penetrating 4th century Yogachara of Asanga and Vasabandu.

Shantarakshita's syncretic centrist version of Shentong prevailed until it was superseded by Tsongkhapa's return to classical Madhyamaka Prasangika in the 15th century dominant Gelug School which he founded. The iconoclast Jamgön Mipham utilized Shantarakshita's synthesis in what some Nyingmapas consider a decisive critique of Tsongkhapa's Prasangika view. [Pettit 1999] Dzogchen master Longchenpa (14th century) was clearly sympathetic to the Yogachara Shentong view although he did not use the term Shentong. We saw that he stated the "highest" Middle Way *scholastic* dialectic is Prasangika, the causal conceptual foundation of acausal Ultimate Truth Ati Dzogchen View and praxis. And yet, in the nondual clear mind of Lonchenpa, "In spacelike awareness...ultimate truth has never existed as anything..." Radical *prasanga* indeed.

Well then, what is the upshot of Shantarakshita's great synthesis? H.H. Dalai Lama has offered what some have seen as an imperative rendering of this centrist unifying view.

*Prasangika Madhyamaka Rangtong emptiness is the correct view of the Buddha's Ultimate Truth (paramartha satya), while Yogachara Madhyamaka Shentong buddha nature is the correct view of Buddha's Relative Truth (samvriti satya).* Thus does Yogachara Shentong *phenomenology* offer the best account of our objective relatively real conventionally appearing spacetime reality; while Tsongkhapa's Rangtong Prasangika *ontology* offers the best account of our nonconceptual, nondual ultimate reality.

*After all, Yogachara is a metaphysical presupposition about the existential status of relative phenomenal appearance, while Prasangika is an ontic metaphysical presupposition about the ultimate nature of that appearing reality.* Satisfying synthesis, or not? Let's probe a bit more deeply.

Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso suggests that Prasangika Rangtong is the "highest view in terms of conceptual analysis", and Yogachara Shentong is "the most profound view in terms of understanding nonconceptual meditation". In short, Rangtong Prasangika is best for analysis; Shentong is best for contemplative yogic practice. Rangtong is grounded in exoteric logical *'reductio ad absurdum'* human reasoning, while Shentong is grounded in esoteric direct contemplative, even nondual practice (samadh*yogi pratyaksa*). Does not the truth of the matter abide in an even higher synthesis of these two? And that is the acausal, nondual Dzogchen *Atiyoga* synthesis of this seemingly interminable Rangtong/Shentong deliberation.

Kagyu scholar-practitioner Karl Brunnhölzl holds that, for these and other reasons, the protean Svatantrika Yogachara Shentong, correctly understood, is entirely commensurate with Prasangika Madhyamaka Rangtong. *[In Praise of Dharmadhatu 2008]*

*Conceptual Prasangika Rangtong correctly points out what our appearing phenomenal realities are not; yet it is not at all clear how we human beings contemplatively directly realize such a liberating truth. Shentong ultimate buddha nature provides that, but only in the nonconceptual, acausal nondual context of highest Ati Dzogchen View and Practice. [Boaz 2020 Ch. V]*

This concludes our all too brief review of a thousand years of the Buddhist Mahayana Middle Way Madhyamaka *Rangtong/Shentong* scholastic critical dialectic.

## Buddha Nature As It Is

Now, some straight talk as to our indwelling buddha nature. Almost everyone agrees on the soteriological (salvation) importance of what is called 'buddha nature'—whether it be conceived: 1) as an *ultimate*, inherently indwelling timeless, selfless, nonconceptual, acausal, perfectly subjective nondual living *relational process*; Dzogchen *rigpa Presence* (not a mere relative objective conceptual *thing*) of *chöying* 'basic space' *ultimate dharmakaya* Primordial Ground of Being. Or 2) as an expedient step function describing the existence of a relative human *concept* about our ultimate buddha nature. The Great Perfection unifies these two voices as a prior, present nondual 'oneness'. [Semiotically, verbs represent dynamic *processes*; nouns represent objective *things*. Our concepts reify both into existing objects.]

As to my own view, I shall follow the lead of Dzogchen masters Longchenpa, Jigme Lingpa, Jamgön Mipham, Adzom Drukpa and Adzom Paylo Rinpoche. And as well the voice of Tibetan Nyingma lineage insofar as it embraces the nondual *process* of Great Perfection/Great Completeness View of 1) above as to the always already present Presence of the union of bliss and emptiness, and of clarity and emptiness in which compassionate *bodhicitta* spontaneously arises for all living beings. Yes. That interdependent process is main cause of our human happiness.

In any case one must make an often uncomfortable, less than certain *ontological commitment*! And compassionately act upon it. *Mindfulness meditation in action*. Contemplative nondual direct experiential certainty (*yogi pratyaksa*) facilitates this urgent cognitive process. The alternative is too often an uncommitted, inactive, slothful para-scholarly apathy. *From the metaphysical ontology you choose arises the life-world realities you deserve.* Buddha told long ago, "What you are is what you have been; what you

will be is what you do now." As good a definition of cause-and-effect karma as ever there was.

Be that as it may, the cognitively cloddish dualistic 'either-or' false dichotomies that mind habitually indulges must be surrendered to nonconceptual, nondual primordial wisdom gnosis (*chönyi yeshe*)—Ultimate Truth that transcends relative conceptual critical dialectics, whether scholarly, or our not so conscious mundane everyday egoic choices.

In due course and by grace we shall learn to understand our arising, often adverse Relative Truth experience from the wholly positive noself *anatman* view of Buddha's all-pervading nondual Ultimate Truth *kosmos* that embraces this fearful angry cognition of a lonely frightened separate self-ego-I wandering about in a vast meaningless cosmos.

Just so, our liberating buddha nature—Buddha's Third Turning of the Wheel of Dharma—relatively 'affirms' the enlightened human worldview that is wholly positive, yet nondual. Our common habitual pessimism, cynicism, materialism, authoritarianism and inherent human and animal suffering that inexorably arise from such an ecology of fear are quite difficult to believe and engage in light of a purely positive view of our always present buddha nature—indwelling love-wisdom mind gnosis *Presence of That*—should we choose to remain cognitively connected to it via our contemplative spiritual practice. *That is the supreme ultimate nondual View that transcends and embraces all relative conceptual views.*

Nearly everyone agrees that human 'primal ignorance' (*marigpa, avidya, ajnana, hamartia*/sin) with its negative afflictive emotions—fear-anger, hatred, grasping desire, greed, pride—is lifted and healed in already present innate buddha nature that is always this *selfless* indwelling *Presence* of our 'groundless' Ground

of Being. Without That (*tathata*) we are indeed 'poor in spirit'. Why won't we heal? Self-ego-I ignorance (*avidya, marigpa)* is the rub.

Our wondrous trans-conceptual perfect indwelling buddha essence buddha nature with all its *buddic* love-wisdom qualities is not at all diminished when expressed as the kindness of *bodhicitta* by a non-practitioner; nor is it improved by the great love and wisdom of the enlightened mindstream of a *mahasiddha*, or of a living buddha.

*In the Ati Dzogchen ultimate fruitional "Immediacy of the View"—immutable, formless, timeless, selfless, unconditioned, utterly uncontrived and beyond all causal conceptual elaboration—our innate always already indwelling buddha nature Spirit Presence is neither permanent nor impermanent, neither existent nor nonexistent, neither affirmed nor negated. That is the Atiyoga nondual View. Buddha nature always is; present here and now at the human spiritual Heart "just as it is". Our buddha heart buddha mind transcends any conceptually contrived Rangtong/Shentong distinction, or any other cognitive dichotomy or duality. It transcends all semiotic linguistic cause-and-effect judgment, affirmation, and negation. Intimations of perfection.*

Clearly this cannot be logically or empirically 'proven' by conceptual, objective 'Big Science'.

Indeed, our human cognitive dualities inherent in the semiotic nature of thinking and language are a nondual display of the natural clarity and luminosity of our innate buddha heart buddha mind—*ultimate* primordial nondual indivisibility of naked, empty cognizance/awareness and living compassionate *bodhicitta*—"perfect exactly as it is", above and beyond (*paröl*) our *relative* dualistic dialectical critical concepts and beliefs about it.

Our innate Ground Buddha Nature of Mind is the directly experienced empty 'basic space' (*chöying, dharmadhatu*) of original

formless, timeless, selfless primordial *dharmakaya* 'groundless' Ground in whom (Adi Buddha Samantabhadra) this all arises and is instantiated. That nondual Ultimate Truth buddha nature love-wisdom gnosis (*yeshe, jnana*) abounds with all 'good' qualities and attributes of the essence and nature of all the buddhas in every cosmic reality dimension of vast boundless whole (*gzhi rigpa*) that is nondual *kosmos* Ground of Being itself.

That innate indwelling cognizant wakefulness/awareness of our ultimate Buddha Nature of Mind—our 'supreme identity' of the 'supreme source' of Being Itself—transcends, enfolds, and subsumes unfolding spacetime causes and conditions. So, it cannot be a *causal* product or condition of our conventional spacetime dimension of Buddha's Relative Truth.

Yes. Our nondual always present *buddic* 'wakefulness' is quite beyond our semiotic linguistic concepts and beliefs about it. Rather, it abides naturally, beyond the inherent causal limit of a relative knowing subject and its objects of perception and conception—the false dichotomy of a cognizing subject inherently separate from its perceived objects—dreadful subject-object split. *"Emptiness is the absence of subject and object."* [Longchenpa]

That nonconceptual nondual View (*darshana, lta ba*) constitutes our always present lucid wakefulness—bright numinous Presence of invariant nondual *one truth unity* (*dzög*) of Buddha's monumental Two Truths that constitute infinite boundless whole/ground of Reality Being Itself. We awaken to that great truth upon life force *prana* spirit (*Lungta*) of each mindful breath as we place our awareness here. Both the Buddha and the Christ told, that bright quiescent happiness Presence that we seek is always already present deep within us. Great joy!

Just so, on the accord of the buddhas, buddha nature, beyond any grand name, is the actual identity nature and design of every living being—infinite 'primordial purity' (*kadag*) that pervades all

arising spacetime phenomena as it manifests as *lhundrub* Presence (*rigpa, vidya*) of That (*tathata*). Yes. For we human beings all appearances, even negative afflictive emotions, are manifestations of inherently 'primordially pure' *kadak* love-wisdom Ground. From *That* naturally arises 'spontaneously present' *lhundrub* compassionate energy/responsiveness of the *one truth unity* of Buddha's prodigious Two Truths—relative form and ultimate boundless emptiness whole.

How is this so? All arising finite spacetime form is but adornment of infinite *"Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen"*, primordial 'basic space' (*chöying*) *dharmakaya* emptiness Ground, "perfect exactly as it is", utterly invariant through all human cognitive reference frames as it spontaneously arises and adorns this 'natural timeless awareness'. This stuff of *relative* quantum light-form-energy ($E=mc^2 \approx \Psi$ *wave)* is *ultimately* 'primordially pure' as it arises through the multiplicity of spacetime Relative Truth. That is *immediate* nondual Dzogchen Fruitional View gently 'pointed out' *(ngotrö)* in loving wisdom of the Dzogchen Vajra master.

Our buddha nature does not cause, act, function, or provide a nice comfy antidote to adverse afflictive phenomena. Nor does assiduous dharma practice cause or create or produce our buddha nature for *That* nondual purity is not an object or thing subject to cause, creation, action, production, or any self-ego-I happiness seeking strategy. In the Nondual View, our buddhahood does not have a cause. It is 'primordially present' from the very beginning.

Hence, on accord of the Buddha, our buddha nature is innately present within every living being. It is inherent in the sacred process of Life Itself. Longchenpa reminds us, it is utterly useless to *seek* our always present buddha nature. It's already here, now. Within the human being we *directly* experience it (*yogi pratyaksa*), beyond (*paröl*) our concepts and beliefs about it, that bright lucid clarity and peaceful "great ease" that is nondual Primordial Presence of our innate Buddha Nature of Mind. How? Mindful 'placement of awareness/attention'

upon it as it rides *prana/pneuma* spirit breath in the gut, then naturally ascends up the chakras upon subtle central vertical channel. Here, negative emotions cannot prevail. They are perforce spontaneously consumed on fiery mindful *shamatha* out-breath. With patience, *thinking*—negative or positive—shall free itself upon the prana breath.

Meanwhile, compassionate practice—for example *tonglen* and basic 'compassion meditation' (*Chapter VIII*)—cultivates our sharing and natural expression of Buddha Presence with suffering living beings trying to survive in this adventitious *samsara* of relative spacetime existence. Arya Nagarjuna told, "There is not the slightest difference between [relative] samsara and [ultimate] nirvana." Two Truths unity. What a relief *That* is!

[*Chaos Theory*—the "butterfly effect"—has demonstrated in a relative objective scientific cognitive modality that the "deterministic initial conditions" of the seemingly random utter chaos of relative samsara is, in a greater view, an underlying prior holistic interconnected interdependent (*pratitya samutpada*) natural, even orderly relational *process*.]

Well, how precisely shall we awaken to this wonder that is our indwelling buddha nature? On the accord of Buddha Gautama Shakyamuni this prodigious all-embracing Buddha Nature of Mind may be directly experienced by *choosing to rest* in the inherent natural Great Perfection of our busy distracted mind precisely as it is now—to 'let being be as it is'. That is the 'innermost secret' teaching given by the Buddha to his disciples of the 'highest spiritual acumen'. That nondual teaching was revealed to us in Buddha's Third Turning of the Wheel of Dharma—Indo-Tibetan Vajrayana Secret Mantra arising as nondual acausal Ati Dzogchen, the Great Perfection—Great Completion of the Mahayana Causal Vehicle.

In Dzogchen tradition we see, that trans-conceptual process as the 'naked open awareness' of *atiyoga magom* 'nonmeditation'—effortless, spontaneous, non-goal directed, not

correcting *Wu-Wei*—natural, luminous stream of being here awake. [More on Dzogchen nonmeditation below.]

We auspiciously enter in this quiescent mindstream of ours—selfless, lucent Primordial Presence of *That* (*tathata*)—by simultaneously engaging both voices of our human cognitive potential: objective conceptual form, and subjective contemplative emptiness—union of Buddha's Two Truths. Recall, "Form is empty; emptiness is form." And yes, Padmasambhava told, "You shall accomplish ultimate truth only by way of relative truth. Practice them as one."

**Guided Meditation: The Open Secret of Human Happiness**

Whether or not you have contemplatively discovered, beyond your concepts and beliefs about it, the always already present *Presence* of timeless *primordial intrinsic awareness itself* that is your innate indwelling buddha nature—by whatever holy name—let us do so for this brief eternal moment now. Buddha nature peace and happiness is always present now as a conscious mindful *choice* of your 'placement of attention' upon that selfless bright Presence as it rides the life force prana breath. Now gently place your sense of self-ego-I in awareness background.

1) *Give Thanks* for the great gift of your rare and precious life exactly as it is here and now—adversity and all. Pray that all living beings may experience happiness and the causes of happiness; and that they be free of suffering and the causes of suffering. Abide "brief moments many times"—day and night—in this perpetual state of thanksgiving.

2) *Placement of Attention.* Briefly expel the stale breath nine times. Place your conscious attention/awareness upon the life

force *prana/lung* spirit breath in your belly *(lungdang).* Breathe normally. *Feel* directly your own clear bright Awareness Presence—without thinking about it.

3) *Mantra.* Now begin mantra: *OM AH HUM,* or other love-wisdom mantra. Unify with your Guru's mindstream thus: *AH AH AH. Feel* luminous Presence of *That* in your *sambhogakaya* 'upper room' above your crown chakra at the crown of your head. Feel your crown center open as purifying *thigle* deity essence descends and pervades your entire body-mind. From the life force prana in your belly experience selfless bright purity of your subtle central channel.

4) *Light Up Your Chakras.* From the *hara* or *dō* center in your belly place your attention briefly on the White *AH* at your *hridyam/nyingpo* heart chakra. Now your throat center (voice, speech, *vishuddha*). Now your 'third eye' *ajna* center, prefrontal cortex behind your forehead. Now your crown center. 'Let there be light'. *Rest* here in Primordial Awareness Ground of Being.

*Now close your eyes and raise your eyebrows.* This *'asana'* instantly produces peaceful alpha, 'waking theta', and a bit of gamma brain rhythm. That is the 'neuroscience of meditation'. *Feel* this subtle stirring, lifting, and peace in your forebrain. Now throughout your entire body and mind, right down to the subatomic level of your physical being, and the subtle and causal levels of your spirit being. Now relax all such concepts and beliefs. No need to *believe* any of it. It's above and beyond belief. *Feel* that peaceful bright spirit *Presence* throughout your body and mind.

*Open your eyes.* Again, move your awareness to your "great bliss crown wheel". Without effort, feel your crown center open. Now *yidam* deity, or your spiritual master, or the Buddha, or your own Buddha Presence dissolves and enters in your crown chakra and downward throughout your head and neck, chest, upper and

lower back, gut, pelvic area, arms and hands, feet, indeed throughout your entire body and mind, all the way down into our Mother Earth. Feel your fearless stability deep in Earth. That is your *full body scan*. *Rest* effortlessly and profoundly in the *dharmakaya* 'basic space' of that luminous numinous Buddha Presence of the very Ground of Being that you are here and now. "The basic space of all phenomena is naturally occurring timeless awareness—awakened mind". [Longchenpa] Who Am I? That bright Presence I Am—always already present and awake.

