

Tilopa's Ganges Mahamudra Oral Instructions

Translated by Daniel Brown, Ph.D.

- 1. Out of respect for the lineage,
who developed these instructions to counter an ocean of suffering in
Samsara,
Let me pour this View into your mind, my friends.**
- 2. Although Mahamudra isn't anything I can really explain.
Just let go, and hold this vantage point of mind, without artificial meditation
strategies, and freshly [without conceptualization].
Just as space has no substance to it,
Likewise, the real nature of the mind, Mahamudra, has no substance that can
serve as a support to focus on**
- 3. Cling to nothing as I speak, and there is no doubt, liberation will come.
Take this View as if you were looking directly into awareness-itself, like space,
in such a way that you aren't trying to see,
because from this vantage point, awareness sees itself by itself.
And when all attempts to conceptualize cease, you will attain perfect
awakening.**
- 4. Clouds float through space,
but don't go anywhere, or stay anywhere.
In the same way conceptualization arises in the mind,
but from the vantage point of the real nature of the mind, thought is like
waves that become calm.**
- 5. Just as space has no color. It has no form.
It has no darkness. No light. It is changeless.
Likewise, the real nature of the mind has no color, no form,
Nor is it tinged by the darkness of bad, nor the light of virtuous actions.**
- 6. For thousands of aeons, the sun that shines everyday day
has never been clouded by darkness.
Likewise, the real nature of the mind's clear-light of awareness
has never been clouded by the cycle of Samsara.**
- 7. You'll probably conceptualize about the mind in so many ways,
calling it "empty space" or "clear-light"
but you can't really explain it in words.
This mind is...insubstantial, and words won't make awakening happen.**

8. The real nature of the mind is always right here, beginningless, endless, like vast space that saturates everything!

So my dear friends, now stop doing anything to set up your body posture, shut your mouth, be quiet, and don't think about anything whatsoever.

Simply take this vantage point, as the teaching beyond all practices.

9. The body has no substance, like the hollow inside of a bamboo stalk. And the mind, like space itself, is beyond any intended meditation object.

So let go of any artificial strategies of meditating. Let go of meditating.

And when this mind reflects itself to itself, right here is Mahamudra-awakening.

10. You will not see the clear-light of Mahamudra by chanting mantras, reading the wisdom texts or sutras on emptiness, or by practicing ethical precepts.

When the [ordinary] mind [incessantly reacts] by moving away from practices it dislikes and moving toward practices it likes

You stay obscured and will not see the clear-light of Mahamudra-awakening.

11. Having ideas about how you routinely keep your vows, trying to conceptualize how you might [awaken], just makes to stray from this truth.

This truth is beyond the reactivity of the mind moving away or moving toward anything.

Don't particularize anything, and whatever seems to arise by itself, immediately becomes calm by itself, and so the mind remains like a still pool of water.

12. Never leave Thatness, but don't stay in it either, and don't try to represent it.

Simply vow never to leave it, and nothing will obscure the flames [of awakening!].

Beyond the reactivity of the [ordinary] mind moving toward and moving away,

not trying to stay, not even trying to see it, then you will see everything there is to see!

13. Conduct an examination-meditation right now on the Truth, and you will become liberated from the prison of Samsara.

Then, in your samadhi-meditation, right now, the flames of this Truth will burn up all the bad karma and obscurations.

Those who are unable to appreciate this Truth are tossed about in the sea of Samsara.

14. Those foolish beings who continuously get caught up in negative states of misery and sorrow.

All these sorry folks who wish to be free, need only depend on the teacher's pointing out instructions.

15. So my friends, everything that exists within Samsara is only the cause of suffering, not the cause of Truth.

The essence of this teaching is: to do nothing, other than taking the vantage point of what is the essence of Truth.

16. The King of Views is: Going beyond subject/object duality

The King of Meditation is: Holding this vantage point uninterruptedly.

The King of Practice is: Do nothing. Do not search for anything.

Be without any expectation of gain or fear of failure, and your realization will directly come to fruition.

17. So now move beyond any intended meditation object to the real nature of the mind's awareness self-illuminating itself to itself.

There is no path to walk.... and you are already facing Buddha-mind as your mind.

And when you are familiar with what its like meditating in this way, without any intended meditation object, and it is perfect, now you awaken!

18. So my friends, please understand me well. Everything that seems to exist in this world is impermanent,

like a mirage or a dream,

And as such, mirages and dreams are not the Truth.

19. So at least for now put aside everyday activities,

break connection with [ordinary] sensory experience. It only generates more desire and aversion.

Dwell in the forests or mountains and meditate.

Yet, [above all] stay in this vantage point of non-meditation,

and when you don't try to attain it, you will attain Mahamudra-awakening.

20. The leaves and branches of a tree wither and wilt when its roots are cut.

Likewise, cut the roots of the mind, and the leaves and branches of Samsara end.

21. The smallest lamp can eliminate darkness that has accumulated for thousands of eons.

**Likewise, a single flame of the clear-light of the mind's awareness self-illuminating itself to itself,
in a single instant, eliminates all the ignorance, obscurations, and defilements, that have accumulated for eons.**

22. So my friends, don't conceptualize this, or you won't see the Truth that is beyond all conceptualization.

Don't engage in any artificial meditation strategies, or you won't see the Truth that is beyond all doing.

So if you want this Truth, it is beyond all conceptualization and all artificial meditation strategies.

23. Use your sword of emptiness everywhere, and cut to the root, and hold the vantage point freshly.

Purify the muddy water of conceptualizing until it becomes clear.

Ease up so you let whatever arises come forth in its own right [self-contentedly].

Don't do anything. Do not make anything happen nor prevent anything from happening.

24. Do not hold onto anything, nor let anything go, and right here, is Mahamudra-awakening, and you are freed from Samsara.

All that obscures, even the subtlest propensities cease.

The awakened mind, always right here, self-illuminates the storehouse of all potential experience.

25. Complete liberation from all extreme [views]. This is the Supreme View.

Wide and deep and limitless. This is the Supreme Meditation.

Beyond any intention or cutting anything off. This is the Supreme Practice.

Beyond all expectation of outcome or fear of failure, the mind frees itself.

This is the Supreme Fruition.

26. At first awakening the mind is like a fast-moving waterfall.

Then, it flows gently like the vast Ganges,

And finally, it is a great ocean wherein the infant of individual consciousness and the dharmakaya mother consciousness flow into one another.

27. For those less intelligent who can't stay [continuously] in the vantage

**point of awakened wisdom [once you taste it]
You can [once again] stay on the breath, and distill the nectar of awareness
with many concentration practices, [and when your concentration is strong
again]**

Above all learn to hold the vantage point of awareness-itself

**28. If you take that vantage point as your support,
Awakened Wisdom arises, its radiance, its emptiness.
Through empowerment, entering samadhi, then insight,
[the seeds of] this Awakened Wisdom are gently drawn into the mandala
[in your heart],
then manifest in various sites in your body, then saturate your entire be-
ing.
When you don't grasp for it, Awakened Wisdom arises, its radiance, its
emptiness.**

**29. You will seem ageless and healthy like the waxing moon.
You become radiant. You'll seem to have the strength of a lion,
and all the ordinary [positive states] and special powers of a Buddha
will flourish.**

**This is my oral advice to you, my friends, on the essence of Mahamudra-
awakening.**

**Let it stay uninterruptedly in your heart,
and in the hearts of all sentient beings!.**