

THE BEAUTY AND BENEFITS OF OFFERING FLOWERS

Lama Zopa Rinpoche has composed a comprehensive flower offering practice for accumulating great merit. This is a short summary.



From the sutra *Distinguishing the Aspects of Karma (Lanam Je)*: There are ten benefits of offering flowers [to objects such as the buddhas, statues, *stupas*, scriptures, etc.]:

1. One becomes like a flower in the world. (You will be very beautiful; everyone will be attracted and amazed to look at you and will remember seeing you.)
2. The sense of smell will never degenerate. (Some people have sicknesses in the nose so that the sense of smell doesn't function.)
3. One will never have bad body odor. (This will be completely purified.)
4. A smell of scented nectar will come from the body.
5. The smell of the morality of the person will spread in all directions and corners.
6. One will be a leader of the world. (One will be a leader of people, of the world, of holy beings.)
7. One will achieve beautiful attractive things.
8. One will have great wealth.
9. One will be reborn in a higher rebirth.
10. One will quickly achieve the sorrowless state and achieve enlightenment, the great liberation.

Before beginning the practice, Lama Zopa says, one needs to set the motivation: "The purpose of my life is to free all sentient beings from sufferings and their causes, the negative imprints, and to lead all beings to enlightenment, to bring them to the peerless state of perfect bliss and peace. To do this, I must achieve enlightenment; therefore, I am going to make charity to all sentient beings and make the offering of flowers to the Guru-Triple Gem."

The practice includes several mantras, as well as instructions on how, to whom and in what sequence to make the offerings.

"People who are not familiar with these practices can instead make the offerings to all the holy beings of the different traditions – Jesus, St. Francis, etc. – whatever is their object of faith, their refuge. Most important is to think that their essence is complete compassion, wisdom, and perfect power to liberate others. Looking at that quality – which means they are the same as a fully enlightened being, the same essence – then one makes the offerings to all the saints and holy beings of the different traditions.

"The flower offering practice is used to make charity to all beings who have depression, those who have fear of death and dying, people whose minds are filled with anger, the emotional mind, the mind that thinks, 'I am abused by others, badly treated by others,' the mind that is full of desire.

"Think of people with marriage problems where one's husband or wife is unfaithful or has left, or who argue a lot.



Immediately, by making the offering, so much loving kindness, tolerance, and affectionate mind is generated in them, and instead of wanting to harm, they want to help. Also, it is good to think of this one person as the most precious one in your life, the most kind and precious one who helps me. By receiving the flower offerings, their hearts are filled with tolerance, they have a very happy mind, filled with patience and loving kindness toward all living beings.

“Making these offerings purifies negative karma as well as helping you to overcome the emotional mind. By being liberated from that, it allows one to practice loving kindness and compassion as well as tolerance. It allows one to have

realizations of renunciation, realizing how this samsara is in the nature of suffering and so because of that one definitely needs to achieve liberation, ultimate happiness. Thus, we can use this life’s situation to inspire and awaken the sleeping mind, the hallucinating mind, to see the truth – how this life is in the nature of suffering, samsara. Our life is in the nature of suffering and we need to put effort to be liberated from this; otherwise, we will have to suffer again and again without end.”

The practice can be dedicated for oneself, one’s family members, and all sentient beings. By this, may they all generate a good heart, wisdom, and particularly, universal responsibility. ☸



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The full flower offering practice may be ordered from FPMT Education Department at www.fpmt.org/education/materials_public.asp for \$2 plus postage and handling.

