

THE PRACTICES OF THE BASE OF SANTI MAHA SANGHA

These are the practices of the Base Level of Santi Maha Sangha to be performed in sitting sessions or *thuns*. (One day of practice corresponds to four *thuns*. If you cannot do long retreats, you can do the required number of *thuns* in a longer time according to your own circumstances.)

LOJONG: THE SEVEN SPECIAL MIND TRAININGS

1. Training the mind in the thought that everything compounded is impermanent.
2. Training the mind in the thought that all actions are the cause of suffering.
3. Training the mind in the thought of how we are beguiled by diverse secondary causes.
4. Training the mind in the thought that all the actions of this life are meaningless.
5. Training the mind by reflecting on the fruit of supreme liberation.
6. Training the mind by reflecting on the value of the teachings of one's teacher.
You should dedicate one day of practice to each of these trainings, concentrating your mind with diligence (total minimum of 6 days). But the main thing is that one must always maintain presence and awareness of these points.
7. Training the mind by means of meditative stability in the state beyond thought.
 - 7.1. Training in the state beyond thought by means of pleasure and emptiness: you should engage diligently in this practice, devoting three, two or at least one week to it. (Total minimum of 7 days.)
 - 7.2. Training in the state beyond thought by means of clarity and emptiness: you should engage diligently in this practice, devoting three, two or at least one week to it. (Total minimum of 7 days.)
 - 7.3. Training in the ultimate nature of phenomena completely beyond thought: in order actually to get the experience of *parlung*, on the basis of the instructions contained in the text you should stabilise major *kumbhaka*, if possible; otherwise, medium *kumbhaka*; or, at least, minor *kumbhaka*, engaging with diligence so as to reach a level at which you do not feel any effort in holding the breath for the amount of time indicated.

THE FOUR IMMEASURABLES

1. Immeasurable equanimity.
2. Immeasurable loving kindness.
3. Immeasurable compassion.
4. Immeasurable joy.

You should devote seven, five, three or at least one day to each of these practices, concentrating your mind with diligence. (Total minimum of 4 days.)

THE THREE SECONDARY PRACTICES FOR THE SAMTEN

1. The equality of oneself and others.
2. Exchanging oneself and others.
3. Cherishing others more than oneself.

One should engage diligently in these practices, devoting seven, five, three or at least one day to each of them. (Total minimum of 3 days.)

THE TWO ABSENCES OF SELF-NATURE

1. Absence of self-nature in the person.

One should engage diligently in this practice, devoting seven, five, three or at least one day to it. (Total minimum of 1 day.)

2. Absence of self-nature in phenomena.

Trenpa Nyershag: the four applications of presence

- 2.1. Presence applied to observation of the body.
- 2.2. Presence applied to observation of sensations.
- 2.3. Presence applied to observation of the mind.
- 2.4. Presence applied to observation of phenomena.

You should devote seven, five, three or at least one day to each of these four subdivisions, engaging your mind with diligence. (Total minimum of 4 days.)

THE PRACTICE OF MEDITATION AND RECITATION OF THE THREE ROOTS

Visualizing clearly the Three Roots of the Anuyoga practice - Guru (Padma Thötrengtsal), Deva (Guru Tragpo or Guru Tragphur) and Dakini (Simhamukha) - and connecting the concentration with recitation of the mantra, for each of the Three Roots:

- According to recitation based on quantity, one must do seven hundred thousand, five hundred thousand or at least three hundred thousand recitations.
- According to recitation (based on quality) with perfect visualization integrated with the reciting of the mantra (singing the melody in the case of Padma Thötrengtsal) one must dedicate at least three weeks of recitation (in retreat).

KHORDE RUSHEN: SEPARATING SAMBARA AND NIRVANA

1. Outer Rushen: when you have the opportunity, you should devote seven, five, three or at least one day to the outer separation and relaxation in the natural condition. (Total minimum of 1 day.)
2. Inner Rushen: engaging yourself with diligence, you should devote seven, five or at least three days to each of the seven phases of the inner separation, consisting in the purification of the seeds of the six lokas, one at a time and then altogether, and relaxation in the natural condition. (Total minimum of 21 days.)

3. Secret Rushen: the separation of the three doors.
 - a. You should devote seven, five or at least three days to the practice of the body, consisting in the position of the vajra and relaxation in the natural condition. (Total minimum of 3 days.)
 - b. You should devote seven, five or at least three days to the practice of the voice, consisting in the exercise of the HUM and relaxation in the natural condition. (Total minimum of 3 days.)
 - c. You should devote seven, five, three or at least one day to each of the five methods (of the five colours) of the practice of the mind, consisting in the exercise of concentration on the letter A and relaxation in the natural condition. (Total minimum of 5 days.)

THE SEVEN SEMDZINS

1. The Semdzin on the symbol of the white A.
2. The Semdzin on the syllable PHAT.
3. The Semdzin on the joyous laughter of the wrathful manifestations.
4. The Semdzin on the struggle of the Asuras.
5. The Semdzin on the letter RAM.
6. The Semdzin on the HUM that chases thoughts.
7. The Semdzin on the Song of the Vajra.

You should engage diligently in each of these seven practices, devoting seven, five, three or at least one days to each of them. (Total minimum of 7 days.)

The best thing would be to complete these practices before taking the Base Level examination. If this is not possible, in any case it is necessary to have completed them before taking the First Level examination, except for the mantras of the Three Roots that can be completed before taking the Third Level examination.

Thanks to these virtues may all on the path
Complete all the practices
And after realizing experiences and understanding as the signs of the path
May they obtain the power to deliver all beings!

This was written by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, a *bhusuku* who travels around the world.
Virtue!