

# The Practice of Prostrations to the Thirty-Five Confession Buddhas



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***Practice Requirements:***

Anyone may perform this practice.

# *The Practice of Prostrations to the Thirty-Five Confession Buddhas*

## *How to Meditate Before the Practice*

The purpose of my life is to free the numberless sentient beings who are the source of all my past, present, and future happiness, temporary as well as ultimate happiness – including all the realizations of the path, liberation from samsara, and enlightenment – from all the oceans of samsaric suffering, including the causes: delusion and karma. In order to do this, I must achieve full enlightenment. Therefore, I need to actualize the path. Therefore, I need to purify the defilements.

If I were now born in hell, it would be so unbearable. Even one tiny fire spark on my body is hundreds of thousands of times hotter than the whole entire fire energy in this world. It is so unbearable that experiencing it for even an instant is like suffering for many eons. I have created numberless causes to be born in the hell realms by creating the ten non-virtuous actions countless times in this and beginningless past lives. I have created numberless causes to be born in the hell realms by breaking the pratimoksha vows, by breaking the bodhisattva vows, and by breaking the tantric vows countless times in this and beginningless past lives. And I have created numberless causes to be born in the hells by creating the heaviest negative karma in relationship with the holy virtuous friend, which includes harming the holy body, breaking the advice, disturbing the holy mind, having non-devotional thoughts, and rising heresy and

anger, which produce the greatest obstacles to achieve realizations and create the greatest suffering.

Every single one of these negative actions has four suffering results: the ripening result (a rebirth in the lower realms), the possessed result (the type of environment I'm born into when again a human), the result similar to the cause in my experience, and the worst one, the result similar to the cause in my actions, which means that again and again I am driven to create the same negative actions in the future, and so again and again I have to experience the four suffering results. In this way, samsara has no end.

Not only that, but karma increases, so from even a small negative action can come huge suffering results. And karma is definite to be experienced, so every negative action I have created will definitely bring its result, no matter how long it takes, until it is purified. So from one negative karma, I have to experience the result over and over again for so many hundreds of lifetimes. Understanding this, how can I stand to live life without purifying myself and getting rid of all these negative karmas, just as I would try to get rid of a deadly poison in my body?

Not only that, but I'm going to die, and death can come even today, any moment. Therefore, I must purify all my negative actions right this second. In order to do that, I am going to do these prostrations with the practice of confessing downfalls, and I'm going to do this so that I can develop myself in order to work for the happiness of all sentient beings.

## *Visualization*

Visualize in the space in front of you your Guru in the aspect of Shakyamuni Buddha, with Thousand-Arm Chenrezig at his heart. At the heart of Thousand-Arm Chenrezig is the syllable HRIH, and from this beams of light emanate, forming six rows in the space below. At the end of each beam is a throne supported by elephants and

adorned with pearls. On each throne is seated a buddha. In the first row are six buddhas, blue in color and in the aspect of Akshobhya, with the exception of the third buddha, King Lord of the Nagas, who has a blue-colored body, but a white head. In the second row, there are seven buddhas, white in color and in the aspect of Vairochana. In the third row are seven buddhas, yellow in color and in the aspect of Ratnasambhava. In the fourth row are seven buddhas, red in color and in the aspect of Amitabha. In the fifth row there are seven buddhas, green in color and in the aspect of Amoghasiddhi. These are the Thirty-Five Confession Buddhas. Each one is in the posture of that particular dhyani buddha. In the final row are the Medicine Buddhas.



## *How to Meditate During the Practice*

Think that each one of these buddhas is the embodiment of all three times ten directions Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, and all statues, stupas, and scriptures. Think they embody all holy objects, whose essence is the Guru. Have complete faith that each one has the power to purify all your negative karmas and imprints, accumulated since beginningless time.

Now imagine that you emanate numberless bodies, and that as you prostrate, all these bodies prostrate along with you from all directions, covering every atom of the earth.