5) *Energy Focus and Release.* Now acutely focus your healing prana breath energy wherever you feel a physical or emotional obstruction to its life energy flow: tension, pain, fear/anxiety, anger, depression, grief, confusion, pride, drowsiness. Forcefully exclaim ***PHAT!*** Blockage released! Surrender it all on the out-breath. Easy. Relax. Enjoy clear, blissful peace throughout your entire body-mind. *Rest* quietly here in the yogin's clarity and bliss for a few moments.

6) *Nonmeditation (magom).* Relax and rest your busy mind just as it is here and now, without following thoughts and feelings into a past or a future; without *trying* to block thinking and feeling; without *fixing* anything or *trying* to meditate; without *doing* anything at all. Past is but a present memory. Future is but a present anticipation. *Simply be present here now*. You are not here *seeking* peace, clarity, or happy experience (*nyams*). You *desire* nothing at all. For this timeless moment now you have no goal whatsoever. Non-doing *Wu-Wei.* Let your luminous mind *be* exactly as it is, adversity and all. *Peace is present in adversity. Adversity and happiness arise together*! As Buddha told so long ago, "Rest your weary mind and let being be as it is; all things are perfect exactly as they are." *Feel that happy peace now*!

Simply *observe* without evaluating or judging. Thoughts, feelings, concepts naturally arise. Well and good. No need to stop them. No need to follow them. They come and they go. They are absent and empty any substance or power that self-ego-I does not choose to bestow upon them. Simply allow whatever thought or feeling that arises now in the mind—negative or positive—to 'self-liberate' *(rangdrol)* of its own accord, like a cloud in vast empty sky, leaving no trace. Patience. It all shall pass. So *rest* now (*rigdang*) in "bare awareness in its pristine nakedness...pure expanse of space"—*Primordial Presence of Ground of Being itself.* Feel *That* now for a few moments. Relax. Rest. Enjoy.

Now *rigpa* 'nonmeditation' becomes compassionate *bodhicitta* action/conduct. Mindfulness in Action! *A la la ho!*

7) *OM AH HUM.* Return to your breath. *Be* awareness of quiescent *prana* spirit breath in your body. Breathe normally. In this quiet space abides peace beyond all understanding. *Feel* living Presence of *OM* behind your forehead. Your Voice is *AH* at your throat. Your essential nature is *HUM*—'supreme identity' of Awareness Ground of *OM*. *OM AH HUM*—three *kayas*/buddha bodies of being. *Rest* in blissful pure Presence.

8) *Your Buddha Nature.* Now you are aware, without thinking about it, that you rest in selfless, open, luminous, lucid *rigpa* Awareness—very Ground of Being. Peace and bliss of *That* (*tathata*). *You are now aware of the vast timeless, selfless, boundless space of your awareness*. Self-centered self-reference ('selfing') is absent. *Feel* clear light luminous knowing-feeling *certainty* of this Presence as your 'original wakefulness'. *That* is Primordial Awareness Wisdom. Whatever arises, 'let being be as it is'. No need to judge. Told Jigme Lingpa: "Simply observe...Intrinsic

awareness is absolute Guru—Ultimate Truth." That knowing-feeling love-wisdom continuity of awareness is innermost Presence of *That* always present—awareness background or foreground, even in midst of all these self-ego-I *distractions*. Your 'self' has now discovered freedom from itself. *Now self is your ally.*

Rest quietly here for as long as you like in love-wisdom Awareness *Presence* that you always are now. *That* is the profound mindful connection to your very own essential buddha nature. Practice it "brief moments many times", day and night. Now that you know, get up and do some good. All wisdom Masters have told it. That will make you happy, not in the future, but here now.

Engage this essential mindfulness practice from 30 seconds to 30 minutes. "Brief moments, many times." Make it your own. Adapt it. *Feel* that happy Presence you are. Easy. Rest. Enjoy.

Christians: 'Buddha nature' *rigpa* Presence is *christos*: indwelling Presence of Christ. *The Brief Course* practice appears below as *Ch. VIII.* Find this *Guided Meditation* in *Appendix B.*

**Refuge, Meditative Stability, Fruition**

To awaken to Ati Dzogchen Fruitional View—"That happiness you seek is always already present within you"—we rely on the Guru's compassion and love-wisdom of the holy dharma. We *choose* to practice mindfulness, and 'take refuge' in the Three Jewels and *dharmakaya* Ground. Now we recognize, pacify, stabilize, then *realize* present body, voice, and mind of all the buddhas. Yes, told Buddha, *"Selfless noself is the true refuge of self."* "Wonder of wonders", that Guru Yoga Refuge is already your love-wisdom buddha mind (*buddhajnana*), your present, indwelling spacious buddha nature *Presence of the Ground*.

As Buddhist Middle Way Madhyamaka founder Arya Nagarjuna told, "It is present and accomplished from the very beginning; to rest here without seeking, that is the meditation." That is the Fruitional View. Our Buddha Presence is always already present here now. No need to seek it elsewhere—in the past or future. Past is but a present memory. Future is but a present anticipation. We cannot *become* happy in the future; but we can *be* happy in this present moment now. We do have this choice. *Mahasukaho!* Blissful bright clarity. Great peace!

As you begin to tame the 'wild horse of the mind'—breath by mindful breath—obsessive 'self-referential thinking' ('selfing') begins to 'self-liberate' (*rangdrol*) at the very instant of its arising as you learn to relax into, then *rest* in that empty 'basic space' (*dharmadhatu, chöying*) of phenomena—peace and yogi's bliss, your 'supreme identity' Presence of that 'supreme source' *dharmakaya* Ground—natural wakefulness as Buddha Nature of Mind.

'You' begin to notice that you are happy, even as inexorable adversity continues to arise in your busy life. Your hopeful, idealized *expectations* about dharma practice are gone.

*Should you desire to enter in more deeply—beyond concepts about self and noself, Longchenpa (1998 p.236) told that from common dualistic 'meditation' spontaneously arises "natural meditative stability of meditative absorption"—nondual "meditation without support" of dualistic deity mantra practice. "Meditative absorption is the supreme state of natural abiding...natural meditative stability pervades awareness." Nonmeditation, magom. Let it be so now.*

From the ultimate Awareness 'Ground of Being' naturally arises Longchenpa's "responsiveness"—compassionate *bodhicitta* response to human and animal suffering—thought, intention, prayer, and engaged action/conduct for benefit of all living beings, including our Mother Earth. And that *Relative Bodhicitta* is a portal into its *Ultimate Bodhicitta* Ground of Being itself.

That 'wisdom of kindness' engaged *action* is after all the open secret of your own human happiness. The 'two limbs' of the Buddha's teaching: *Love* guided by *Wisdom*. Love as compassionate *bodhicitta*. Wisdom as *relative* discriminating wisdom (*prajna*) arising in nondual *ultimate* Primordial Wisdom (*yeshe, jnana, gnosis*) of the boundless infinite expanse of original Ground of Being itself (*gzhi rigpa*) in whom this all arises. That (*tathata, suchness*) is your 'innermost secret' buddha nature. As Guru Rinpoche Padmasambhava told, "Keep your view as high as the sky; and your deeds as fine as barley flour...You accomplish Ultimate Truth only through the means of Relative Truth. Practice these two as a unity."

As we continuously practice nondual 'refuge' we can now *feel* our buddha nature buddha mind in midst of the scattered activity of our mostly negative concept mind—without imputing and reifying any difference—'*samadhi* of certainty' enters in and adventitious negative thinking and narcissistic "selfing" is 'self-liberated' (*rangdrol*) at the very instant of its arising—before we act on it, creating negative karma, and suffering.

Great Completion/Perfection clarity/bliss! Stop and *feel* that just for this brief moment now. Stop and smell the roses. Our indwelling buddha mind *Presence* has a very subtle scent of roses. "*Ehi Passika*: Come and see for yourself". [Shakyamuni Buddha]

*Now stop reading and feel Presence directly for 60 seconds.* We are told by the wise that 'success' of our meditation practice of the Path is "brief moments, many times". Let Ground Awareness be a bright continuity of your present personal awareness, your present mind state. When it's not, breathe consciously and briefly *place your attention/awareness* upon the *prana* spirit life force in your body. Remain close to your breath. It's always present. Yes, told the Buddha, "Rest your weary mind and let being be as it is; all things are perfect exactly as they are." You cannot fix samsara. Let it be. *Rest* in profound peace of empty, non-doing *Wu Wei*.

## Brief Introduction to Nondual Fruitional 'Immediacy of the View'

This present moment intimacy of our indwelling enlightened buddha mind was expressed in the lovely prose of the great 16th century Ch'an master Hakuin Ekaku:

> From the beginning all beings are Buddha...
> Nirvana peace is right here now. As we turn inward
> and see our true nature, that self now is no-self, our
> form now is no-form, our thought now no-thought...
> This earth where we now stand is the lotus pure land,
> and this very body the body of Buddha.

Sublime. The Promised Land is Earth— here and now! In this nondual ultimate Fruitional View no yogic *effort* is required. No conceptual thinking is required. No *seeking* something greater is required. Yes, Arya Nagarjuna told long ago, "It is present and accomplished from the very beginning." "That happiness you seek is already present within you." [Jesus the Christ] That is nondual fruitional "immediacy of the view". Here we quite naturally effortlessly surrender the foolish drama of our fruitless happiness seeking strategies as our future-looking goals now become moment to moment practice itself. "*Make your goal the path.*"

Indeed, all that you think and do is 'practice'. Buddha's boundless emptiness of the mind and your own innermost buddha nature are no longer merely conceptual. Yes, *That* (*tathata*) is who you are now—your 'supreme identity' of that 'supreme source'—primordial 'basic space' (*chöying*) of *dharmakaya* 'groundless' Ground of Being. You do have this *choice* to connect. Again, don't *believe* it! It's far beyond belief and your concepts about it. As Buddha told, "*Ehi Passika*: Come and see for yourself." Healthy skepticism indeed.

That then is the noetic nondual (body mind spirit subject-object unity) ultimate *process* of liberating the relative conflicted mind into its own prior and present nondual Ground Nature of Mind. Yes, as Buddha told so long ago, "Rest your weary mind and let being be as it is; all things are perfect exactly as they are." That is the 'Fruitional View' that you have now accomplished. Indeed, it is always "already accomplished from the very beginning". [Nagarjuna] Who am I? What is my mind? That buddha heart buddha mind is who you already are; 'supreme source' of your mind. *That* is your mind. *Tat Tvam Asi!* That I Am!

Therefore, this is the 'skillful method' that assures your awakening *now* to already present realization of your 'innermost secret' *nondual* buddha love-wisdom mind. Dualistic perception perforce arises within nondual 'oneness' of that singular spacious Ground of Being. Always *feel* that! Longchenpa told, "All things are pure by nature, spontaneously present, nondual. They arise within a single basic space...they do not, in essence, exist separately." And now you have nondual yogic certainty of it! *Feel your joyous Presence of the Ground of that vast whole for this timeless moment now.*

At the instant of receiving your very subtle introduction to the Ground Buddha Nature of Mind by the Vajra master—here on your cushion, perhaps from across the sea—you no longer need seek it elsewhere, in material or spiritual stuff, nor in a nonexistent past or future.

*That happiness you seek is always already present within your ordinary mind!* Wondrous paradox of nondual Awareness. And now you know and feel it with trans-conceptual nondual certainty. You now know what to do with your life! Give that *bodhicitta* gift to others as much as you can. *Happiness Itself.*

*Seeking already present happiness to avoid suffering is itself a kind of suffering.* Once again, you cannot *become* happy in some exalted *future* enlightened mind state. But you can *be* happy here

and now. Yes. "That happiness you seek is already present within you." [Jesus the Christ] That assiduous practice of the Path, with selfless *bodhicitta*, is your skillful means for a happy life simply being here in often unrelenting adversity. *A La La Ho!*

In my own not especially special case, upon the light touch to my forehead of my root Guru's fingers I instantly realized my clear lucid (*ösel*) joyous identity with *buddic* Primordial Awareness Ground of Being that is true nature of my own mind. The details are 'secret', but that great truth has grown and matured in my heart and mind for thirty years. My noetic nondual (subject-object unity) *ultimate* 'Big Mind' is revealed with great clarity and bliss. And yes, many happy years of my *relative* 'Small Mind' unfolding and grounding that *ultimate* love-wisdom gnosis buddha mind have naturally followed. Great gratitude!

My mind, your mind, any human mind, and the luminous mind essence of all the buddhas of the Three Times (past, present, future) abides in that eternal *relationship* of noetic, trans-conceptual, nondual identity of your mind with its always already present Presence of essential Ground Buddha Nature of Mind. That is Great Perfection Fruitional View that your Vajra Master transmits directly to you, often when you least expect it. It may be quite subtle with little or no idealized emotional drama. So, receive it often. How? Quit expectations. Remain close to your mindful prana breath in the belly; and at the Heart, throat, forebrain, and your "great bliss crown wheel" along your subtle central vertical channel. Your *goal* is that always present *practice*!

Now unify your heart-mind with clarity and bliss of the mindstream of your Dzogchen master via the ancient mantra *OM AH HUM.* Please do it now for a few moments. *[Appendix B]*

[The Mahayana and its Vajrayana source texts on the 'basic space' of buddha nature (*tathagatagarbha*) are: *Lankavatara Sutra; Tathagatagarbha Sutra; Mahaparinirvana Sutra;* and the

*Ratnagotravibhaga.* These foundational texts emphasize a profound liberation phenomenology over against dry dualistic dialectical philosophical concerns with emptiness/*shunyata* and noself/*anatman,* and all the *concepts* about buddha nature of Buddhist scholastic critical dialectics. Depend entirely upon your Dzogchen master's guidance.]

## Shamatha Calm Abiding and Dzogchen

Whether we name it *sati, zhine, smrti, bhavana*—mindful *shamatha* (*Ch. VII*) begins with conscious *placement of attention/awareness* upon the foundational 'object of meditation', usually the life force *prana/lung* spirit breath in the belly. That gentle, patient, diligent, objective, conscious 'placement of attention' instantly reconnects you to your spiritual home—*nonobjective* 'basic space' (*chöying*) of perfectly subjective timeless nondual *dharmakaya* Primordial Ground of Being *(kadak)* as it spontaneously manifests *(lhundrub presence)* in time as *tukje* quantum light-energy-matter *($E=mc^2$).* Bright lucid "Oneness"—harmless happy *Presence of That* (*tathata*)—arising and abiding in all-embracing *Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen*.

[The Mahayana Buddhist source texts for *shamatha* calm abiding *(Ch. VII)* include Indian Buddhist master Kamalashila's *Bhavanakrama*, the Buddha's own *Satipatthana* Sutra and his *Anapanasati* Sutra, and the *Arya Ratnamegha* Sutra. Good ancillary reading indeed.]

*Shamatha* calm abiding meditation is, for Indian Buddhist Mahayana and Tibetan Vajrayana, the foundation and necessary prerequisite for the 'analytic penetrating insight' of 'clear seeing' *vipashyana*. The present union of these two prepare body and mind to receive nondual Dzogchen teaching from the Vajra master. A calm quiescent mind is required for Dzogchen practice.

During the 'nine stages of *shamatha*' (*Ch.VII*), *vipashyana* and mindful *shamatha* are naturally practiced together and so constitute a unity that prepares for the profundity of Buddha's *one truth unity* (*dzög*) of his Two Truths—relative form and its ultimate boundless emptiness *dharmakaya* 'groundless Ground'. *Shamatha* engages the 7th discipline of Buddha's Eightfold Path to the cessation of human suffering, and so to our already present compassionate harmless happiness. [Boaz 2020 *Ch. II*]

We are advised by the wise that the 'attainment of *shamatha*'—its nine stages—should not be considered the *full bodhi* of Buddhist enlightenment. Rather, it provides mindful preparation for the final stages of Buddha's noble Eightfold Path—Dzogchen and Essence Mahamudra. It serves to relieve much pain and suffering, and offers profound peace, clarity, and yogi's bliss that utterly surpasses mere conceptual understanding.

*Just so, the Buddha told that shamatha "mindfulness of breathing" does not sever the root cause of suffering that is 'primal ignorance' (marigpa, avidya, ajnana). Yet it prepares the contemplative foundation for the eighth yogic wisdom discipline of his Eightfold Path. In Tibetan Buddhism that stage engages Ati Dzogchen kadak (trekchö) Ground, and lhundrub (tögal) manifest Presence of that Ground. We discover, then realize* That *in the nondual Great Perfection fruitional teaching.*

In all cases of *shamatha/vipashyana*, then of Ati Dzogchen, practice is motivated by compassionate *bodhicitta*—thought, intention, prayer, and engaged action/conduct for the benefit of all living beings—to liberate all beings from the suffering of cyclic existence that is birth, old age, sickness, death, and rebirth. *Bodhicitta* celebrates *That (tathata)* in word and deed.

