

Methods to Counteract Spirit Harm

Here are four things you can do when you are being harmed by a spirit (feeling such things as the spirit pressing down on your chest and so on):

- 1) Generate yourself as Yamantaka and then the spirit cannot harm you
- 2) Also you can visualize the spirit as Guru-Deity Yamantaka
- 3) Use the experience to meditate on emptiness
- 4) Develop compassion toward the spirit

How to meditate on emptiness:

Seal these three things – the harm giver, which is the spirit, yourself, the object to be harmed, and the action of being harmed – in emptiness. Regard these three things as not inherently existent, because they are dependent arisings, which means they are merely imputed by mind. Meditate that these three (subject, action, and object) are not truly existent.

One simple way is to think that these three are not true, meaning that they are empty. Since what appears to exist from its own side is not true, then you see it as nonexistent, empty. Meditate on this and then think these three are empty because they are dependent arisings. Meditate on the meaning of the Prasangika view, the extremely subtle view of dependent arising, of merely labeled by the mind, which makes you see the reality – that is empty.

So the first method – meditating on emptiness – eliminates eternalism. The second method – dependent arising – eliminates nihilism. This is the very powerful middle way view on emptiness, which is the Prasangika view.

You can meditate on these verses from *The Three Principal Aspects of the Path* by Lama Tsongkhapa:

Appearances are infallible dependent origination;
Voidness is free of assertions.
As long as these two understandings are seen as separate,
One has not yet realized the intent of the Buddha.

When these two realizations are simultaneous and concurrent,
From a mere sight of infallible dependent origination
Comes certain knowledge that completely destroys all modes of mental grasping.
At that time the analysis of the profound view is complete.

Appearances clear away the extreme of existence;
Voidness clears away the extreme of non-existence.
When you understand the arising of cause and effect from the viewpoint of voidness,
You are not captivated by either extreme view.

How to develop compassion toward the spirit:

Think that the spirit is totally overwhelmed by delusion and ignorance, the totally hallucinating, cheating mind, as well as under the power of karma and the disturbing thoughts. Think that the spirit is in samsara, completely overwhelmed by suffering. Generate compassion by reflecting in this way.

Each time the spirit harms you, the spirit creates negative karma that causes him or her to be reborn in the hell realms, or again as a spirit, a hell being, or an animal. That being again harms me and others and again creates negative karma, creating more causes to continuously be born in the lower realms and experience unimaginable suffering again and again.

Another method to develop compassion is to think: If I were already enlightened or liberated from samsara, already not suffering nor under the power of karma and delusion, then the spirit could not harm me. Therefore, the spirit would not create negative karma by harming me, because from my side there would be no cause to receive harm from the spirit. So the spirit couldn't create heavy negative karma by harming me.

You can meditate on these verses from *The Three Principal Aspects of the Path*:

Swept by the current of the four powerful rivers,
Tied by strong bonds of karma, so hard to undo,
Caught in the iron net of self-grasping,
Completely enveloped by the darkness of ignorance,

Born and reborn in boundless samsara,
Ceaselessly tormented by the three miseries –
All beings, your mothers, are in this condition.
Think of them and generate bodhi-mind.

Also you can think: In the past I have caused harm to the spirit, which has caused him or her to engage in negative karma and to harm me in this life. Therefore, I deserve to receive harm from the spirit now. This is my karma because I have harmed the spirit before. So this experience is the result of my past karma. Thus, I must not harm others, I must practice my samaya vows and protect my karma – practice cause and effect.

So use these ways of thinking to develop compassion. Think: I must do something to liberate the spirit, so therefore I must practice Dharma. Thus, in order to really benefit other sentient beings, to not harm other sentient beings, and to benefit sentient beings I must actualize the path to enlightenment. Therefore, I must first achieve enlightenment myself, and the quickest way to do that is by actualizing the Three Principles of the Path, especially the practice of tantra, so that I can quickly lead all beings on the path to liberation and enlightenment.

Colophon:

Advice for one monk who was being attacked by spirits, even being thrown from his bed.

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