Now recite the increasing mantras, refuge, and the *Confession of Downfalls to the Thirty-Five Buddhas*, repeating each buddha's name over and over as many times as you can with each prostration. It is the recitation of the name of each buddha that brings the purification, so there is a big difference when you recite just a few times or many. Even if you do the recitation by listening to a recording, still recite the name yourself as much as you can. Either recite the prayer three times straight through making one prostration to each buddha each time, or do three prostrations to each buddha as you go through the prayer once. At the end, recite the names of the Medicine Buddhas. This can be followed by Vajrasattva mantra and the *Po Praise* to Chenrezig, according to time. Then recite the prayer at the end, followed by the General Confession.

## *Reciting the Names of the Thirty-Five Confession Buddhas*

First, recite the mantras for multiplying the merit of making prostrations

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG  
PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ RINCHHEN GYÄLTSHÄN LA CHHAG  
TSHÄL LO (7x)

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE RATNA KETU RAJAYA /  
TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAK SAMBUDDHAYA /  
TADYATHA / OM RATNE RATNE MAHA RATNE RATNA BIJA YE  
SVAHA (7x)

OM NAMO MANJUSHRIYE / NAMAH SUSHRIYE / NAMA  
UTTAMA SHRIYE SVAHA (3x)

NA MO JANG CHHUB SEM PÄI TUNG WA SHAG PA

**Homage to the Confession of the Bodhisattva's Downfalls!**

DAG [MING] DI ZHE GYI WA

**I, (say your name) throughout all times,**

DÜ TAG TU LA MA LA KYAB SU CHHI WO

**Take refuge in the Guru;**

SANG GYÄ LA KYAB SU CHHI WO

**I take refuge in the Buddha;**

CHHÖ LA KYAB SU CHHI WO

**I take refuge in the Dharma;**

GE DÜN LA KYAB SU CHHI WO (3x)

**I take refuge in the Sangha. (3x)**

TÖN PA CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR

DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ PÄL GYÄL WA SHA KYA THUB PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To the Founder, Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Completed Buddha, Glorious Conqueror Shakyamuni Buddha, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA DOR JE NYING PÖ RAB TU JOM PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Thoroughly Destroying with Vajra Essence, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA RIN CHHEN Ö THRÖ LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Radiant Jewel, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA LU WANG GI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata King, Lord of the Nagas, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA PA WÖI DE LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Army of Heroes, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA PÄL GYE LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Delighted Hero, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA RIN CHHEN ME LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Jewel Fire, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA RIN CHHEN DA Ö LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To Tathagata Jewel Moonlight, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TONG WA DÖN YÖ LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Meaningful to See, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA RIN CHHEN DA WA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Jewel Moon, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRI MA ME PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Stainless One, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA PÄ JIN LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Bestowed with Courage, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TSHANG PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Pure One, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TSHANG PÄ JIN LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Bestowed with Purity, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA CHHU LHA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Water God, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA CHHU LHÄI LHA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Deity of the Water God, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA PÄL ZANG LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Goodness, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TSÄN DÄN PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Sandalwood, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA ZI JI THA YÄ LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Infinite Splendor, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA Ö PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Light, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA NYA NGÄN ME PÄI PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Sorrowless Glory, I prostrate.**



DE ZHIN SHEG PA SE ME KYI BU LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Son of Non-craving, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA ME TOG PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Flower, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TSHANG PÄI Ö ZER NAM PAR RÖL PÄ NGÖN PAR  
 KHYEN PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Pure Light Rays Clearly Knowing by Play,  
 I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA PÄ MÄI Ö ZER NAM PAR RÖL PÄ NGÖN PAR KHYEN  
 PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Lotus Light Rays Clearly Knowing by Play,  
 I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA NOR PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Wealth, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRÄN PÄI PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Mindfulness, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA TSHÄN PÄL SHIN TU YONG DRAG LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Name Widely Renowned, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA WANG PÖI TOG GI GYÄL TSHÄN GYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG  
 TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata King Holding the Victory Banner of Foremost  
 Power, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA SHIN TU NAM PAR NÖN PÄI PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious One Totally Subduing, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA YÜL LÄ SHIN TU NAM PAR GYÄL WA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Utterly Victorious in Battle, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA NAM PAR NÖN PÄ SHEG PÄI PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Transcendence Through Subduing,  
 I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA KÜN NÄ NANG WA KÖ PÄI PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata Glorious Manifestations Illuminating All,  
I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA RIN CHHEN PÄ MÄI NAM PAR NÖN PA LA CHAG TSHÄL LO  
**To Tathagata All-Subduing Jewel Lotus, I prostrate.**

DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ  
RIN PO CHHE DANG PÄ MA LA RAB TU ZHUG PA RI WANG GI GYÄL PO LA  
CHHAG TSHÄL LO (3X)

**To Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Completed Buddha, King of the  
Lord of Mountains Firmly Seated on Jewel and Lotus, I prostrate.  
(3x)**

## *Prostrations to the Seven Medicine Buddhas*

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
PÄI SANG GYÄ TSEN LEG PA YONG DRAG PÄL GYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG  
TSHÄL LO

**To the Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Completed Buddha,  
Renowned Glorious King of Excellent Signs, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
PÄI SANG GYÄ RIN PO CHHE DANG DA WA DANG PÄ MÄ RAB TU GYÄN  
PA KHÄ PA ZI JI DRA YANG KYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To the Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Completed Buddha,  
King of Melodious Sound, Brilliant Radiance of Skill, Adorned  
with Jewels, Moon, and Lotus, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
PÄI SANG GYÄ SER ZANG DRI ME RIN CHHEN NANG TUL ZHUG DRUB PA  
LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To the Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Completed Buddha,  
Stainless Excellent Gold, Illuminating Jewel Who Accomplishes  
All Conduct, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
PÄI SANG GYÄ NYA NÄN ME CHHOG PÄL LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To the Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Completed Buddha,  
Glorious Supreme One Free from Sorrow, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
PÄI SANG GYÄ CHHÖ DRAG GYA TSHÖ YANG LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To the Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Completed Buddha,  
Melodious Ocean of Proclaimed Dharma, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG  
PÄI SANG GYÄ CHHÖ GYA TSHO CHHOG GI LÖ NAM PAR RÖL PÄ NÖN  
PAR KHYÄN PA LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To the Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Completed Buddha,  
Clearly Knowing by the Play of Supreme Wisdom of an Ocean of  
Dharma, I prostrate.**

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI  
SANG GYÄ MEN GYI LHA BÄI DUR YÄ Ö KYI GYÄL PO LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

**To the Bhagavan, Tathagata, Arhat, Perfectly Completed Buddha,  
Medicine Guru, King of Lapis Lazuli Light, I prostrate.**

## *Confession Prayer*

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For English, see p.13.

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DE DAG LA SOG PA CHHOG CHÜI JIG TEN GYI KHAM THAM CHÄ NA  
DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ  
CHOM DÄN DÄ GANG JI NYE CHIG ZHUG TE TSHO ZHING ZHE PÄI SANG  
GYÄ CHOM DÄN DÄ DE DAG THAM CHÄ DAG LA GONG SU SÖL

DAG GI KYE WA DI DANG / KYE WA TOG MÄI THA MA MA CHHI PA NÄ  
KHOR WA NA KHOR WÄI KYE NÄ THAM CHÄ DU DIG PÄI LÄ GYI PA DANG  
GYI DU TSÄL WA DANG / GYI PA LA JE SU YI RANG PA AM / CHHÖ TEN  
GYI KOR RAM / GE DÜN GYI KOR RAM / CHHOG CHÜI GE DÜN GYI KOR  
THROG PA DANG / THROG TU CHUG PA DANG / THROG PA LA JE SU YI  
RANG PA AM / TSHAM MA CHHI PA NÄI LÄ GYI PA DANG / GYI DU