*Shamatha in Ati Dzogchen and Essence Mahamudra.*

> The View of Dzogchen is the perfection of wisdom... The Buddha's Emptiness is the transcendent perfection of wisdom...The conventional path is *anuyoga*. The dawning of primordial *rigpa*, beyond mind, is highest *atiyoga* of Dzogchen... Shamatha calm abiding is the foundation for advanced Dzogchen teaching.
>
> —21st century Dzogchen/Mahamudra master
> Adzom Paylo Rinpoche

Shamatha is the first of the four Nyingma Dzogchen Yogas, as we have seen. *Shamatha is an urgent prerequisite practice for approaching Dzogchen View and Practice. Without such pacification of dualistic concept mind, nondual Dzogchen remains all too conceptual.*

> Primordial buddhahood, the ground of fully evident enlightenment, unchanging, spontaneously present, the basic space [*chöying*] of the Vajra Heart Essence—the Nature of Mind is natural Great Perfection...The vast expanse of the inexpressible nature of phenomena, the very pinnacle of the View is the Great Perfection.
>
> —Longchenpa 1998, *Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*

So yes, in the ancient Nyingma lineage Dzogchen *semde* (mind) teaching cycle *shamatha* is the first of the Four Dzogchen Yogas, followed by *vipashyana*; *kadak* (*trekcho*) nondual 'primordially pure' Ground; and *lhundrub* (*tögal*) manifest Presence of that Ground. These four parallel the Four Yogas of Kagyu lineage highest Essence Mahamudra.

## 'Nonmeditation' is Effortless Action of Your Buddha Nature Presence

*Being Here*. We've seen that *magom* nonmeditation is active, effortless, spontaneous continuity of *rigpa* awareness. In non-goal directed, non-doing of nondual Dzogchen *trekchö* we do not culture, fabricate, or conceptually contrive any meditative state by *doing* something. We simply remain present to our already present indwelling Primordial Awareness Ground Presence.

But wait! Freedom from such contrived 'doing' elaborations is not yet the liberating freedom of nondual Primordial Awareness Wisdom (gnosis, *yeshe, jnana*). "Mind is like space". Yet mind is so much more than *negative* empty space. "Mind is cognizant and aware". Mind is naturally pervaded and suffused with Ground Nature of Mind—*positive* bliss and luminous clear light clarity (*ösel*) of always present Presence of selfless, timeless Primordial Awareness Wisdom itself (*yeshe, jnana,* gnosis). *That* is buddha nature Presence. *Feel That Now!*

That dynamical Awareness Presence of *Ultimate Bodhicitta*—wondrous love-wisdom gift that realizes the 'wisdom of emptiness'—spontaneously, effortlessly expresses itself in the dimension of human cultural time and space as *Relative Bodhicitta* of intention and engaged human action—compassionate loving kindness 'responsiveness' or 'enlightened intent' for benefit of all living beings, including our precious Mother Earth. And that dynamic *nonmeditation in action* is the open secret of our harmless human happiness. *Mahasukaho!*

Effortless *magom* nonmeditation abides as *essential rigpa Presence* prior to any 'meditation'. Now there is nothing to seek, fabricate, correct, or meditate on, and nothing to accomplish. We simply 'let being be as it is'. Wisdom of *Wu Wei.* Buddha told, "Being is perfect just as it is." What remains? Only 'primordial

purity' of this natural, easeful, empty, nondual Ground of Being. *Trekchö*—self-liberation beyond 'attainment'—is formless timeless, selfless, Primordial Awareness *dharmakaya* 'groundless' Ground, spacious fullness of our being here in form and time. Utterly empty of all these heady conceptual thoughts about it.

Hence, *active nonmeditation* facilitates mind's continuous direct experience (*yogi pratyaksa*), then *rest* in that always present Ground state of nondual 'open Primordial Presence'. We need not *try* to meditate. We cannot fix *samsara*. We breathe, sit and walk. Our only 'goal' is continuity of *rigdang rest* in nondual body-mind-spirit 'openness'. 'Oneness'. Thus do we open our heart-mind to receive that which is always present and awake at the spiritual Heart (*nyingpo, hridyam, kokoro*) as—if we must name it—very Buddha Nature of Mind; nonconceptual indwelling bright wisdom Presence of *That* (*tathata*). That is who we are now—*HUM*, our indwelling, bare, purely present 'instant Presence' of *nondual* Primordial Awareness Ground of Being. We abide fearlessly in that blissful clarity of the 'wisdom of emptiness'. Why? For the "two benefits, self and other", of course.

So yes. Simply *resting* effortlessly in clear light 'basic space' (*chöying*, *dharmadhatu*) of phenomena is in the Nyingma Dzogchen tradition 'nonmeditation'. We "leave it alone" that nonconceptual Ultimate Truth and "let being be as it is"—radically non-fabricated non-reified truth of the matter. That nondual truth is our 'supreme identity'. We 'simply sit with no gaining idea': no effort, no expectations. Then we arise from our too often self-centered meditation and do some good.

In short, our 'meditative stability' is undistracted, non-seeking, non-doing, active *magom* nonmeditation. It is quite natural because infinite *chöying* 'basic space' of Primordial *dharmakaya* Ground Presence already embraces and pervades us. We have never departed it. It is Supreme Source of all that arises

in the 'concealer' Relative Truth *(samriti satya)* dimension of space and time—whether or not we choose to name it. That Ground is Buddha's all-embracing nondual Ultimate Truth *(paramartha satya)* dimension. That 'basic space' essential mind nature is formless, timeless, and selfless—utterly transcending the 'three times' past, present, future—always abiding in *turiya*, singular empty 'nowness' of the 'fourth time', nondual 'fourth state'.

In the clear words of 21st century Dzogchen master Adzom Paylo Rinpoche:

> When you fully realize this view and this practice, everything is the infinite display of buddha bodies of light, and of primordial wisdom. These are the stainless and spontaneous displays of nondual Reality Itself. Like the rays of the sun, they are utterly pure, for all impure appearances have vanished...May you all become buddhas for whom there is no bias; for whom all is of one taste so that infinite benefit arises.

Nyingma school Dzogchen *rimé* master Jamgön Mipham (*White Lotus* 2007) expresses this protean *shentong* view of our inherent indwelling buddha nature:

> Mind is inseparable from all the buddhas. Because buddha nature consists in all the qualities of enlightenment, which are all spontaneously present from the very beginning; all the paths render the primordial wisdom luminosity of the dharmakaya ground manifest...When that primordial wisdom of buddhahood is realized, you are that ground.

We've seen that past and future are 'gone beyond'. Nothing can happen there. Yes. Past is but a present memory. Future is but a present anticipation. And this 'eternal' present moment *now* is too brief to be grasped and held. It is already

past. So there is nothing to which we may grasp and cling. What remains?

'Nonmeditation' of joyous, spacious, empty, luminous 'Timeless Awareness' upon mindful *prana* spirit breath in your body. And that's enough. "The rest shall be given unto you." [Jesus the Christ]

In the "immediacy of the view" of acausal nondual Dzogchen *Atiyoga* we are therefore not encouraged to strive for a conceptually contrived temporal hierarchy of preconceived causal "stages" of contemplative accomplishment that progressively eliminates discursive thinking, but rather to recognize such habitual thought as adventitious impermanent transient phenomena that naturally 'self-liberate' (*rangdrol*) back into its *ultimate* Primordial Awareness-Consciousness Ground at the very instant of its arising to *relative* mind in space and time. The "stages" of that natural *process* naturally unfold as mindful *shamatha. [Ch. VII]*

In that subtle teaching, *shamatha* is ever present "mindfulness of breathing", as the Buddha called it so long ago. Dzogchen is not concerned with temporal "development stages" of anything. Instead, we know and feel the mind itself 'just as it is', timeless, bright, lucid, selfless 'object of meditation' (*sattipathana*). The analytic penetrating insight of *vipashyana* then follows quite naturally. That is mindful foundation of nondual "immediacy of the view".

Nonetheless, as Guru Rinpoche Padmasambhava told, "We accomplish the ultimate view only by way of relative practice." Therefore, as engaged Buddhist practitioners we do indeed require the step-functional mind training 'stages' of dualistic *relative shamatha* mindfulness practice as the causal foundation of acausal *ultimate* Ati Dzogchen View and Practice. Meanwhile, Buddha's Two Truths—relative and

ultimate—are a prior yet ever present spontaneous, noetic nondual all-embracing *one truth unity* (*dzög*).

*How Shall We Realize and Practice That Unity?* Our habitual cognitive life evolves in a deep cultural background of concepts and beliefs—our "global web of belief" (Quine 1969), from atavistic biased opinions about everything—to open questions about everything. In the 'openness' of unbiased 'oneness' of the 'state of Presence' we consciously, assiduously but effortlessly 'cultivate' *(bhavana)* contemplative direct experience (*yogi pratyaksa*) of the unified subject-object *certainty* that we desire—quite beyond (*paröl*) good questions about our dualistic conceptually reified (*namtok, dianoia*) appearing realities.

Now we may receive, then *rest* in undistracted nondual Primordial Awareness Wisdom (*yeshe, jnana*, gnosis) *realization* at spirit Heart—*selfless* 'supreme identity'—prior and present unity of objective experience with boundless whole *(mahabindu)* of perfectly subjective *dharmakaya* Spirit Ground of Being in whom (Samantabhadra) this all arises, participates, and is instantiated in *ultimate* realm of these our often all too real *relative* space and time experiences. Yes. Buddha's Two Truths are a luminous lucid *one truth unity (dzög).*

In due course and by grace, through such *awareness management* we have now realized 'meditative absorption', nonmeditation 'meditative stability'—beyond retro-romantic cupidity of desire-mind attachment to our joyous but impermanent 'meditation' experiences (*nyams*). That love-wisdom *realization* awakens yogi's bliss (*sukha*), lucent clarity (*ösel*), and the *prajna/sherab* 'logic of the nonconceptual' arising in our nondual Primordial Wisdom (*yeshe/jnana*) as altruistic harmless human Happiness Itself; the happiness that cannot be lost.

*Mahasukhaho!*

*Historiographic Note. Shamatha* 'calm abiding' as mindful placement of awareness/attention upon the breath need not be construed as a purely Buddhist invention. It is present in its various contemplative array in the primary wisdom traditions of humankind—Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, and the often-missing esoteric contemplative voice of Abrahamic monotheism—Hebrew, Christian, Hermetic Christian Kabbalah, and Sufi/Islam.

Such mindful placement of our attentional awareness upon life force *prana/lung/pneuma* spirit breath *(lungsem)* in the body has been the basis of human prayer and contemplative meditation—in both the East and the West—for 15,000 years. Buddha's naturally arising *shamatha* 'mindfulness of breathing', in whatever splendid name or form (*namarupa*) is indeed universal. It has always been our human 'skillful means' to reconnect—again and again—to Primordial Awareness love-wisdom Ground of Being in whom this all arises.

Some sunny day we shall all together arise and outshine in that happy bright Presence.

## A Note on Mahayana/Vajrayana Buddhist 'Metaphysical Ontology'

'Ontology' is, as we have seen, the *conceptual* pursuit of the Ultimate Nature of Being, indeed the 'Primordial Ground of Being' itself. Mahayana Buddhist sutra ontology introduces causal relational 'Interdependent Arising' or 'Dependent Origination' (*pratitya samutpada, tendrel*). Vajrayana ontology introduces the nature of the *Mandala* of its indwelling Indo-Tibetan tantric deities. The monistic metaphysical ontology of Ati Dzogchen conceptually introduces an essentially nonconceptual, acausal, nondual contemplative 'truth' that is the Great

Completion of our semiotic linguistic conceptual pursuit of being here— 'Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen'. Direct nondual Being itself—quite beyond affirmation or negation of any existing or not-existing 'Nondual Ground of Being'.

Ultimately there is only nondual *Primordial Awareness*. And even *That (tathata)* is *parasamgate*—utterly 'gone beyond' anything at all. *That* is Ati Dzogchen 'ontology', beyond any conceptual notion of 'nihilism' or 'eternalism'—Great Perfection—empty of any idea, concept or belief about a 'Ground of Being'.

Be all *That* as it may, ontology is a pragmatic, quite useful human conceit, a conceptual fabrication, a relative exercise in grasping at an ultimately nonexistent metaphysical absolute. Just so, ontology points to nondual 'truth' underlying such propositions. Well, how do we feel/know That?

The yogin's 'ontology' is more immediate, intimate, and profound. It lies in nonconceptual contemplative direct yogic experience (*yogi pratyaksa*)—knowing-feeling nondual *essential rigpa* love-wisdom Presence of the Ground—nondual contemplative *certainty* of *That* (*tathata*, thatness, thusness, suchness, *sattva*, *noesis, chönyi, neluk*, *metanoia*, quiddity, etc).

As the interdependent *one truth unity* of Buddha's Two Truths suggests, our primal ultimate Buddha Mind Awareness subsumes and embraces relative-conventional concept mind. We utilize conceptual Relative Truth practice of the Path to approach, then realize liberating nondual Ultimate Truth 'enlightenment'—beyond our ontic concepts about it all.

That singular all-embracing Ground of Being is known in the West as the *kosmic Great Love* that embraces and binds together the worlds—both microcosmic and macrocosmic. That Great Love includes the romantic desire of *eros,* and selfless compassionate *agape*.

Thus do we use conceptual metaphysical ontology as 'discursive meditation' to self-reflexively transcend itself in

utterly nonconceptual, nondual, formless, selfless, timeless Primordial Awareness *dharmakaya* Ground in whom arises and abides all spacetime appearing phenomenal 'existence' *($E=mc^2 \approx$ quantum $\Psi$ wave).* That 'Ground' is ultimate Nature of Mind—lucid bright selfless *Presence* of our 'supreme source identity'—essence Ground of Being itself, very Buddha Nature of Mind. That is Buddhist Vajrayana Dzogchen centrist Middle Way 'ontology'—quite beyond all these concepts and beliefs about it.

As we engage such esoteric considerations we understand the inherent ultimate unity—sameness, 'ontic isomorphism', *samatajnana*—of the complementary dichotomies that pervade relative conventional phenomena: to wit, the ominous split between knowing subject and its objects known; existence and nonexistence; phenomena and their singular *Noumenon*; samsara/nirvana; yin/yang; Tao/Te; quantum particle and spacelike $\Psi$ wave.

*Self and Human Happiness.* In both the East and the West, the urgent question for we human beings is this: "How may I be happy?" That leads to our primary *metaphysical* question: "Who Am I?" And within that question is nested another. "Is there an essential self/soul That I Am?" Or is 'self' condemned to the eternal metaphysical trash bin of history?

Well, "Does self/soul exist, or not?" The Buddha declined to offer a *conceptual* answer to the 'ten metaphysical questions'. He told, "These are not the correct questions." The urgent question for human beings is this: "How shall I be free of suffering (*dukkha*) and the causes of suffering?" That is Buddha's Fourth Noble Truth—yogic Eightfold Path to freedom from suffering and discontent. And that is our essential question of human happiness. "How may I be happy?" What is the secret of harmless (*ahimsa*) human happiness, both relative (*eudiamonia, felicitas*), and ultimate (*paramananda, mahasukha, beatitudo*)?

Buddha then suggested a propitious Middle Way: Self—whether an ultimate Vedic-Hindu Atman Self, or a relative-conventional self-ego-I—does not exist as an Ultimate Truth entity yet clearly exists as an all too real apparitional entity in this spacetime dimension of Relative Truth arising within our all-embracing perfectly subjective selfless 'noself' *(anatman)* Ground of Being. Still, there 'exists' a real relative self that shows up for work and chooses to practice Buddhadharma.

Yes. While dwelling upon such a 'middle path' between the 'metaphysical extremes' of absolute existence and absolute nonexistence of 'the self', we abide in selfless *anatman* or "noself". Told the Buddha, *"Selfless noself is the true refuge of self."* Buddha's Middle Way strikes a fine balance between *cessation* of grasping *desire (raga)* of relative self happiness, and awakening to selfless ultimate happiness *Presence* of our nondual Awareness Ground.

Just so, conceptual philosophical ontology and epistemology may, if engaged with healthy skepticism and a devotional intention for nondual truth, further a deeper understanding ('discursive meditation') of the various Buddhist Tenet Systems in relation to one another, and to our other primary wisdom traditions that have arisen in the great Primordial Wisdom Tradition of humankind. These include the Hindu Vedic *Sanatanadharma*, Chinese Taoism, and Western Abrahamic monotheism—Hebrew, Christian, Sufi/Islam, and the profound, syncretic 'mystical' *diglossia* of Hermetic Christian Kabbalah. [Powel 1985 *Meditations on the Tarot: Christian Hermeticism;* Tarcher/Penguin]

Love-wisdom engages both voices of our human cognition—our innate *noetic cognitive doublet*—objective causal conceptual, and subjective acausal contemplative, both embraced in our perfectly subjective *nondual* groundless 'Ground of Being'.

*The Three Turnings of the Wheel.* As to Buddha's Three Turnings of his Wheel of Dharma, the *First Turning* is the so called 'Lesser Vehicle', the Hinayana, codified in 1st century *Pali Canon* (now Theravada Buddhism). It's an *Ontological Realism*—arising appearing phenomenal reality is objectively substantial and really real just as it appears to the six senses. Spacetime stuff *ultimately* exists!