TSÄL WA DANG / GYI PA LA JE SU YI RANG PA AM / MI GE WA CHÜI LÄ  
 KYI LAM YANG DAG PAR LANG WA LA ZHUG PA DANG JUG TU TSÄL WA  
 DANG / JUG PA LA JE SU YI RANG PA AM / LÄ KYI DRIB PA GANG GI  
 DRIB NÄ DAG SEM CHÄN NYÄL WAR CHHI PA AM / DÜ DRÖI KYE NÄ SU  
 CHHI PA AM / YI DVAG KYI YÜL DU CHHI PA AM YÜL THA KHOB TU KYE  
 PA AM / LA LOR KYE PA AM / LHA TSHE RING PO NAM SU KYE PA AM  
 WANG PO MA TSHANG WAR GYUR PA AM / TA WA LOG PA DZIN PAR  
 GYUR PA AM / SANG GYÄ JUNG WA LA NYE PAR MI GYI PAR GYUR WÄI  
 LÄ KYI DRIB PA GANG LAG PA DE DAG THAM CHÄ SANG GYÄ CHOM  
 DÄN DÄ YE SHE SU GYUR PA / CHÄN DU GYUR PA / PANG DU GYUR PA /  
 TSHÄ MAR GYUR PA / KHYEN PÄ ZIG PA DE DAG GI CHÄN NGAR THÖL  
 LO CHHAG SO / MI CHHAB BO / MI BE DO / LÄN CHHÄ KYANG CHÖ  
 CHING DOM PAR GYI LAG SO

SANG GYÄ CHOM DÄN DÄ DE DAG THAM CHÄ DAG LA GONG SU SÖL  
 DAG GI KYE WA DI DANG / KYE WA THOG MÄI THA MA MA CHHI PA NÄ  
 KHOR WA NA KHOR WÄI KYE NÄ ZHÄN DAG TU JIN PA THA NA DÜ DRÖI  
 KYE NÄ SU KYE PA LA ZÄ KHAM CHIG TSAM TSÄL WÄI GE WÄI TSA WA  
 GANG LAG PA DANG / DAG GI TSHÜL THRIM SUNG PÄI GE WÄI TSA WA  
 GANG LAG PA DANG / DAG GI TSHANG PAR CHÖ PÄI GE WÄI TSA WA  
 GANG LAG PA DANG / DAG GI SEM CHÄN YONG SU MIN PAR GYI PÄI  
 GE WÄI TSA WA GANG LAG PA DANG / DAG GI JANG CHHUB CHHOG  
 TU SEM KYE PÄI GE WÄI TSA WA GANG LAG PA DANG / DAG GI LA NA  
 ME PÄI YE SHE KYI GE WÄI TSA WA GANG LAG PA DE DAG THAM CHÄ  
 CHIG TU DÜ SHING DUM TE DOM NÄ LA NA MA CHHI PA DANG / GONG  
 NA MA CHHI PA DANG / GONG MÄI YANG GONG MA / LA MÄI YANG  
 LA MAR YONG SU NGO WÄ LA NA ME PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI  
 JANG CHHUB TU YONG SU NGO WAR GYI O

Ji TAR DÄ PÄI SANG GYÄ CHOM DÄN DÄ NAM KYI YONG SU NGÖ PA  
 DANG / Ji TAR MA JÖN PÄI SANG GYÄ CHOM DÄN DÄ NAM KYI YONG  
 SU NGO WAR GYUR WA DANG / Ji TAR DA TAR ZHUG PÄI SANG GYÄ  
 CHOM DÄN DÄ NAM KYI YONG SU NGO WAR DZÄ PA DE ZHIN DU DAG  
 GI KYANG YONG SU NGO WAR GYI O

DIG PA THAM CHÄ NI SO SOR SHAG SO / SÖ NAM THAM CHÄ LA NI JE SU  
 YI RANG NGO / SANG GYÄ THAM CHÄ LA NI KÜL ZHING SÖL WA DEB SO /  
 DAG GI LA NA ME PÄI YE SHE KYI CHHOG DAM PA THOB PAR GYUR CHIG

MI CHHOG GYÄL WA GANG DAG DA TAR ZHUG PA DANG / GANG DAG  
 DÄ PA DAG DANG DE ZHIN GANG MA JÖN / YÖN TÄN NGAG PA THA  
 YÄ GYA TSHO DRA KÜN LA / THÄL MO JAR WAR GYI TE KYAB SU NYE  
 WAR CHHI WO

**All those [you Thirty-Five Buddhas] and others, as many tathagatas, arhats, perfectly completed buddhas as there are existing, sustaining, and residing in all the world systems of the ten directions; all you buddha-bhagavans, please pay attention to me.**