In the cause-and-effect Mahayana Causal Vehicle, the *Second Turning of the Wheel,* this appearing spacetime stuff of our phenomenal realities is ultimately nonexistent and illusory—acausal *Ontological Antirealism*. Phenomenal stuff does not *ultimately* exist! That is Buddha's Ultimate Truth.

Yet, because suffering is 'real' in this realm of Relative Truth, we respect the commonsense reality of Ontic Realism and so practice the *Relative Bodhicitta* of intention and action. And yes, because all-embracing Ultimate Truth embraces, subsumes and pervades spacetime relative dimension of Relative Truth, Buddha's Two Truths are always already a prior and ever present *one truth unity (dzog).* Pragmatic 'discursive meditation' divides them.

The Indo-Tibetan Vajrayana *Third Turning* of the *Dharmachakra* presents a centrist Middle Way between these two metaphysical extremes—Ontic Realism essential existence, and Ontic Antirealism nihilistic nonexistence. That centrist view arises in the two schools of Tibetan Buddhism causal Madhyamaka Middle Way: antirealist Prasangika (*rangtong*), and the balanced Subjective Idealism of 'mind only' (*chittamatra*) Yogachara (*shentong*), as we saw above.

The 'minimalist ontology' of all-subsuming, all-pervading *Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen* transcends yet embraces all Three Turnings of the Buddha's Wheel of Existence—all three Buddhist Tenet Systems. Thus, Vajrayana Ati Dzogchen is often seen as the

non-causal nondual Great Completion of the noble Mahayana Causal Vehicle. ["Three Turnings" *Ch. I* above]

In any case, it is strongly suggested, as per the Mahayana *Zen Ten Ox-herding Pictures of Enlightenment*, that in the final tenth enlightenment stage one keeps ones awakened dharma ox out of other people's mind fields.

Meanwhile one helps 'others' via the *Relative Bodhicitta* of intention and engaged action/conduct as it naturally, effortlessly, and spontaneously arises from our great gift *(jinlob)* of nonconceptual *Ultimate Bodhicitta*—nondual 'Primordial Ground of Being' itself in whom this perfect ontic process of being here in relative space and time is fortuitously given for all living beings. We human beings may *choose* to realize it through our compassionate *(karuna)* spiritual practice under enlightened loving guidance of the Vajra Master. For *That* we may dwell in perpetual great gratitude.

*A la la ho!*

# VII

## The Nine Stages of Shamatha

*Beyond past, present, future—empty awake mind.*

*Awareness Management.* The ancient 'progressive' stages of mindful shamatha are crucial to *relative*, dualistic, conceptual, causal, objective understanding that is cognitive support for *ultimate* acausal, nondual perfectly subjective moment to moment continuity of realization of that indwelling, always present selfless intrinsic Awareness Ground *Presence*.

From the luminous empty 'space between your thoughts', beyond past and future, spontaneously arises mindful quiescent shamatha (calm abiding, *sati, zhine, smrti*). Breath by mindful breath, stage by stage it opens into present and awake formless all-embracing Primordial Awareness 'wisdom of emptiness', very Nature of Mind that is 'groundless' empty, selfless, formless Ground of Being itself. Lucid indwelling bright Presence of *That* (*tathata*). It is through assiduous practice of this "mindfulness of breathing" as told by Gautama Shakyamuni so long ago that we approach, reconnect and return to that 'supreme identity' of numinous 'supreme source' *ultimate* perfectly subjective Ground Essence of all objective *relative* arising physical/mental spacetime phenomena. However, mindful shamatha is dualistic in that meditator and the object of meditation remain separate.

Shamatha is conscious one-pointed "placement of attention" upon that lucid bright *Presence of the Ground* as it rides our life force *prana, lung, pneuma, c'hi* spirit breath in the body. Or the 'object of concentration' may be a mental image of the Guru, or of the Buddha, or the Christ, or a deity, or the Presence of prior yet present *dharmakaya* unity of Buddha's Two Truths, ultimate and relative.

*Meditation on Emptiness of Inherent Existence.* We've seen that human cognition—our *noetic cognitive doublet*—has two interconnected interdependent voices—objective conceptual, analytic, and subjective nonconceptual contemplative—both embraced by and enfolded in *ultimate* nondual perfectly subjective 'basic space' (*chöying*) *dharmakaya* spirit Ground of Being in whom this all unfolds and arises here in *relative* space and time. The Buddha's Two Truths.

We learn to engage both of these love-wisdom voices—objective and subjective—at first more or less independently, then with a bit of practice, simultaneously, as a prior and present *one truth unity*. *(dzog).* This union of quiescent calm abiding and analytic penetrating insight, in due course and by grace, opens into realization of lucid nondual 'wisdom of emptiness'—Ground of Being.

Thus, does the bodhisattva's *Path of Preparation* cultivate 'the joyous' *Path of Seeing* wherein emptiness is directly known (*essential rigpa*); then to 'stainless' *Path of Meditation* where the wisdom of emptiness becomes stable. Through this great *process* of enlightenment, selfless compassionate *bodhicitta* for the benefit of living beings evolves and matures. This *Path of Accumulation* develops concurrently with the *Path of Seeing* and the *Path of Meditation*. The first three bodhisattva '*bhūmis*' have now been attained. The next seven bodhisattva levels culminate in the 'Path of No More Learning'—*full bodhi* of enlightened buddhahood. That is wisdom Path of Buddhist Mahayana/Vajrayana of India, Tibet, China, and Japan. That is liberation from suffering—ultimate harmless happiness for benefit of living beings upon our precious Mother Earth, abiding here among the stars. Shamatha is thus the causal foundation of acausal nondual Ati Dzogchen.

Habitual, obsessive conceptual activity of self-ego-I may now *directly experience* mindful clarity and yogi's bliss of nonconceptual 'witness presence' (*saksin*). We have seen that human beings are inherently absent and empty of a 'core self'. Just so, *relative* spacetime physical and mental phenomena arising in the sensory perception of living beings are as well, empty of any whit of *ultimate* intrinsic existence. That ultimate Ground of Being "appears as anything at all".

Thus, do we begin by 'culturing' conscious mindful *'placement of attentional awareness'* upon that 'instant Presence' and 'take refuge' in selfless *anatman* noself of our original Primordial Awareness Ground of Being of everything arising here in relative space and time *($E=mc^2$).* The 'fruition/result'? The self-centered cause of our suffering, painful negative afflictive emotions—fear-anger, hostility, ill will, hatred, greed, pride—with the incessant dichotomies, judgments and vicious projections of narcissistic self onto others gradually 'self-liberate' (*rangdrol*) at the very instant of their arising. Breath by mindful breath 'self' begins to 'drop away' revealing our original freedom. *E ma ho!* How wonderful!

That self (*atman*) and the relative spacetime phenomena arising to it are "mind only" (*chittamatra*), ultimately indefinable and unfindable through 15,000 years of human global East-West philosophical and spiritual inquiry. How? Because relative 'self' is in nondual truth ultimate formless, selfless "noself" (*anatman*). Yes. Shakyamuni Buddha told: *"Selfless noself is the ultimate refuge of self"*. Bright indwelling 'innermost secret' always already present nondual Presence of the Ground. Abide here now in perpetual thanksgiving for *That (tathata, suchness, chönyi, neluk).*

Moreover, relative self and its phenomena arising in ultimate selfless noself Ground of Being are naturally and inherently interconnected and interdependent. In Middle Way Madhyamaka Buddhist idiom that relational process is named 'interdependent arising' or 'dependent origination' (*pratitya*

*samutpada, tendrel)*. And that is the Buddha's emptiness/ *shunyata*—profound absence of 'intrinsic existence' of all this relative-conventional spacetime phenomena that appear to a perceiving, knowing subject-self.

Yet, self and its phenomena remain *relatively real*. When we seek a fragrant red rose among only its separate parts, the rose is absent. That is the rose's emptiness. "That flower absent from all bouquets." [Mallarmé] Yet, that absence in no way negates its lovely relative-conventional impermanent existence that appears to our senses, and our heart.

*The Two Truths.* Buddha's Two Truths are the Relative Truth of real spacetime stuff that arises and is embraced and subsumed by Ultimate Truth of nondual, formless, selfless emptiness Ground Buddha Nature of Mind in whom this all arises. As omniscient Longchenpa told, *"Emptiness is the absence of subject and object"*—utterly beyond (*paröl*) dualistic desire grasp of the thinking mind of any 'seeking' human subject.

We study Buddhist emptiness via 'discursive meditation'—reading texts like this one and listening to many teachings by qualified teachers—and we 'meditate on emptiness' via non-discursive quiescent contemplative *rest (rigdang)* in the very Primordial Awareness Ground of Being itself, all under sublime guidance of the Vajra master. We cannot free our 'self' by ourselves! Enlightened guidance is most urgent.

Thus does the shamatha mindful miracle change our lives! On the accord of H.H. Dalai Lama (2001) shamatha is *relative* causal mindful foundation of liberating acausal *ultimate* nondual Ati Dzogchen. *Without the stabilizing foundation of mindful quiescent calm abiding, nondual Dzogchen practice remains all too conceptual.* Our teachers have told it well: shamatha/vipashyana is para-dualistic foundation for nondual Ati Dzogchen View and Practice.

*The Nine Stages of Shamatha.* The first four stages of shamatha 'calm abiding' develop a bit of 'meditative stability' for the wild horse of the mind. These stages are 1) conscious *directed placement of attention* upon foundational 'object of meditation'—usually the mindful *prana/lung* spirit breath in the body; 2) *continuous attention*; 3) *repeated attention*; and 4) *close attention* of our 'timeless awareness'. Here the mindful yoga practitioner maintains focused attentional awareness upon the chosen 'object of meditation' (*sattipathana*), whether *prana/ lung* spirit breath, or *shunyata*/emptiness itself. Stages five, six, and seven bestow easeful, restful, mindful clarity and bliss in order to pacify the distracting 'laxity and excitation' that inhibit profound quiescent equanimity of the final two stages of shamatha.

Just so, stages eight and nine bestow that equanimity (*upeksha*)—single pointed pacification of our habitual conceptual and emotional distractions from natural, selfless, peaceful, blissful clarity that is already present deep within us—conscious mindful primordial Presence of Ground of Being. Now more remaining distractions are freed as perceptual and conceptual attention is happily placed in clear lucid introspective purity of empty awareness—primordial all-embracing, all-subsuming nondual 'basic space' *dharmakaya* Ground of all this arising appearing display of seductive, duplicitous phenomenal reality.

These *Nine Stages of Shamatha* are drawn primarily from the great Indian Middle Way Madhyamaka *mahasiddha* Kamalashila—*The Stages of Meditation*—who, with his master Shantarakshita, and later Padmasambhava, brought the teaching to Tibet in the eighth century at the behest of great Buddhist King Trisong Detsen.

Please understand that in the beginning your intelligent and intellectually well-trained concept mind may be woefully untrained in nonconceptual 'mindfulness of breathing'.

We have seen that conscious 'placement of attention' upon the mindful *prana/lung* love-wisdom mind breath (*jnanaprana*) in the belly begins with intentional surrender of busy scattered concept mind that then reveals instant reconnection with indwelling already present numinous *Presence* of Adi Buddha Samanthabhadra—personification of formless, timeless, selfless, all-embracing primordial *dharmakaya* Ground—vast boundless whole that is 'basic space' (*chöying*) ultimate Ground of Being itself in whom all relative spacetime stuff arises, participates, and is instantiated. And yes, that Ground is our natural, indwelling, always present buddha nature buddha heart-mind whose numinous lucid Presence is mirrored and transmitted via luminous mind-stream of the Dzogchen master. Plenty of heady dharma concepts here to deracinate via our 'natural place of rest' in nonconceptual Ground Nature of Mind.

The nine stages of shamatha may be seen as a dualistic introduction to the natural continuity of lucid prior and present unity of nondual Primordial Awareness-Consciousness itself, that radiant Ground of Being, ever spontaneously embodied in our precious human form.

1) *Directed Placement of Attention.* Beginning stage shamatha. Here we may utilize 'discursive meditation'—clear contemplative conceptual insight before, but not during the actual breathing practice in order to understand just what it is that we are about in our 'calm abiding' practice. We now begin to concentrate upon the cyclic rhythmic rising and falling of life-giving *prana/lung* spirit breath in the belly—on the in-breath, then the out-breath (*Ch. VIII*). Counting the breaths may be useful. Course 'laxity' and drowsiness along with mental 'agitation' are to be expected. Conceptual and emotional distraction is the norm.

Here we manage to go from distraction to distraction 'without losing enthusiasm'. [after Winston Churchill]

Placement of conscious focused attention upon a chosen object of awareness—usually the *prana/lung* breath in the belly—now begins. Even though you may have a bit of mantra and deity practice under your belt, scattered random thoughts continue to arise in your untrained mind like a wild horse—proverbial untamed 'wild horse of the mind'.

Quite oddly, shamatha calm abiding practice is often neglected—sometimes for years—even though the Buddha and your meditation master encourage "mindfulness of breathing" to deracinate your heady contemplative practices. *"Shamatha calm abiding is the foundation of all advanced Dzogchen teaching."* [Adzom Gyalse Rinpoche]

Buddha's "mindfulness of breathing" now begins in earnest. Your self-ego-I here discovers creative excuses for forgetting, or for being 'too busy' to practice. You have very important stuff to do! And you already have a bunch of meditation practices to which you are committed. It's a matter of priorities after all. Yet mindful breathing happens each *conscious* breath. Simply breathe with awareness! Learn to use energy spent in avoidance behavior to practice now. Just too busy? No time? Yes. There is no time! As Albert Einstein told, "Time is an illusion, albeit a very persistent one." So, in this eternal present moment now, *be* the breath in your body. Say *OM AH HUM* three times. The key is "brief moments many times"—day and night. Now *rest* beyond thinking in very Ground of Being. Easy. Relax. Enjoy!

Awareness of the great gift of compassionate *bodhicitta*—the thought, intention, prayer, and engaged action/conduct for the benefit of all living beings—not just your favorites—is now greatly enhanced. You can *feel* it. It feels good. It feels bright, vivid, lucid. 'Self-referencing mind' (selfing) is in the beginning quite full of itself. Use basic mantra deity practice—*OM AH HUM, Lama Khyen,*

*Menla Medicine Buddha, Vajra Guru Mantra, Vajra Sattva Mantra, Tara*—to connect to your already present love-wisdom mind *Presence.* Use your 108-bead mala. Remain present to your breath for a minute or two 'brief moments many times' as you go about your day. If you are not too resistant, practice 10 minutes or more before retiring, and first thing upon rising, even—Yikes!—before your morning coffee. [*Appendix B*] Yes, the change you wish to see must after all begin somewhere. Now begins your 'Development Stage' practice. Soon your egocentric wandering mind begins to stabilize, and you remain clear, firm, and close to the holy *prana* spirit wind (*Lungta*) of your breath in the body. Stray not from That. Your entire life world is thereby enhanced. Relax your thinking mind and *feel* it.

Some straight talk. You are now beginning the surrender of 'extremely hidden' *pride* that you have in your practice, and in your opinions and beliefs. Self-ego-I pride is destructive, very subtle. It's difficult to bring into conscious awareness, though you may have some 'accomplishment' in your practice. We are told by those who know of such things, that ego pride is the most hidden and difficult emotional affliction of the bunch. Open and begin to see it now. The flip side of pride is 'the worthless'. "I am no good at my practice, or much of anything else worthwhile"; or self-destructive variations on that theme. Most such negative self-judgment is projected onto others. Begin now to surrender it. Selfless *bodhicitta* will help.

You are good at what you do. Yet you have this *choice* to enhance now present *management of your awareness*. It's the potential of each human being. It will save you 'timeless time' spent in anxious worry and obsessive negative thinking. It heals your negative karma. When is the best time to begin? After the holidays? When the kids go back to school? On your next breath? Manage your awareness upon prana spirit breath. *OM AH HUM*.

2) *Continuous Placement of Attention*. You have now accomplished brief focused unbroken attentional 'continuity of awareness' upon your mindful breath. That lucid gap (*schnitt*) between your habitual thoughts may extend for a minute or more. Mostly conceptual 'selfing' and random scattered wandering thinking in and out of the natural quiescence of the breath is still present. You are frequently distracted from your mindful breath. Course excitation and agitation alternating with laxity ('sloth and torpor') remain present in your mindstream. *Patience.* The only mistake you can make now is to quit.

You have by now engaged with a qualified meditation teacher, or even a Dzogchen master and a *sangha* community to gently and subtly guide your practice. Peace begins to arise in your life-world. *Feel* your yogi's bliss and clarity, 'samadhi of certainty', utter perfection of this great *process* of being here. You now see, if you have not already seen, that such contemplative happiness is right for you. You may now actually *feel* your indwelling Buddha Nature of Mind—bright Presence of the very Primordial Awareness Ground of Being—beyond your habitual concepts and beliefs about it. Merge often your mindstream with your Guru's mindstream via the powerful ancient mantra *OM AH HUM*. Feel That Now.

3) *Repeated Placement of Attention.* Mindfulness calm abiding reveals anew and in greater depth your natural nonconceptual, indwelling buddha nature buddha heart-mind Presence (*rigpa, vidya*; *christos* for mindful Christians) of the spacious primordial *dharmakaya* Ground of Being in whom you and everything else arise and participate. You now observe your recovery of distracted scattered attentional awareness and return it to the mindful breath—again and again. You are gaining confidence. It's working! Non-judgmental mindful *introspection* begins to develop.

Distraction from your mindful breath via random obsessive conceptual 'selfing' is further reduced. Course agitation, then laxity continues. Compassionate *bodhicitta* and the 'wisdom of kindness' increase as your mindful practice and prayer become less narcissistic—'all about me'. Your *bodhicitta* now expands phylogenetically to embrace non-Mammalian life forms. You no longer intentionally take the life of 'lower' life forms. You 'take refuge' in the precious Three Jewels—your Guru as the Buddha, the Dharma teaching of the Buddha, and the *Sangha* spiritual community, holy body of the Buddha—day and night. Your precious Guru/Lama may be seen as a Fourth Refuge Jewel. Your attention/awareness does not stray far from always indwelling buddha nature Presence that you are now—your 'supreme identity'. Begin dream yoga. Do some retreats in non-doing *Wu-Wei*. "Let being be as it is." All Good. Easy. Relax. Enjoy!

4) *Close Placement of Attention.* Indwelling primordial Buddha Presence now becomes 'really real'. Clarity and precision of focused attention further develop. You remain close to mindful breath most of the time. Thoughts and feelings, negative and positive, pass on the out-breath, or flow by in the vast empty space of sky, like a cloud leaving no trace. You now have *nondual contemplative certainty* that you can 'continue in confidence' upon this path. Tempered agitation, with laxity remains. Distractions begin to subside naturally and effortlessly. Kind, non-judgmental self-introspection further develops. More selfless peace for the scattered troubled mind of self-ego-I. Your selfless, compassionate *bodhicitta* becomes more skillful through your kind engaged action. Perhaps you are now a volunteer helping animals or feeding the homeless. The *paramitas* of generosity, ethical conduct, patience, and diligence are becoming stable as effortless 'nonmeditation' becomes more fluent. Buddha's 'mindfulness of breathing' focus of attention is extended to include

the attentional awareness of your obsessively busy mind. You become that upon which you place your attention! *Feel* the release/relief. Depend upon your Dzogchen master's teaching.

5) *Mindfully Tamed Attention/Awareness.* Distractions during 'meditation' are becoming tamed. The 'wild horse of the mind' has come home and is accepting advanced Completion Stage training. Some *samadhi* insight brings peace of mind, clarity, and 'yogi's bliss'. You may experience profound *samadhi* as to joyous utter perfection of this wondrous interdependent reality *relationship process*. Distraction, excitation and laxity remain. Still, you dwell often in ease of always present subtle spirit buddha mind Presence of *ultimate* perfectly subjective Primordial Awareness spacious *dharmakaya* 'groundless Ground' of your *relative* spacetime realities. You may now peacefully rest for a few minutes without concepts in that natural effortless state that is subtle Presence Ground of Being. That '*samadhi* of certainty' now transcends your concepts and beliefs about it. You engage disturbing thoughts and emotions with less fear/anger, without grasping, clinging, or repression. And it feels good.

You now 'manage' adventitious anger more skillfully. You apply the anger antidote *PHAT*! Then let it go. You may even choose psychotherapy to finish unfinished psycho-emotional business, as for example deep psychic trauma. Self-ego-I becomes background without repressing it. You have entered Completion Stage practices with your Dzogchen meditation master and his/her disciples. Your intimate family relationships and working relationships are stable, generous, patient, kind, and loving. You have earned almost everyone's respect.

You have now extended your precious *bodhicitta* to those 'difficult people' who may wish to harm you or others, even as you wisely avoid them. You now realize, if you have not already

done so, that you have liberated through Buddha's basic 'mindfulness of breathing', *bodhicitta*, and through 'compassion meditation' timeless eons of negative karmic imprints. You abide in perpetual thanksgiving and great joy! That selfless empathetic joy is the true human emotion. *Feel* That now and rejoice with all the buddhas!

6) *Mindfully Pacified Awareness.* Kind introspection deepens. 'Distractions' and habitual thinking are further pacified. The calm space between your thoughts may approach several minutes. Conscious suppression of thinking is absent. Conceptual thinking is present but tamed, lifted, and controlled. Laxity is gone. Introspection further penetrates your subtle 'excitement'. As the solid fearful defensive boundary between 'self and other' is softened, repressed negative psychic material may arise and 'self-liberate'. As to deep psychic trauma, don't let subtle pride rule out skillful psychotherapy. You now know that none of your thoughts has any reality beyond what your 'self' *chooses* to bestow upon them. Resistance and excuses to mindfulness practice have fallen away. As Buddha predicted, your duplicitous demanding self-ego-I is now an ally. You have come to be kind to your unruly self, like a faithful mother loves her willful child. You are that mother. You are that child. You now pray for those who would harm, obstruct, or 'disrespect' your self-ego-I.

As Buddha told so long ago, *"Selfless noself is the true refuge of self."* You take refuge in *That* ever more deeply. Deep introspection, vipashyana penetrating insight, peace and bliss continue. Your chakras at belly, heart, throat, forebrain, and crown are all open for business. You connect to your *yidam* deities via their approach and root mantras. The first five *Paramitas* are imperfectly stable. You now *feel* that happiness Presence in your

Heart of hearts. Attachment of self-ego-I to your peace and yogi's bliss persists. You understand the infallible *Seven-Line Refuge Prayer.* You joyously practice Guru Yoga as the root of all spiritual practice. You *feel* Guru's Presence within you always. And you see it in everyone and everything.

7) *Fully Pacified Awareness.* "Shamatha is radical pacification of the mind. It is the great peace that passes conceptual understanding. It affords the mental and emotional stability required for Dzogchen *trekchö* and *tögal* practice." [Adzom Gyalse Rinpoche]

Your always already present peace and equanimity have fully emerged into your life world. You avoid harmful negative people. You pray for them. Your enhanced *bodhicitta* wisdom of kindness no longer surprises you. Your communication with both family and non-family 'others' is motivated by strong desire to help them be free of ignorance and suffering. You have become a non-proselytizing non-judgmental good listener. You have accomplished the devotion, faith, and conviction of Guru Yoga to enter Perfection Stage practice—*Yeshe Lama,* and perhaps Dzogchen *trekchö* and/or *tögal* practice. You experience often the easeful nondual *'samadhi* of certainty' that knows and feels the Great Perfection. Good work! Yogin's bliss. Great peace.

Attraction and Aversion of the negative afflictive emotions born in 'primal ignorance' (*avidya, marigpa, ajnana*), *hamartia*/sin)—fear/anger, hatred, grasping desire, greed, pride—become present to awareness and are allowed to 'self-liberate' (*rangdrol*) at the instant of their arising, moment to moment upon the mindful *prana/lung* spirit breath. Subtle distractions and imbalances in attentional awareness (e.g. excitation/agitation) remain present but are quickly recognized and surrendered to your now very present Buddha Nature of Mind upon the quiescent mindful

breath. Habitual obsessive conceptual mind is mostly pacified. You no longer obsess over slights to your self-ego-I. You have come to enjoy your self-effacing good humor. The *paramitas*/perfections of contemplative stability are more stable. 'Selfing' is further minimized. Your angry 'critical eruptions' are nearly a thing of the past. You are doing longer retreats. You pray for those who mean you harm.

Peace, clarity, and bliss are yours. Your *bodhicitta* is a light to all who enter your sphere. You have come to understand that *That* (*tathata*) as the open secret of human happiness; of *your* happiness. As if self and other were ever separate at all. You are now authentically happy! And you *feel* it. *Om Ah Hum Benza Guru Pema Siddhi Hung.* "Primordial intrinsic awareness itself is absolute Guru—Ultimate Truth." [Jigme Lingpa] *Meditative Stability:* Along with your dualistic deity mantra practice you now *rest* in nondual "meditative absorption" (*rigdang*) of Longchenpa's "meditation without support".

8) *One-Pointed Awareness.* You further engage the 'Path of Meditation'. Your disciplined awareness is mostly 'single pointed' within indwelling buddha heart buddha mind Ground *Presence*. Laxity and excitement are 'gone beyond'. Non-self-absorbed contemplative meditative concentration has arisen from the cushion to your everyday lifeworld. Clarity, bliss, happiness manifest abundantly in your sphere, even as adversity arises. That 'samadhi of suchness' is extended in spacetime and effortlessly, spontaneously manifests as profound selfless *engaged bodhicitta*—the intention and skillful action to benefit all living beings.

Fear/anger are mostly "gone, gone beyond". *Parasamgate*. You may direct your attention to directly experience (*yogi pratyaksa*) indwelling peace and yogi's bliss at will. You may still be attached to it. Distractions to your awareness are very subtle; and you have now

the *patience* to surrender them. Anger/anxiety eruptions may still arise. In nondual "meditative absorption", meditation and meditator are a prior and present unity.

You may be teaching and writing what you have learned. Conceptual thinking is mostly a choice. Your cognitive activity is creative thinking and perhaps writing and teaching, non-judgmental introspection, and mantra prayer. Your yogic 'practice of the night' offers profound access to your Guru. Your *bodhicitta* is abundantly active in word and deed. Adversity happens. Yet you are happy! You understand that the best way to help a suffering world is to be present to your own indwelling primordial buddha mind Presence of all-embracing *dharmakaya* 'groundless Ground'. Your peace, clarity, and bliss approach stability, but are not yet profound. A bit of "vajra pride" for what remains of your "self" is now in order. The first three *bhūmis* are now accomplished. *A La La Ho!*

9) *Awareness Placement in Equanimity.* Stability in Primordial Wisdom. Peace, clarity, and 'meditative stability' now manifest through your practice. You practice a skillful centrist balance between blissful quiescence of subjective 'one-pointed awareness' and the clarity of objective analytic insight. Thus are both shamatha calm abiding, and penetrating vipashyana 'analysis' well established within your mindstream—the 'Path of Meditation'.

Due to your contemplative skill at abiding in *Ultimate Bodhicitta* Ground your self-ego-I is active and effective in the service of *Relative Bodhicitta* of intention and action for benefit of living beings. *Samadhi* clarity joy/bliss is effortlessly sustained in your sitting, walking, working, and teaching. You may rest at will in often imperfect 'meditative absorption' of the very Nature of Mind—Primordial Awareness Ground of Being itself. Effortless

quiescence in sitting and walking *magom* 'nonmeditation' may be maintained for hours with minimal distraction. Easeful *prana/lung (jnanaprana)* life energy of primordial *dharmakaya* Ground Presence pervades your body and mind. And now you *feel* it. Clear-light blissful certainty. 'Spiritualized' pride and egocentric attachment to yogic peace/bliss is mostly surrendered. Appearance and its emptiness Ground are a present noetic, nondual, body mind spirit, subject-object unity!

Subtle latent attentional awareness imbalance may arise until the full *bodhi* of buddhahood. You accept that. Your conceptual discursive mind is mostly quiescent. Conceptual activity is now mostly a choice. Your love-wisdom mind compassionate *bodhicitta* is mostly selfless. All *Six Paramitas* are well grounded in conduct. The sixth *paramita* of relative *prajna* discriminating wisdom is nearly stable in its ultimate Primordial Wisdom (*yeshe*) gnosis *dharmakaya* Ground—*OM. HUM* is your essential identity of that Primordial Ground, spontaneously effortlessly expressing itself as loving 'wisdom of kindness', readily manifested to all living beings—the immeasurable magic metric of a life well lived.

For practitioners of Ati Dzogchen, Perfection Stage *kadak trekchö* and/or *lhundrub tögal* have now been approached. Effortless continuity of Dzogchen 'nonmeditation' *(magom)* is always present. Realization of the *one truth unity* of Buddha's Two Truths—ultimate and relative—is now the happiness of liberation from adventitious human suffering. It is present always. That helps to manage and heal physical afflictions and pain. Your concern for others equals or exceeds your concern for yourself. Self-referential thinking ('selfing') is surrendered. Much negative karma is redeemed in this great light. 'Doubt' is gone beyond. Selfless nonconceptual nondual certainty is present and awake. Luminous lucid Awareness Presence of *That.*

Still, you as a self-ego-I are not fully awake. And you know it. Mindful shamatha is a prodigious beginning. It is not ultimately free of discursive thinking. Nor is it buddhahood. Subtle attachment of self to shamatha peace and bliss are still present. For Adzom Paylo Rinpoche that is a "contamination of shamatha that may stall further growth...Shamatha is not nondual Primordial Wisdom." You understand and appreciate that.

Yet you are truly happy in this great work for the benefit of living beings. Indeed, that is the open secret of our human happiness. Of *your* happiness. Your mindful shamatha practice has become love-wisdom in action—'mindful meditation in action'.

Buddha's last words: "Make of yourselves a light." At all 'stages' of shamatha you have always had that intention. It is the meaning of your life. It's like coming home. So you smile. You shall be a light for all living beings for as long as you live.

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*Mahasukaho*

# VIII

# Let It Be: Brief Course in Basic Mindfulness Meditation

*The Open Secret of Human Happiness: Being happy now!*

## Awareness Management

*"Happiness Arises from Your Present Mind State"* [Adzom Paylo *Rinpoche]* Therefore, *train your mind* in happiness: peace, free of the habitual thinking of self-ego-I with its unhappy fear-anger, hatred, grasping desire, greed, and pride. "Mindfulness of breathing" as the Buddha called it is after all a conscious finite portal into infinite 'basic space'—peace and happiness of the vast boundless Primordial Awareness whole itself, original Ground of Being—bright love-wisdom mind *Presence* of That, always already present within you now. Train your mind in placement of awareness/attention upon that aspect, or imprint, or Presence that you are, in this present moment now. *That* rides the breath. You do have this choice.

'Mindfulness of breathing' is 'The Meditation' that grounds this compassionate open secret of human happiness. Below are *Ten Steps* that will make you happy, not in some glorious future mind state, but here and now. Good news! It's easier than you think! Indeed, correct mindfulness practice is effortless! It is simply *mindful aware breathing*. So, begin now by *feeling* the *prana (lung, c'hi, pneuma)* spirit life energy breath deep in your belly.

Now sit in a chair, your back straight, hands in your lap or on your thighs, legs uncrossed, feet flat on the floor. Or sit on a cushion, legs crossed. After sitting practice try consciously walking in the peaceful meadow of awakened mind. That is

known as 'walking meditation'. And now your Ten Steps of ”mindfulness meditation in action".

**1. Thank You!**

*Experience deep thanks for this great gift of your life, just as it is now. Accept yourself—all your positive and negative experience—exactly as you are, here and now. Feel now your selfless good will intention to benefit living beings. That is the open secret of human happiness. Dwell in perpetual thanksgiving for that precious opportunity.*

*Sitting Meditation:* Now slightly lower your gaze so that your neck is straight. Relax jaw, neck, gut, anus. *Feel* for a minute life giving *prana* spirit wind upon breath in your belly. Breathe normally. Now *place your attention/awareness* behind your forehead, in the forebrain. *Close your eyes and raise your eyebrows.* This 'posture' will produce alpha and 'waking theta' brain rhythm, the 'peace response', replacing habitual stressful 'fight or flight' beta rhythm. *Feel* the gentle bright stirring here, a subtle focused fullness in the forebrain. Let the crown of your head open as light of your indwelling love-wisdom Presence streams in from above and instantly pervades your entire body and mind, and deep down into our precious Mother Earth.

Now open your eyes. Return to *prana* life energy rising upon each conscious breath. *Rest* here a few moments in quiet peaceful space of the lovely Presence of Primordial Awareness 'Ground of Being' in whom you and everything else arise. That Presence you are now—your 'supreme identity' of that 'supreme source'—the very 'Nature of Mind'.

## 2. Attention!

Maintain this state of Presence as you now walk for 3-4 minutes. Gather scattered awareness by *placement of attention* upon your breath. Be present to your breath as it rises and falls in your belly. No need to block your thoughts. No need to follow your thoughts. Simply *observe* whatever arises, positive or negative. No need to judge! When drowsy—walk!

Again sit. Let your basic mantra prayer begin. Softly recite *OM AH HUM* (see 10 below). That is your 'alpha mantra breath': 5 seconds in; 7 seconds out through pursed lips (12 seconds). That is your stress reducing "polyvagal breath". Do it 3 to 9 times (36 to 108 seconds). Count them or not, as you wish. Let this, or other mantra prayer (e.g. *Guru Yoga*) continue, either consciously, or in your awareness background, day and night.

*Each mindful breath effortlessly* feel *your busy mind settle into its quiet natural state of wakefulness; beyond your concepts and beliefs about it. Here rests your clear light love-wisdom mind* Presence—*that aspect of you that is utterly connected with great spirit Ground of Being itself—your safe place, beyond all thoughts, concepts, beliefs; free of judgment, fear-anger, hatred, grasping desire, greed, pride; just for a moment perfectly free of self-ego-I. No need to think about it. Open and feel it! Be that stillness. Now say to the busy mind, "Peace, be still". Say to the fearful grasping self, "Peace, I Am". Take refuge in your bright selfless "noself" (anatman) Spirit Presence of the Ground.*

As you practice, thoughts, questions, feelings naturally arise. Very briefly greet whatever arises in your busy mind. Negative or positive thinking, planning, mind-wandering, worry/anxiety, doubt, anger: label whatever arises "distraction", or "thinking". Then surrender it all on the out-breath. Or let it flow by in the vast empty space of sky, like a cloud leaving no trace.