**In this life and in all the states of rebirth in which I have circled in samsara throughout beginningless lives, whatever negative actions I have created, made others create, or rejoiced in the creation of; whatever possessions of stupas, possessions of the Sangha, or possessions of the Sangha of the ten directions that I have appropriated, made others appropriate, or rejoiced in the appropriation of; whichever among the five actions of immediate (retribution) I have done, caused to be done, or rejoiced in the doing of; whichever paths of the ten non-virtuous actions I have engaged in, caused others to engage in, or rejoiced in the engaging in; whatever I have created, being obscured by these karmas causes me and sentient beings to be born in the hell realms, in the animal realm, and in the preta realm; in irreligious countries, as barbarians, or as long-life gods; with imperfect faculties, holding wrong views, or not being pleased with Buddha's descent. In the presence of the buddha-bhagavans, who are transcendental wisdom, who are eyes, who are witnesses, who are valid, and who see with omniscient consciousness, I am admitting and confessing all these negativities. I will not conceal them nor hide them, and from now on in the future I will abstain and refrain from committing them again.**

**All buddha-bhagavans, please pay attention to me. In this life and in the other states of rebirth in which I have circled in samsara throughout beginningless lives, whatever roots of virtue I have created by generosity, even as little as giving just one mouthful of food to a being born in the animal realm; whatever roots of virtue I have created by guarding morality; whatever roots of virtue I have created by following pure conduct; whatever roots of virtue I have created by fully ripening sentient beings; whatever roots of virtue I have created by generating bodhichitta; and whatever roots of virtue I have created by my unsurpassed transcendental wisdom: all these assembled and gathered, combined together, I fully dedicate to the unsurpassed, the unexcelled, that higher than the high, that superior to the superior. Thus, I completely dedicate to the highest, perfectly complete enlightenment.**

**Just as the previous buddha-bhagavans have fully dedicated, just as the future buddha-bhagavans will fully dedicate, and just as the presently abiding buddha-bhagavans are fully dedicating, like that I too dedicate fully.**

**I confess all negativities individually. I rejoice in all the merits. I urge and implore all buddhas to grant my request: may I receive the highest, most sublime transcendental wisdom.**

**To the conquerors, the best of humans — those who are living in the present time, those who have lived in the past, and those who will likewise come — to all those who have qualities as vast as an infinite ocean, with hands folded, I approach for refuge.**

## *How to Meditate on the General Confession*

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As you confess each of the negative actions contained in this prayer, think to yourself that you have created this negative action not just once, but countless times in this and beginningless lives, whether you remember it or not. Generate very strong regret. The stronger the regret, the greater the purification.

Then reflect on the emptiness of each of these negative actions, remembering that even negative actions do not truly exist from their own side. They arise in dependence on causes and conditions and are merely labeled by the mind. You can either think they are completely non-existent from their own side, or that they are merely labeled by mind, or that they are hallucinations. Whichever method you use to understand emptiness, the conclusion that should come in your heart is that each of these negative actions are completely empty, not existing from their own side, even the slightest atom.

At the end of the confession prayer, pause to make the determination not to commit these negative actions again in the future. This is the power of restraint. Make this promise realistic, even if you are promising simply not to do the negative action even for just the next five minutes or seconds. This is to make sure you that you do not tell a lie to the merit field.

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## *General Confession*

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For English, see the next page.

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U HU LAG!

LA MA DOR JE DZIN PA CHHEN PO LA SOG PA CHHOG CHU NA ZHUG  
PÄI SANG GYÄ DANG JANG CHHUB SEM PA THAM CHÄ DANG GE DÜN  
TSÜN PA NAM DAG LA GONG SU SÖL