*Again and again, return your attention to the breath.* Breathe normally, mouth closed, tongue on the roof of your mouth, behind your front teeth. *Feel* for just this eternal moment *now* that indwelling naturally arising happiness *Presence* that is always already present at Spirit Heart, deep within you. You do have this choice as to where to place your attention.

As you settle into, and rest in your selfless *love-wisdom mind Presence,* your breath will naturally be uncontrived, slow and gentle. Enjoy this feeling of delight within you. *Feel* your connectedness to everything. No need to try to create it; or grasp at it; or seek it. Mindful Presence upon the breath is always present—your "supreme source identity". That is selfless 'nonmeditation' of the Ati Dzogchen 'Fruitional View'. No need to *think* about it. No need to *try* to meditate. No need to *fix* anything. No need to *do* anything. *Wu-Wei*. "*Let being be as it is"*. Who Am I? *That I Am!* That Presence is always already present, indwelling at your Spirit Heart. *Feel That!* Easy. Rest. Enjoy!

**3. In-Breath**

Open to receive luminous purifying 'life-force energy', sustainer of all life. It has many names. In the East this energy is *prana* or *lung*, or *ch'i* (spirit/breath). In the West it is *pneuma*/holy spirit, your very 'breath of life'. For neuroscience it is 'bioenergy', the subtle presence of gross physical light/energy/matter/form ($E=mc^2$) arising from formless, timeless, selfless, nonconceptual, spacious boundless whole itself *(mahabindu);* vast nondual Primordial Awareness-Consciousness 'groundless Ground' in whom this all arises. *Breathe*: you are alive! Open and receive. Feel it pervade every space of your body-mind. Easy. Rest. Enjoy.

### 4. Out-Breath

Surrender on the out-breath all negative and positive thoughts, feelings, past, future, all self-ego-I grasping and clinging. *Feel* your stability deep in our precious Mother Earth. Whatever arises—thoughts, feelings, doubts, happy or not—release it all on the out-breath. Let it all go. Witness it all dissolve as you return to your mindful mantra breath, again and again. '*Let being be just as it is'* in this great natural gift of peaceful luminous sky-like space of your mind—abiding here among the stars. Who am I? That happy embodied mind is who I Am!

As the Buddha told so long ago: "Now I am breathing in; I am happy and at peace. Now I am breathing out; I am happy and at peace." No need to complicate it. Recite that a few times, even count your breaths, or both, if it helps you to calm the 'wild horse of the mind'. Give up counting and reciting when you no longer need it. If you are new to "mindfulness of breathing" you will be astounded at your 'addiction' to constant self-referential thinking ('selfing')—I, me, mine. It shall pass in due course. Patience. Practice.

*Please consider this well: Thoughts are only thoughts. They come and they go in dependence upon your present mind state choices. Your thoughts are not a solid reality! You are now learning to* choose *your realities by choosing your present mind state. The love-wisdom masters of our great Primordial Wisdom Tradition have taught this liberating freedom to be happy right here now. You 'accomplish' that through conscious mindful "placement of attention/awareness" upon your life force prana spirit wind of mindful breath in the body. Indwelling bright Spirit Presence of That!*

So, as thoughts and feelings begin to retreat, *feel* your selfless, natural clear light *love-wisdom mind Presence*—peace,

clarity, subtle 'yogi's bliss'. From this natural spacious mind state spontaneously arises kind, compassionate *activity* of love in your mind stream—open secret and primary cause of our human happiness. That is known as *bodhicitta*, altruistic thought, intention, prayer, and engaged action/conduct for benefit of all living beings. Now, place your attention upon *That*. Be always present to *That* (*tathata, tattva*, suchness).

*That deep blissful peace you desire rides the breath.* Remain close to the breath. When distracted by fear/anxiety/anger, hatred, pride, or self-doubt simply return to already present Presence of the nondual primal Awareness Ground of Being upon your conscious mindful mantra breath—again and again. When your mind is filled with this light of love-wisdom Presence, there is little room for the negative stuff. Practice that and be happy. Now, rest naturally in *That* for as long as you wish. Practice being here now while walking, working, loving, endless errands, arguing with the kids, sleeping. *Patience* begets peace of mind.

**5. Presence**

*Now simply breathe peacefully and naturally. Open your heart and mind and feel your always already present indwelling love-wisdom mind Presence of vast open Primordial Awareness whole in whom this all so naturally and spontaneously arises. It's right here! That you are now! Subtle Presence of That (tathata) may be directly experienced, prior to thinking, even during thinking, as luminous clear-light mind essence—essential Buddha-Christ-Tao-Brahman-Ein Sof Nature of Mind, Ground of Being, utterly beyond name, concept, or belief. That is your practice.*

*Light Up Your Chakras.* While sitting, or prone on your back, now experience this *prana* spirit light-life energy in the chakras at belly, heart, throat, forebrain, and the crown of your head. *Feel*

Presence of Buddha, Guru, or Christ in the 'upper room' just above your crown center. *Feel* that subtle bright Presence stream in from above upon each mindful breath. Open your heart to receive. *Feel prana* spirit life energy instantly pervade your entire body-mind—like a purifying flash of light energy. Relax into it and observe as it spontaneously flows downward from your 'upper room' through your crown center, throughout your head, throat, heart center in your chest, upper and lower back, *hara* center in the belly, pelvic area, and deep into Earth. *Feel* your natural fearless stability deep in our Mother Earth. Let any obstructions to your *prana* spirit life energy that you are ready to release flow out and away through the soles of your feet and the palms of your hands. Release any negative thoughts and emotions that are ready to go, whether or not you as a self-ego-I are aware of that readiness. Trust this ancient mindfulness *process*.

That is your healing *'full body awareness scan'*. So simple. But not so easy due to endless distractions and ego excuses to avoid it. Practice it upon retiring, just before sleep. Rest in it all through the night. Rekindle it immediately upon waking. Touch into it "brief moments many times" day and night.

*Energy Focus and Release*. Now let energy of Ground Presence penetrate any discomfort—that self-contraction from your natural life-energy flow: physical tension and pain, sense desire, grief, self-doubt, guilt, fear/anxiety, pride, anger/hostility, harsh judgments about self and others. *Patient love and wisdom heal fear and anger. Patience.* Now, wonder of wonders, you know what to do with your life! "Instant Presence" of your 'polyvagal' alpha mantra breath is your touchstone for being happy now; and for truly restful deep sleep through the night.

Now experience the emotional lift as any and all presently activated 'attachment and aversion' are pervaded by loving

Presence of your clear light life energy. *Be* for this brief moment with whatever arises—attractive or aversive. Then surrender it all on the out-breath. Again, and again. Know now you are free of it. "Brief moments many times" you shall free yourself upon the mindful prana spirit wind of your mindful breath. Easy. Rest.

Now once again *feel* this awareness light penetrate and pervade the space of your entire emotional and physical body-mind: brain, nervous systems, heart, organs, cells, the very atomic structure of your physical/emotional/spiritual being. Now, *rest* in this feeling of delight within you. Told the Buddha, "Let being be as it is, and rest your weary mind, all things are perfect exactly as they are...Wonder of wonders all beings are Buddha." Told the Christ, "That happiness you seek...the Kingdom of God...is already present within you...and it is spread upon the face of the world, but you do not see it." [*Luke 17*]

With each breath *feel* your healing life energy *Presence* fill and overflow into your subtle energy field, this light of you that embraces and pervades your whole body-mind and fills your spacious non-physical non-local *akashic* energy field. Awaken to this 'basic goodness' that you are, prior to your deep background cultural skeptical 'global web of belief'. But don't *believe* this. It's far beyond concept and belief. *Feel* it. Self-ego-I is now at peace. Now that you can feel it, *rest* fearlessly in that Presence. Now arise and do some good. It will make you happy, not in some glorious future mind state, but right here and now.

**6. Awareness Management: Love-Wisdom Mind is a Choice**

*"What you are is what you have been; what you will be is what you do now."* [Gautama the Buddha] As good a definition of cause-and-effect karma as ever there was. This bright *'basic space'* upon the breath is your spacious natural wakefulness—your primordial

love-wisdom mind Presence. *Choose to be* that space/peace, here and now, beyond self-ego-I: no past nor future; no attachment nor aversion; no true nor false; no judgment at all—just for this eternal moment now. No need to think, try, or fix anything. *Know that your clear-light mind is always already awake, loving and wise. Rest in That, each breath. Let it be as it is; calm and clear.* When you forget, breathe! *OM AH HUM* mantra is your gentle conscious constant connection to your primordial love-wisdom mind. Those who know have told it: that always already present Presence has a subtle scent of roses. Stop and smell the roses.

Your *choice* of innermost love-wisdom mind Presence is your *relative* Path to *ultimate* liberation from egocentric ignorance and delusion, root cause of human suffering. And of *your* suffering. Stay with it! Remain close to your breath. Your self-ego-I may resist. After all, that 'self' has for many years contrived a rather uncomfortable 'comfort zone' that defends against change, healing, and deep emotional/spiritual growth. Notice the bogus excuses. It may be useful here to suggest that *the emotional and psychological 'disorders' that obstruct human growth and happiness are disorders of a 'self', with its mostly unconscious ego defenses of that ultimately illusory self-ego-I.* So, please don't take your 'self' too seriously. As you begin to see the foolish comedy-drama of your obsessive reactions to any 'disrespect' of your not so secure 'self', you may discover and share the refreshment of self-effacing humor.

That said, this courageous, compassionate awareness *choice* of yours to heal ancient wounds visited upon our humankind is gentle, karma-free *relative* human flourishing; and *ultimate* happiness-liberation from suffering; the harmless happiness that cannot be lost. As Zen Master Suzuki Roshi told, "The only mistake you can make in your practice is to quit." Discover again and again your often hidden *patience*. It's always present now!

*Thus is human happiness very much an awareness management skill set!* Happiness arises, not so much from desirable stuff, but from the choice of your *placement of awareness/attention* upon your eternal spirit breath, in this present moment now! Bright Presence of That. No belief, no leap of faith, no authority but your own is required. Simply settle your mind, open your heart, and be fully present to your mantra breath now. *OM AH HUM.* That is your *choice* of instant *connection* to peace and happiness already present within you. That is foundation of your love-wisdom mind happiness on the Spirit Path. That is your awakening to indwelling Presence of *That. Who am I? Tat Tvam Asi! That I Am. What is my mind? That is my mind. Feel that now, beyond your thoughts about it. Easy. Relax. Rest. Enjoy.*

### 7. Refuge

Now you know this bright selfless 'basic space' Primordial Awareness Ground of Being—peace of your own *love-wisdom mind Presence*. 'Take refuge' in it often. Breath by mindful breath purify, pacify, stabilize, beautify your mind; a most courageous act; your most urgent activity. Find a qualified meditation mentor. Make mindful breathing a priority, *'brief moments; many times'*, all day, all night. Soon it becomes a quiet conscious continuity of foreground or background awareness. Who am I? Feeling *Presence* of that vast primordial whole—That I Am!—without a single exception. You have always been *That (tathata)! Feel* it upon each conscious mindful breath. That is timeless selfless 'supreme identity' of 'supreme source' Ground of everything. Take Refuge in *That*. Buddha told, *"Selfless noself is the true refuge of self." That is the View. That is the Teaching. It's like coming home.*

## 8. Compassion Meditation

By this good virtue generated by each conscious mindful breath make this aspiration for the benefit of all living beings: "*May all beings have happiness and the causes of happiness. May all beings be free of suffering and the causes of suffering*." That powerful mantra prayer is your *Compassion Meditation* when practiced for a few minutes at a time. It moves your attention/awareness from self to others. It frees a potentially narcissistic mindful spiritual practice from the burden of self-ego-I. Buddha told, "Don't believe it; come and see for yourself" what it does for your present state of innermost peace and happiness.

Is not your happiness already linked to the happiness of others? We're all in this reality boat together. Discover your own happiness through compassionate thought, intention, and engaged action for benefit of living beings. In the West it is altruism. In the East it is *bodhicitta*—immeasurable magic metric for a good life. So, arise from your often self-centered spiritual practice and do some good. It will make you happy here and now. Past and future are 'gone beyond'. Everything happens now. Past is a present memory. Future is a present anticipation. We cannot *become* happy later. But we can *be* happy now.

## 9. Real Practice

Real practice requires patience and courage. Please don't say that you lack it. You demonstrate both in your life every day. *Patience is the antidote to anger and ill will, which arises from basic fear.* It takes courage to face our fear. Practice mindfulness of breathing 10 minutes or more upon rising and retiring; and many '36 seconds of bliss' alpha mantra breaths during the day—'brief moments many times'. Peace is always here, between your

thoughts, each mindful breath. H.H. Dalai Lama told, "Just open the door." *Choose* to enter in and be happy now.

*Take refuge often in your love-wisdom mind Presence, and in your spiritual guide.* Feel both in your heart before sleep; and all night long. Be fully present while eating, walking, driving, working, reading, thinking, loving. Lovingly accept yourself as the patient mother accepts her willful child. Yes, you are that mother. And you are that child. No blame. Pure love.

Anxious, angry? No time? Take six effortless *OM AH HUM* mantra belly breaths now! Go ahead and do it now. That's enough. Your goal is not peace and happiness in some ideal future mind state. *That happiness you seek is always already present here and now—upon the breath, at the Heart. So, make your practice itself the goal—each mindful breath.* The Buddha told, "Mindfulness of breathing is the foundation for all wisdom and happiness."

## 10. The Five Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation: An Always Present Unity

1) *Body-Mind Healing and Relaxation:* experience as profound peace, bliss, forgiveness.

2) *Non-Conceptuality*: beyond self-ego-I thinking, concept, belief, fear-anger.

3) *Clarity*: mental and perceptual acuity, luminosity, vividness, lucidity, blissful wakefulness.

4) *Deep Appreciation and Thanksgiving:* acceptance and gratitude for your life, and yourself, just as you are, even as adversity, self-doubt, fear/anxiety/anger naturally and inevitably arise in this Great Love that dwells within you now.

5) *Happiness. Love-Wisdom Mind Presence*: authentic deep happiness expressed as your kind, compassionate, engaged action for the benefit of living beings. Yes. That most of all.

Make your own list. Science has 'scientifically proven' many benefits of mindfulness meditation: reduced stress; feelings of happiness, goodwill and well-being; body-mind healing; treatment of depression, anxiety disorder, bipolar I, II; and more. [*Ch. IV*]

**Good Sleep**

This works! Engage your 'alpha mantra belly breath' for a few minutes near your bed just before sleep. In bed recite *OM AH HUM* mantra silently, on your back, hands over your solar plexus, or at your side, palms down. Settle into your clear light love-wisdom mind Presence, beyond mere thinking about it. *Feel* that gentle peace throughout your entire body-mind. Buddhists: place seed syllable *White AH* at your heart as you recite the *OM AH HUM* mantra.

Now begin brief *full body awareness scan*. Yes. Feel the gentle prana life force on the breath in your gut. Close your eyes and raise your eyebrows. *Feel* the 'relaxation response' behind your forehead and feel the 'relaxation response'—alpha and 'waking theta' brain rhythm. *Feel* that peace of prana spirit life energy throughout your entire body and mind. With a touch of attentional awareness your crown center opens. *Feel* Presence of Buddha or Christ or your spirit teacher in the 'upper room', above your crown chakra.

Breath by mindful breath receive this love, wisdom and peace from above through your crown and into your head, neck, shoulders, chest; belly and back, pelvic area, legs and feet, and deep into our precious Mother Earth. That is your safe "grounding relation". Let this quiescent life-light *prana* spirit energy pervade your entire body-mind, all the way down to the subatomic level of your being.

Quietly relax into this peaceful subtle light. Now gently *rest* in it. Let any obstruction to energy flow—tension, pain, worry, anger, obsessive thinking—flow away on the out-breath, and out through your hands and feet. "Rest your weary mind and let being be as it is." *Feel* gentle life energy prana peace pervade your entire body and mind. Now say quietly, *"May all beings have happiness and the causes of happiness. May all beings be free of suffering and the causes of suffering."* In this way you go beyond 'self' to quiet peace of Christ-Buddha selfless 'noself' Presence of *ultimate* Primordial Awareness Ground of Being in whom this all arises here in our all too real *relative* dimension of space and time. Easy. Rest. Enjoy.

As your breath naturally becomes slow and regular, let your *OM AH HUM* mantra prayer settle into your awareness background as you assume your normal sleeping position. You may now sleep deeply. Let this quiet peaceful spirit breath be your love-wisdom mind lullaby and goodnight. Please be patient. Give your new sleep practice a couple of weeks. Make it your own. For a week or two review this *Brief Course* daily.

*Common Sense Sleep Hygiene.* Avoid caffeine or stimulants after noon; don't read or watch TV in bed; consider sleeping alone for two weeks; taper off sleeping meds and recreational drugs. Remain close to your mindful breath. Relax and rest in Presence of the Ground.

### *OM AH HUM*: Our Three Reality Dimensions

Use this powerful mantra prayer as a touchstone in your practice—all that you think and do is practice—to instantly connect to and protect your primordial love-wisdom mind Presence. Let it be always in your awareness foreground or background. Free your mind by reciting it 2 or 3 times a day—108 repetitions each while walking or sitting. Use your 108-bead mala. These three 'Buddha Bodies' are a prior and present *one truth unity*. Take refuge in *That*.

*OM* is nondual noetic (body mind spirit subject-object unity) primordial *dharmakaya* dimension—formless, timeless, selfless, empty 'basic space' (*chöying, dharmadhatu*). *OM* is all-pervading, always present *kadak* Primordial Awareness Ground of Being in whom *lhundrub* spacetime phenomena arise and play—infinite vast unbounded whole of Reality Being Itself. *That* (*tathata, tattva,* suchness) is who you are. Lucid love-wisdom Presence of That.

*AH* is *sambhogakaya* dimension, like the sun in empty space; Logos; cognizant, lucid, blissful clear-ight awareness—subtle light-bridge into the gross physical/mental dimension of spacetime form.

*HUM* is luminous lucid *rigpa* Presence of the Awareness Ground of *OM*. *HUM* is your essential nature, dream-like display of *nirmanakaya* form dimension—your subtle Buddha Mind acting in space and time as love and wisdom—always already present within you now. *HUM* is light-form gift naturally expressing itself as skillful loving *bodhicitta*—thought, intention, prayer, and engaged action for both relative and ultimate benefit of all living beings.

*OM AH HUM.* These three dimensions of vast whole of Ground of Being are always already an indivisible indwelling ultimate *one truth unity* (*dzög*)—ultimately transcending our relative conventional concepts and beliefs about it all. Easy. Relax. Rest. Enjoy.

What is your mind? Selfless Primordial Awareness Ground of Being is the very Nature of Mind. Who am I? *I AM OM AH HUM*: body, voice, and mind of all the Buddhas and wisdom masters of the Three Times—past, present, future. That is your Buddha nature Christ mind *Presence*—instant connection to *That! Feel* that lucid Presence purify your cause-and-effect karma. Relax thinking mind. *Feel* your way here. Now *rest* in the Ground for benefit of all living beings. The benefit of mindfulness of breathing is immeasurable.

Now you know the 'open secret of human happiness'. Please consider it well. If you desire to be free and happy, then *choose* to practice it, not later, but here and now. Begin upon this very breath! You do have this choice. You can do this! But don't *think* about it; and don't *believe* it. It abides utterly beyond belief and your concepts about it. Gautama Shakyamuni Buddha told so long ago, *"Ehi Passika*—don't believe what I teach; come and see for yourself."

Now that you know, arise and do some good. It will make you happy, not in a glorious future mind state, but here and now, upon this very breath. It's like coming home. *E ma ho! Mahasukaho!*

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[For a brief guided meditation of this *Mindfulness Course* please see *Appendix B* below: "Mindful Bright Interlude: The Open Secret of Human Happiness".]

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*consummatum est*

*Appendix A*

## The Prior Unity of Science and Spirit: A Panpsychic Noetic Quantum Ontology

We shall herein very briefly explore the prior and ever-present unity of objective *Science* and perfectly subjective nondual *Spirit* that is its Primordial Awareness-Consciousness Ground—formless, timeless, selfless boundless whole of physical/mental/spiritual *kosmos*—nondual Ground of Being itself. That all-subsuming 'supreme source' of physical cosmos pervades relative quantum spacetime phenomena *($E=mc^2 \approx \Psi$ wave).* That is the mereological (part-whole relations) ultimate source of our nascent foundational panpsychic Dzogchen Integral Noetic Quantum Ontology. *[*Boaz 2023 *The Prior Unity of Science and Spirit]*

## Primordial Awareness Ground: Mereological Proof for Existence of Nondual God

The multiplicity of arising spacetime cosmic parts is perforce included in a monist Pythagorean *kosmos,* singular primordial boundless whole that embraces, subsumes and pervades them all. Mereologically, where there are parts, there is necessarily a greater whole that embraces them. Just so, for any whole, there are constituting parts subsumed therein. Writ large this constitutes a mereological 'proof' of indwelling always present numinous *Presence* of an all-embracing nondual primordial 'Ground of Being', by whatever name or concept. *If anything exists, that ultimate whole in which or in whom it arises exists.*

Hence, the 'original ground state' of all appearing phenomenal reality—vast formless, timeless, selfless all-embracing boundless whole—necessarily ultimately exists. As good a 'proof' for the existence of all-pervading, post-theistic, non-anthropomorphic, non-

creator, trans-conceptual, nondual primordial 'godhead' as we are likely to encounter.

Gautama Shakyamuni the Buddha of this present age told, "Wonder of wonders, all beings are primordial Buddha." Yeshua, Jesus the Christ to his advanced disciples: "That happiness you seek...the Kingdom of God...is already present within you; and it is spread upon the face of the world, but you do not see it." [*Luke 17*] "Let Being be as it is." [Shakyamuni Buddha]

*Still, this ambitious 'Mereological Proof' of nondual God is a mere dualistic logical proof, absent the nonconceptual, nondual direct experiential profundity that is Ati Dzogchen ultimate Awareness Ground of Being.*

Hence, by surrendering all such conceptually contrived fabrications and engaging contemplative *direct* samadhi experience (*yogi pratyaksa*) of that nonconceptual noetic nondual formless, timeless, selfless, numinous perfectly subjective 'Ground of Being'—"naturally occurring timeless awareness of awakened mind"—we have 'post-empirical' direct yogic certainty of it. As 'the omniscient one', 14th century Longchenpa (2001) told so long ago:

> Rest in that ground of being where everything is the spacious expanse of awakened mind—Samantabhadra [*dharmakaya Adi Buddha*]...This brings about natural rest in the state [of Presence] that cannot be reified as anything...All phenomena are timelessly free in awakened mind, equally existent and equally nonexistent... Awareness is 'basic space' [*chöying*], because whatever manifests occurs within that single state of equalness. It is 'the ground of being'...It is 'the vast expanse of being'...It is 'awakened mind', like space, primordially pure...Everything is subsumed and completely pure within awakened mind...So awareness—awakened mind is always spontaneously present as the basic space, or ground, of all phenomena...The entire universe of appearances and possibilities does not stray from the expanse of awakened mind...timelessly free...There is primordial freedom in that unborn expanse...the single state of evenness—vast expanse of timeless awakening.

## Objective Science and its Perfectly Subjective Spirit Ground

Objective *Science*—grounded in physics—arises in the relative-conventional domain of quasi-subjective Quantum Field Theory (QFT/QED) which itself arises—along with everything else—in the perfectly subjective noetic nondual whole itself, primordial *Spirit* Ground—'basic space' *dharmakaya, kadak*, Tao, *Nirguna Brahman*, infinite *Ein Sof*, *Abba* God, all-embracing nondual Primordial Father of Jesus the Christ, and all of us. We all arise and abide in *That* (*tathata,* suchness, *chönyi)*.

*The Two Truths.* Conventional physical-mental phenomena of our *relative* spacetime cosmos—and our science and philosophy about it—perforce arise and participate in its ontic prior all-subsuming *ultimate* Pythagorean *kosmos*, formless, timeless, selfless 'supreme source'; nondual Primordial Awareness-Consciousness Ground of Being itself. Feeling Presence of *That.*

For Indo-Tibetan Buddhists that vast emptiness infinite boundless whole is 'basic space' (*chöying*) of all-pervading primordial *dharmakaya* 'groundless' Ground. That indwelling always already present indwelling lucid Spirit Presence (*rigpa, vidya, christos*) then manifests through the liminal centrist space of Mahayana/Vajrayana Middle Way Yogachara and Prasangika teaching vehicles. The latter is conceptual causal foundation of highest acausal nondual Ati Dzogchen *Great Perfection* View and Practice. *[Ch. II above]*

The blissful, peaceful clarity of that indwelling innermost numinous *Presence* is the urgent 'grounding relation'—'grounding by subsumption'—that is primary cause or modality of our compassionate human happiness: *relative* human flourishing (*eudiamonia, felicitas*), and harmless *ultimate* Happiness Itself (*paramananda, mahasukha, beatitudo*).

During our journey we were introduced to Nyingma lineage essential Four Dzogchen Yogas—1) mindful quiescent calm abiding of *shamatha,* Buddha's 'mindfulness of breathing'; 2) analytic penetrating samadhi insight of *vipashyana*; 3) formless, timeless, selfless Primordial Awareness Ground of all phenomena, primal purity of *kadak*; and 4) spontaneous, manifest pure Presence of that Ground—*lhundrub*. The prior and present unity of these four Dzogchen Yogas is the heart essence of the Indo-Tibetan Vajrayana spiritual Path.

We have learned that our knowledge of the ontic prior and phenomenally present *unity* of objective Science and its mereologically necessary noetic nondual perfectly subjective Spirit Ground requires that we conceptually recognize, then contemplatively directly realize (*yogi pratyaksa*) that unity of the Science of *relative* Quantum Field Theory with *ultimate* Spirit Ground whence perforce it arises. That 'basic space' (*chöying*) Awareness 'Ground of Being' as revealed in subtlest Ati Dzogchen—"heart essence of all spiritual teaching". [Longchenpa] The 'Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen' naturally embraces highest nondual teaching of each noetic 'innermost' path of our great Primordial Wisdom Tradition—Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, and Abrahamic monotheism—Hebrew, Christian, Islamic Sufism.

We may now understand that the reality dimensions of objective conceptual *Science* or Relative Truth (*samvriti satya*) and trans-conceptual, contemplative, perfectly subjective Ultimate Truth (*paramartha satya*) or *Spirit* in whom that all arises and is instantiated are, in an integral noetic view, an indivisible prior yet present one truth unity-equality (*dzög, samatajnana*). That compassionate knowing-feeling love-wisdom *buddic* mind—naturally occurring timeless, selfless 'unborn awareness', lucid all-embracing 'basic space' (*chöying*) buddha nature of naturally *awakened mind*—is 'spontaneously present' for human beings as

acausal nondual Primordial Awareness Wisdom (*jnana, yeshe,* gnosis). That naturally embraces its practical expression as cause-and-effect 'discriminating wisdom' (*prajna, sherab, sophia*). The unity of these Two Truths—relative and ultimate—our two wisdom voices, constitute the root cause of altruistic human happiness, both relative human flourishing and Happiness Itself, harmless ultimate happiness *(sukha)* that cannot be lost. That peace and good will effortlessly manifests as our compassionate *bodhicitta*—thought, intention, and engaged action/conduct for benefit of all living beings, including our precious Mother Earth.

## Toward an Integral Noetic Quantum Ontology

In *The Prior Unity of Science and Spirit* (Boaz 2023) we explored the prodigious Relativistic Quantum Field Theory (QED) of modern physics and cosmology; and as well the 'paraconsistent intuitionist' logical mathematical foundation of a 'post-empirical', centrist middle way Integral Noetic Quantum Ontology. That modern metaphysic constitutes a conscious finite awareness portal, finite cognitive bridge into infinite, timeless, selfless, formless, all-subsuming nondual noetic primordial emptiness Awareness Ground of not only quantum formalist mathematics, and its universal zero-point vacuum energy field (ZPE), but of all arising physical-mental form in space and time.

We discovered there that such a panpsychic Dzogchen *'kosmopsychic'* Integral Noetic Quantum Ontology is required should we desire to fathom deeper meaning of the subjectivity of recent Relativistic Quantum Theory beyond its arcane mathematical formalism and the prevailing metaphysical ontic biases that lie hidden in our deep cultural background 'global web of belief' (Quine 1969)—the bygone classical ideology of

Scientific Local Realism/Materialism. We shall now explore that coalescent new wisdom that is unity of Buddha's Two Truths.

*Relative* nonlocal entangled quantum 'ZPE zero-point vacuum energy' of the Unified Quantum Vacuum—which I have termed *quantum emptiness*—and *ultimate* boundless Buddhist emptiness, emerge as nominally real spacetime phenomena within nondual Primordial Awareness Ground of Being (*rang rig yeshe*) that is vast boundless whole (*mahabindu, thigle chenpo*) of nondual Reality Being Itself (*chöying yeshe*). As Buddha told, "Form is empty; emptiness is form." Spacetime form is primordially enfolded in its prior nondual formless, timeless, selfless, emptiness, Ultimate Truth dimension—perfectly subjective *kadak* 'groundless' Spirit Ground. That great all-pervading *kosmos* whole naturally, spontaneously unfolds *(lhundrub)* and 'descends' as cosmos, Relative Truth spacetime dimension. Lucid, numinous, present, indwelling *Presence* of that great nondual Spirit *process*—that vast whole—is who we are now, our awakened mind 'supreme identity' of that 'supreme source' Ground that is our monumental Spirit gift (*jinlob*) of being here in form. Without a single exception.

That nondual ultimate emptiness Ground of everything is 'groundless' because it transcends all dualistic concepts and beliefs about any such 'nondual ultimate Ground'. Middle Way founder Arya Nagarjuna told that Buddhist emptiness is itself utterly "empty of any iota of intrinsic ultimate existence." That is known as the "emptiness of emptiness". "Buddhist emptiness is established by human conceptual minds." [H.H. Dalai Lama]

Our cognitively cloddish dualistic concepts and beliefs *about* an ultimate nondual Ground of Being are indeed a philosophical and spiritual cage. With little or no direct realization (*yogi pratyaksa*) of the natural equality of that

conceptually uncorrupted 'emptiness of emptiness' (*shunyata shunyata*)—the vivid lucid clarity *(ösel)* of the natural state absent any self-other dichotomy, and absent any cognitive reference frame whatsoever—we remain inured to an uncomfortable comfort zone of 'primal ignorance' (*avidya, marigpa, ajnana, hamartia*/sin). Here our apocryphal unexamined concepts and beliefs—our naïve 'global web of belief' *about* that nonconceptual, nondual Ground of Reality Being Itself—have become our false 'idols of the tribe'. That perfectly subjective Spirit Ground in whom our noble objective Science arises is decidedly not conceptual; try as we may to make it so.

That said, Einstein's colleague the great quantum physicist David Bohm (1993) has told it well: "The vast implicate order of the singular enfolded vast unbroken whole is the ground for the existence of everything." Yes, that is the completion of physics' prodigious Relativistic Quantum Field Theory (relativistic quantum electrodynamics or QED) as it opens into and adorns the nondual infinite, *ultimate Spirit* Source Ground in which, or in whom, all dualistic *relative Science* arises, participates, and is instantiated.

## Dzogchen Kosmopsychism

*That vast boundless whole—Primordial Awareness-Consciousness Ground of appearing phenomena—is the metaphysical foundation, the 'grounding relation' for Jon Schaffer's (2010) post-micropsychic 'priority monism cosmopsychism' that I now describe as a panpsychic precursor to what I shall term all-subsuming Dzogchen Kosmopsychism wherein a mereological centrist integral Noetic Quantum Ontology naturally arises. [*Boaz 2023 *The Noetic Revolution, Ch. V]*

We have seen that our perennial Two Truths trope—*relative*, dualistic, causal objective Science (form) and its perfectly subjective nondual acausal *ultimate* Spirit 'emptiness' Ground—is an ultimate unified invariant *one truth unity* (*dzög*), ontic prior and phenomenally present nondual union, all-embracing *Perfect Sphere of Dzogchen (Atiyoga).*

In short, *That (tathata)* is prior and present unity of objective *Science* and its perfectly subjective *Spirit* 'Supreme Source' Ground. We have come to know this all-subsuming noetic unity via the contemplative practice of 'mindfulness of breathing' or *shamatha,* and its direct 'penetrating insight' that is causal meditative contemplative 'awareness' of *vipashyana*. These two provide a contemplative approach to acausal nondual Ati Dzogchen View and praxis.

Our *noetic cognitive doublet*: 1) relative, exoteric, objective, conceptual, mental, scientific cognition; and 2) noetic, esoteric, higher mental, contemplative, spiritual, even oracular ultimate perfectly subjective nondual cognition. These, our two human cognitive modalities that are conceptual objective *Science* and its perfectly subjective nondual *Spirit* Ground unified at last! In practice a real balancing act, to be sure. But good to know as we consciously engage this difficult joyous love-wisdom-mind life path we've been given as esteemed guests of a beautiful, phenomenal world on this highly unlikely precious little blue planet abiding here among the stars. Remarkable! Utterly sublime!

So please *practice* and remain present to that always present enlightened *Awareness Presence* of your 'already present' indwelling love-wisdom Buddha nature, Christ mind, *Ein Sof, Tao Chia Hsing Ch'i, I Am That I Am* Awareness Ground. As to the mindful love-wisdom *jnanaprana* breath in the belly—the gut chakra—place and maintain your

awareness-attention upon *That* (*tathata*) lucid, numinous *Presence* now as it reveals bright continuity of your bright *buddic* Awareness. *[Appendix B below]* How is this so?