DAG [MING DI] ZHE GYI WÄ TSHE RAB KHOR WA THOG MA MA CHHI  
PA NÄ DA TA LA THUG GI BAR DU / NYÖN MONG PA DÖ CHHAG DANG  
ZHE DANG DANG TI MUG GI WANG GI LÜ NGAG YI SUM GYI GO NÄ DIG  
PA MI GE WA CHU GYI PA DANG / TSHAM MA CHHI PA NGA GYI PA  
DANG / DE DANG NYE WA NGA GYI PA DANG / SO SOR THAR PÄI DOM  
PA DANG GÄL WA DANG / JANG CHHUB SEM PÄI LAB PA DANG GÄL  
WA DANG / SANG NGAG KYI DAM TSHIG DANG GÄL WA DANG / PHA  
DANG MA LA MA GÜ PA DANG / KHÄN PO DANG LOB PÖN LA MA GÜ  
PA DANG / DROG TSHANG PA TSHUNG PAR CHÖ PA NAM LA MA GÜ

PA DANG / KÖN CHHOG SUM LA NÖ PÄI LÄ GYI PA DANG / DAM PÄI  
 CHHÖ PANG PA DANG / PHAG PÄI GE DÜN LA KUR PA TAB PA DANG /  
 SEM CHÄN LA NÖ PÄI LÄ GYI PA LA SOG PA / DIG PA MI GE WÄI TSHOG  
 DAG GI GYI PA DANG / GYI DU TSÄL WA DANG / ZHÄN GYI GYI PA LA  
 JE SU YI RANG WA LA SOG PA / DOR NA THO RI DANG THAR PÄI GEG  
 SU GYUR CHING KHOR WA DANG NGÄN SONG GI GYUR GYUR PÄI NYE  
 TUNG GI TSHOG CHI CHHI PA THAM CHÄ

LA MA DOR JE DZIN PA CHHEN PO LA SOG PA CHHOG CHU NA ZHUG  
 PÄI SANG GYÄ DANG JANG CHHUB SEM PA THAM CHÄ DANG / GE DÜN  
 TSÜN PA NAM KYI CHÄN NGAR THÖL LO / MI CHHAB BO / CHHAG SO  
 CHHIN CHHÄ KYANG DOM PAR GYI LAG SO / THÖL ZHING SHAG NA  
 DAG DE WA LA REG PAR NÄ PAR GYUR GYI / MA THÖL MA SHAG NA  
 DE TAR MI GYUR WA LAG SO

### **U hu lag! (Woe is me!)**

**O great Guru Vajradhara, all other buddhas and bodhisattvas who abide in the ten directions, and all the venerable Sangha, please pay attention to me.**

**I, who am named [say your name], circling in cyclic existence since beginningless time until the present, overpowered by mental afflictions such as attachment, aversion, and ignorance by means of body, speech, and mind have created the ten non-virtuous actions. I have engaged in the five uninterrupted negative karmas and the five nearing uninterrupted negative karmas.<sup>1</sup> I have transgressed the vows of individual liberation, transgressed the vows of bodhisattvas, and transgressed the samaya of secret mantra.<sup>2</sup> I have been disrespectful to my parents, have been disrespectful to my vajra masters, and to my abbot, and have been disrespectful to my spiritual friends living in ordination.<sup>3</sup> I have committed actions harmful to the Three Jewels, avoided the holy Dharma,<sup>4</sup> criticized the arya Sangha,<sup>5</sup> harmed sentient beings, and so on. These and many other non-virtuous negative actions I have done, have caused others to do, have rejoiced in others' doing, and so forth.**



**In the presence of the great Guru Vajradhara, all the buddhas and bodhisattvas who abide in the ten directions, and the venerable Sangha, I admit this entire collection of faults and transgressions that are obstacles to my own higher rebirth and liberation and are causes of cyclic existence and miserable lower rebirths. I will not conceal them, and I accept them as negative. I promise to refrain from doing these actions again in the future.<sup>6</sup> By confessing and acknowledging them, I will attain and abide in happiness, while by not confessing and acknowledging them, true happiness will not come.**

### *Visualization at the End of the Confession Prayer*

Think that through the force of reciting these names of the Thirty-Five Buddhas of Confession and Medicine Buddhas, through the power of their pure prayers and vows, through the power of generating regret and the other opponent forces, and through the power of having made these prostrations, nectars and light rays descend from the holy bodies of the buddhas, completely purifying all negative karmas, defilements, and imprints collected on your mental continuum since beginningless time. Generate strong faith that your mind has become completely pure.