## Awareness Management

*Human happiness arises from conscious placement of our moment-to-moment attentional awareness upon prana 'spirit' breath in the body (lungsem).* That urgent cognitive process is *awareness management*. We do have this choice. So, stay mindful (*shamatha*) and aware (*vipashyana*) of *That*, your 'supreme identity'—compassionate lucid *Presence* of nondual Primordial Ground in whom this all arises. How? *Relax* often on the breath into that quiescent Awareness-Consciousness vast expanse in whom the world unfolds and abides. *Rest* here *(rigdang)* in that peaceful bright 'basic space' (*chöying, dharmdhatu*)—*buddic dharmakaya* Ground. *Feel* and know *That* now, beyond your concepts and beliefs about it. *Tat Tvam Asi!* That I Am! That is the mereological infinite whole—awakened Buddha Nature of Mind, Awareness-Consciousness Ground of Being itself. That is nondual primordial ultimate kosmopsychic Ground of relative Quantum Field Theory. And *That* is our centrist Integral Noetic Quantum Ontology. [Boaz 2022 *Mindfulness Meditation: The Complete Guide*; Boaz 2023 *The Noetic Revolution*]

As Gautama Shakyamuni the Buddha of this present age told so long ago: "Rest your weary mind and let being be as it is; all things are perfect exactly as they are." Incredulous to our dualistic *relative* conventional 'scientific' thinking mind. Yes. That nonconceptual Great Perfection is our nondual 'innermost secret' Ultimate Truth in whom arises the noetic prior unity of objective Science and its perfectly subjective Spirit Ground.

Now that you know, arise and do some good. That will make you happy here and now. That is after all the 'open secret of human happiness'. It's like coming home. And so we smile.

I shall conclude this brief text with the lovely words of 'omniscient' Longchenpa:

*By this virtue, may all beings without exception*
*effortlessly reach the primordial ground.*

## The Open Secret of Human Happiness

Whether or not you have mindfully discovered, beyond your concepts and beliefs about it, always already present Presence of timeless *primordial intrinsic awareness,* very Ground of Being itself—by whatever holy name—let us do so for this brief eternal moment now. Peace and happiness are always present as a conscious *choice* of your 'placement of attentional awareness' upon that selfless bright Presence that rides your mindful breath. Now let self-ego-I recede into background awareness. 'Self' ultimately desires freedom from itself. "Let being be as it is."

1) *Give Thanks* for great blessing of your rare and precious life exactly as it is here and now—adversity and all. Pray that all living beings experience happiness and the causes of happiness; and that they be free of suffering and the causes of suffering. Dwell always in thanksgiving and be happy.

2) *Placement of Attention.* Expel the stale breath nine times. Place your conscious attention/awareness upon the life force *prana/lung* spirit breath in your belly (*lungdang*). Breathe normally. *Feel* your bright Spirit Presence—without thinking about it. Easy. Relax. Enjoy.

3) *Mantra.* Now begin your mantra: *OM AH HUM*, or other mantra. Unify with your Guru's mindstream thus: *AH AH AH. Feel* luminous Presence of that in your *sambhogakaya* 'upper room' above your crown chakra at crown of your head. That is abode of the deities. Feel your crown center open as *thigle* deity essence streams in and pervades your entire body-mind. From the life

force prana spirit in your belly experience selfless bright purity of your subtle central channel and its chakra centers.

4) *Light Up Your Chakras.* From the *hara* or *dō* center in your belly place your attention briefly on the White *AH* at your *hridyam/nyingpo* heart chakra. Now your throat center (voice, speech, *vishuddha*). Now your 'third eye' *ajna* center, prefrontal cortex behind your forehead. Now your crown center. 'Let there be light'. *Rest* here for a few moments.

*Now close your eyes and raise your eyebrows.* This 'yogic *asana*' instantly produces peaceful alpha, 'waking theta', and a bit of gamma brain rhythm. That is the neuroscience of meditation (*Ch. IV*). *Feel* this very subtle stirring, lifting, and peace in your forebrain. Now throughout your entire body and mind, right down to the subatomic level of your physical being, and the subtle and causal levels of your spirit being. Now relax all such concepts and beliefs. No need to *believe* any of it. It's far beyond belief. *Feel* primal purity of that quiescent bright Ground Presence now.

*Open your eyes.* Again, move your awareness to your "great bliss crown wheel". With no effort feel your crown center open. Now *yidam* deity, or your spiritual master, or the Buddha, or your own Buddha Presence, or the Christ Presence dissolves and enters in your crown chakra and downward throughout your head and neck, chest, upper and lower back, gut, pelvic area, arms and hands, feet, indeed throughout your entire body and mind, all the way down into our Mother Earth. Feel your fearless stability deep in Earth. That is your *full body scan*. Rest effortlessly and profoundly in *dharmakaya* 'basic space' of that Presence of the Primordial Ground of Being itself that you always already are here and now. "The basic space of all phenomena is naturally occurring timeless awareness—awakened mind". [Longchenpa]

5) *Energy Focus and Release.* Now acutely focus your prana breath life energy wherever you feel a physical or emotional obstruction to its flow: tension, pain, anxiety, anger, depression, grief, drowsiness. *PHAT!* [skillful means/wisdom] Blockage released! Surrender it all on the out-breath. *Rest.* Enjoy blissful clarity and peace throughout your entire body-mind. *Feel That No.*

6) *Nonmeditation.* Simply relax and rest your weary mind just as it is here and now, without following your thoughts and feelings into past or future; without *trying* to block thinking and feeling; without *trying* to meditate; without *doing* anything at all. Past is but a *present* memory. Future is but a *present* anticipation. Simply be *present* here now. You are not here *seeking* peace, clarity, or happy experience (*nyams*). You *desire* nothing at all. In this timeless moment now you have no *goal* whatsoever. You are letting your luminous mind *be* exactly as it is, adversity and all. Peace and adversity arise together. Buddha told long ago, "Rest your weary mind and let being be as it is; all things are perfect exactly as they are." *Feel That Now!* Relax. Rest. Enjoy.

Simply *observe* without judging. *Wu-Wei.* Let it be. No need to *try* to fix it! Thoughts and feelings naturally arise. No need to stop them. No need to follow them. They come and they go. They are absent and empty any substance or power that 'self' does not choose to bestow upon them. Let whatever arises in the mind—negative or positive—to 'self-liberate' (*rangdrol*) of its own accord leaving no trace. *Patience.* It all shall pass. *Rest* now (*rigdang*) in "bare awareness in its pristine nakedness...pure expanse of space"—*nondual Primordial Ground of Being*—beyond self-ego-I.

7) *OM AH HUM on the Breath. Be* awareness now of quiescent *prana* spirit wind in the belly. Breathe normally. In this quiet space abides peace and bliss that passes all understanding.

Feel living essence of *OM* at your 'third eye'. Feel *AH* at your throat center. Your essential nature is *HUM* at the Heart—'supreme identity' of primordial *OM*. *OM AH HUM.* The three buddha bodies—*Vajrakaya of the Base.* Now simply rest in spacious pure Presence of Awareness Ground of Being. Great joy!

8) *Your Buddha Nature.* Now you are aware, without thinking about it, that you are resting in selfless, open, empty, intrinsic awareness itself—Ground Buddha Nature of Mind. Peace and bliss. Feel That. *You are now aware of the vast timeless, selfless, boundless space of your Awareness*. Self-centered self-reference ('selfing') is absent. Feel 'clear light' luminous knowing-feeling *certainty* of this Presence of 'original wakefulness'. That is Primordial Awareness itself. Whatever arises, "let being be as it is". No need to judge. Told Jigme Lingpa: "Simply observe.... intrinsic awareness is absolute Guru—Ultimate Truth." That knowing-feeling love-wisdom Awareness is always present, even in midst of distraction and adversity. *Feel That Presence Now.*

Rest quietly for as long as you like in that sweet love-wisdom Presence that you always are now. That is profound mindful connection to your very own essential buddha nature. Practice it "brief moments many times", day and night. Now that you know, arise and do some good. That will make you happy, not in future mind state, but here and now!

Engage this essential mindfulness practice from 30 seconds to 30 minutes. Make it your own. Adapt it. *Feel* that Presence you are now. Sit, then walk. Easy. Relax. Rest. Enjoy.

Christians: 'Buddha Nature' is *christos*: indwelling Christ Presence, your luminous mind of Jesus the Christ.

Clear, bright, selfless, active flow of 'nonmeditation' we have explored in *Chapter I* and near the end of *Chapter VI.* The *Brief Course* mindfulness in action appears as *Chapter VIII.*

*Appendix C:*

# The Three Samadhi Liberations:

## Nyingma Mahayoga Development Stage Practice

Adzom Gyalse Rinpoche has told it well. *The Three Samadhis* (*grol sum*) are Development Stage and Completion Stage approach to Perfection Stage Ati Dzogchen. In *Atiyoga* these three are not cultivated as in *Mahayoga* meditation (*gom*) but are perfected as effortless 'nonmeditation' *(magom),* lucid present unity of form and emptiness of nondual Ground of Being—union of empty *Essence,* clarity *Nature,* compassion *Energy.* Samadhi: in Sanskrit *sam* is unity; *dhi* is awareness. Samadhi is then 'meditative absorption' in *magom rigpa* self-reflexive Primordial Awareness Presence of the prior and present union of meditator and meditation.

These 'three liberations' of the *Vajrakaya Ground* are: 1) *The Samadhi of Suchness*—resting in nondual essential emptiness *rigpa Presence* of all spacetime phenomena—Buddha's Ultimate Truth that is great gift of *Ultimate Bodhicitta*. 2) *The Samadhi of Illumination of All Phenomena* is Great Compassion clarity/bliss (*mahakaruna)* for living beings that spontaneously arises from *rest* in *chöying* 'basic space' of *dharmakaya* emptiness Awareness Ground of Being. [“Space” is here the *universal metaphor* for spacious perfectly subjective all-subsuming Gound itself. It should not be construed literally as an objective empty void.] *Ultimate Bodhicitta* spontaneously manifests as the action-conduct of *Relative Bodhicitta*. 3) Unity of these two results in cause-effect display of *Samadhi of the Seed Syllable—HUM (HUNG)*—great 'potential' for realization of one's personal *yidam* deity—indivisible unity of form and emptiness. That ultimate Primordial Wisdom of the Ground (*yeshe, jnana, gnosis*) in whom arises

relative *prajna, sherab* wisdom of skillful means/method (*upaya*) liberates the suffering and dissatisfaction of we human beings.

Samsara and nirvana are therefore an indivisible ultimate *one truth unity*, even as adversity continues to arise here in relative time and space. For the yogin of Perfection Stage Dzogchen that nondual trans-conceptual *essential rigpa* realization may be easier done than said; beyond words—Ground of Being Presence—perfect just as it is. The 'labels' here are *magom* nonmeditation; the 'non-action' of *Wu-Wei*. Both are free of any subject-object duality of meditator and meditation (*gom*). "That is *magom*, the natural abiding of *rigpa* awareness". [Longchenpa 2001] That is our *essential rigpa* Presence—primordial awareness dwelling in self-reflexive *ösel* clarity and bliss—beyond even the slightest *'gom med'* desire or effort.

*1. The Samadhi of Suchness*. *Dharmakaya*. Lucid emptiness of the naked Primordial Awareness Ground of Being rests in its own place. *Rigpa magom ati* realization. That pure nondual *dharmakaya* emptiness nature of all arising physical and mental phenomenal reality is utterly free of conceptual elaboration. This liberating samadhi realizes *relative* spacetime phenomena to be empty of *ultimate* intrinsic existence. That is realization of *Ultimate Bodhicitta*. That self-knowing *feeling* of *essential rigpa* wisdom Presence frees us from desire-mind cupidity of grasping at all this illusory stuff of relative samsara as ultimately real. Indeed, Samsara and Nirvana are nondual in the singular vast expanse of infinite Primal Awareness. That is the Dzogchen *Atiyoga* View of the Ground.

'Primal ignorance' (*marigpa)* is the primary cause of our dissatisfaction, suffering, and human evil. That Ati Dzogchen 'suchness' (*tathata, thatness, noumena, chönyi, rigpa, quidditas*) is pure

perfect Presence of our being here in formless, timeless, selfless *dharmakaya* Ground of Being, just as it is—before we think about it—quite free of conceptual elaboration and belief of cause-and-effect 'lesser approaches' of the Nyingma eight 'lower vehicles'. Yes. That is nondual *Atiyoga* ninth teaching *yana*—always present primordial *buddic* state of direct *essential rigpa* Presence of Awareness Ground.

This empty 'suchness of being' is natural imprint of Being Itself upon our human being, our authentic actual nature—Ground Buddha Nature of Mind. That is Buddhist emptiness above and beyond any concept or meditation experience of emptiness. 'Suchness' *(tathata)* is intrinsically empty of our concepts and beliefs about it. Buddha's Two Truths: "Form is empty; emptiness is form." Empty suchness is the primordial equality/sameness (*samatajnana*) of emptiness, clarity, bliss, energy. Realization of this 'wisdom of emptiness'—nondual *rigpa* Presence—is the always present 'purifying agent' that is our open secret of human happiness.

Emptiness—vast openness/oneness is unborn and uncreated. It is timeless, formless primordially pure Ground Presence already present since before the beginning of spacetime stuff *($E=mc^2$).* Longchenpa has told it well, "Emptiness is free of qualities and characteristics. Emptiness is utter absence of subject and object."

This 'logic of the nonconceptual' of nondual essence of emptiness is not about fulfilling our wishes. It is wholly free of desire and intellectual elaboration. It is *dharmakaya* primordial purity (*kadak*) manifesting as spontaneous presence (*lhundrub, rigpa*) of essential 'groundless' Awareness Ground of Being itself—the very Nature of Mind. Such is *The Samadhi of Suchness.*

*2. The Samadhi of Illumination of All Phenomena. Sambhogakaya*. Luminosity of form and formless form. All arising phenomena are illumined by timeless Great Compassion—*mahakaruna*. That is sublime gift of *Ultimate Bodhicitta*; prior and always present unity of *The Great Love*: great gravity of Relative Truth spacetime cosmos that binds together the worlds; great gravitas of Ultimate Truth *kosmos* that expresses itself as human love *(agape, eros).* That Love naturally and spontaneously manifests in time as 'Buddha responsiveness', and as *buddic* 'human responsiveness'—*Relative Bodhicitta*—thought, intention, prayer, and engaged action-conduct for both relative and ultimate benefit of all living beings.

What is the actual design and purpose of *Ultimate Bodhicitta* and its *mahakaruna (tukje)*? It is to bring living beings to peace and clarity of *sambhogakaya* fruition of buddhahood—liberating *mahasukha*—harmless Happiness Itself. What must we 'purify' to *be* this? As we free 'self' of 'primal ignorance' (*avidya, marigpa, ajnana, hamartia*/sin)—grasping desire of self-ego-I—*The Great Love* spontaneously manifests primordial *essential rigpa* 'noself' *(anatman)* love-wisdom Presence of nondual *ultimate* Ground of Being itself, the very Nature of Mind.

How is this so? Through *relative* ethical action/conduct in our precious lives. Nothing special (*wushin*). Natural gentle loving kindness. What is the 'purifying agent/factor'? It is step-by-step, breath-by-breath here now selfless *rigpa* Presence realization that all appearing physical and mental phenomena are inherently always already illumined by the Buddha's ultimate luminous

emptiness/*shunyata*—suchness/*tathata*—expressed through kind relative compassion that so naturally pervades our being here in *shepa* space and time.

Please remember that in the Ati Dzogchen View 'purification' is 'already present and accomplished' as nondual, all-embracing, ultimate Primordial Awareness Ground of Being.

*3. The Samadhi of the Seed Syllable. Nirnanakaya.* Compassion energy action-conduct manifested in space and time. Causal manifestation of the deity. The *Mahayoga* Development Stage union of empty 'Suchness' and all-illuminating Great Compassion together comprise the causal *nirmanakaya* Seed Syllable—*HUM (HUNG}*—potential or cause for realizing one's personal meditational 'Inner Refuge' *yidam* deity. In Vajrayana the *yidam* deity is one of the Three Roots that form the Inner Refuge. "Ultimate realization of your personal *yidam* deity is realization of all deities of the great Mandala." [Adzom Gyalse Rinpoche]

There are three 'seed potential causal aspects' here present: 1) seed potential or cause of primordial buddhahood; 2) seed potential or cause of all living beings; 3) seed potential or cause of beginning *relative* Development Stage practice of Buddhadharma Path toward Ati Dzogchen *ultimate* Perfection Stage realization of buddhahood.

What is being 'purified' here? The cause-and-effect karmic cycle of ignorance and attachment that is cause for our states of rebirth in samsara. The fourth state of rebirth is 'womb birth'. The fruition of the Seed Syllable *HUM* is then the rebirth of a *buddic nirnanakaya* being (e.g. Grab Dorje). Such a one demonstrates by his/her life that

wondrous *samadhi* seed potential for both relative and ultimate benefit of all living beings—in accordance with their present capacity. That acausal *Ati* union of emptiness/suchness with causal skillful luminous compassion is from before the beginning of space and time here now present for us as perfectly subjective nondual *dharmakaya* ′groundless' Ground of Being. Great Joy! Happiness Itself!

*Mahasukaho!*

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