Then reflect on emptiness. In emptiness there is no I, the creator of negative actions. In emptiness there is no creating of negative actions. In emptiness there are no negative actions created. Even though there are infinite phenomena, in emptiness nothing exists at all. There is no this and that, no me and you, nothing. In emptiness everything is one taste. From this emptiness, everything comes into existence. Whatever exists is the manifestation of emptiness.

## *Dedication*

Due to all the three time merits accumulated by myself, all the buddhas and bodhisattvas and all sentient beings, which are completely empty of existing from their own side, may the I, which is completely empty of existing from its own side, quickly achieve the state of full enlightenment, which is completely empty of existing from its own side, in order to lead all sentient beings, who are completely empty of existing from their own side, to that state by myself alone, who is completely empty of existing from its own side.

Due to all the three time merits accumulated by myself, all the buddhas and bodhisattvas and all sentient beings, may the precious supreme enlightened thought, bodhichitta – letting go of self and cherishing others – which is the source of all success and happiness for myself and all sentient beings, immediately be generated within my own mind, and within the minds of all sentient beings. May that which has already been generated never decline, but increase more and more.

## Notes:

1. These five negative karmas – killing one’s father or mother, killing an arhat, causing disunity amongst the Sangha, harming the Buddha– are called uninterrupted because if this negative karma is accumulated, then immediately after death, without ‘interruption’ of another life, one is reborn in the lowest hot hell, number eight, the most unbearable one, which has the heaviest suffering. The five nearing uninterrupted karmas are committing incest with one’s mother who is an arhat, killing a bodhisattva who is destined to become a buddha in that very life, killing a Hinayana arya other than one abiding in the result of arhatship, stealing the possessions of the Sangha, and destroying a stupa or monastery out of hatred.
2. Tantric samaya is not just doing a sadhana, not just reciting words. At the time of a highest yoga tantra initiation, the disciple is put under pledge or samaya. There are many codes of conduct to be upheld. It is not just a question of remembering to recite the sadhana or mantra commitment of the particular deity into which one has been initiated.
3. According to Lama Zopa Rinpoche, this refers to the ordained Sangha, those living in celibacy. Literally it says: “those who are engaged in similar behavior to perfectness,” which means that by living in ordination one’s conduct is harmonized to achieve buddhahood. This phrase can also refer to vajra kin, those with whom we have taken initiations.
4. Avoiding the holy Dharma is very heavy negative karma, worse than having destroyed every single holy object – statue, stupa, and scripture – that exists in the world.
5. This is the very heavy negative karma of having criticized holy beings, arya beings – those who have the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness and have achieved the right seeing path, the path of meditation, and the path of no more learning, whether Hinayana or Mahayana. It can also include other members of the Sangha.
6. Think, “The ones from which I can abstain, I will. The ones from which it is extremely difficult, I will abstain for one day, or one hour, or one minute, even one second.” Make this promise, but let it be something you can actually keep so that it doesn’t become lying to the merit field. Restraint is the last of the four opponent powers. All four should be complete: refuge, regret, remedy, and restraint.

### Colophons:

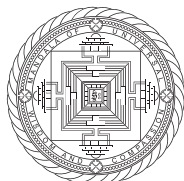
*The Confession of Downfalls* is based on an original translation by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, extracted from the booklet entitled, *The Bodhisattva's Confession of Moral Downfalls*, Kopan Monastery, Nepal. Originally revised and edited by Vens. Thubten Dondrub, George Churinoff, and Constance Miller, FPMT Education Services, 2000. Additional revisions made according to instructions by Lama Zopa Rinpoche given at the Mitrugpa retreat, Milarepa Center, Vermont, USA, August 2002. Motivation, visualizations, and meditations compiled by Ven. Sarah Thresher according to instructions of Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Additional editing and corrections made by Ven. Gyalten Mindrol, FPMT Education Services, November 2005.

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*General Confession* is based on a translation by Glenn H. Mullin, with adjustments by Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Lightly edited by Ven. Sarah Thresher and Kendall Magnussen, FPMT Education Services, January 2003. The line "have been disrespectful to my spiritual friends living in ordination" was changed according to verbal instruction of Lama Zopa Rinpoche, October 2005.



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