Advice to Correctly Follow the Virtuous Friend with Thought and Action: The Nine Attitudes of Guru Devotion
Advice to Correctly Follow the Virtuous Friend with Thought and Action: The Nine Attitudes of Guru Devotion

In order to quickly set all my mother sentient beings, who have protected me with kindness from beginningless lives in cyclic existence, in the state of a complete buddha, I myself must attain the perfectly complete state of a buddha. Therefore, I will practice the nine attitudes for resolutely considering and seeing my virtuous friend to be a buddha and carrying out his orders.

Sang gyä kün lä lhag päi drin chän je
I request the kind lord root guru,
Tsa wäi la ma nam la söl wa deb
Who is more extraordinary than all the buddhas:
Tshe rab kün tu tshän dän la ma je
Please bless me to be able to devote myself with great respect
Gü pa chhen pö ten par jin gyi lob
To a qualified lord guru in all my lives.

 Yöṅ tän zhi gyur drin chän la ma je
Realizing that correctly devoting myself to the kind lord guru—
Tshül zhin ten pa de leg tsa wa ru
Who is the foundation of all good qualities—
She nä sog gi chhir yang mi pong war
Is the root of happiness and goodness, I will devote myself to him
Rab tu gü pä go nā ten par ja
With great respect, not forsaking him even at the cost of my life.

1. Tshān dān la māi ngor ta wang du tang
Thinking of the importance of the qualified guru, I will allow myself to enter under his control.
Ka zhin je pa dzāng pāi bu tar ja
May I be like an obedient son, acting exactly in accordance with the guru’s advice.

2. Dü dang dig drog sog kyi yen jā rung
Even when maras, evil friends, and the like try to split me from the guru,
Nam yang mi chhe dor je ta bur ja
May I be like a vajra, inseparable forever.

3. La māi ja wa lā dön khur kur kyang
When the guru gives me work, whatever the burden,
Tham chā khur wa sa zhi ta bur ja
May I be like the earth, carrying it all.

4. La ma ten dü dug ngāl chi jung kyang
When I devote myself to the guru, whatever suffering occurs,
Gūl mi nū pa ri wo ta bur ja
May I be like a mountain, immovable.

5. Ngān lā tham chā nyam su len gō kyang
Even if I have to perform every unpleasant task,
Yi mi thrug pa gyāl pōi drān tar ja
May I be like a servant of the king, with a mind undisturbed.
6. **Nga gyäl pang nä la ma nam lā rang**
   Having abandoned pride, holding myself
   **Ma war dzin pa chhag dar ta bu ja**
   Lower than the guru, may I be like a sweeper.

7. **La māi ku dön ja kā khur tsi wa**
   May I be like a rope, joyfully holding the guru’s work,
   **Tro zhin dzin pa thag pa ta bur ja**
   No matter how difficult or heavy a burden.

8. **La mā nyā shing she la tshang drū kyang**
   Even when the guru criticizes, provokes, or ignores me,
   **De la thro wa me pa khyi tar ja**
   May I be like a dog, never responding with anger.

9. **La māi dön du dro zhing ong wa la**
   May I be like a ferry boat, never upset
   **Nam yang kyo wa me pa dru tar ja**
   At any time to come and go for the guru.

**Pāl dān tsā wāi la ma rin po chhe**
Glorious and precious root guru,
**Dag gi de tar nū par jin gyi lob**
Please bless me to be able to practice in this way.
**Deng nā zung te tshe rab tham chā du**
From now on and in all my future lives,
**Ge wāi she nyen de tar ten par shog**
May I be able to devote myself to the virtuous friend
in this way.

*If you recite these words aloud and mentally reflect on their meaning, you will have the good fortune to be able to devote yourself correctly to a virtuous friend in life after life.*
If, with these nine attitudes, you serve and respect the virtuous friend, even if you do not practice intentionally, you will naturally develop excellent qualities within your mindstream and complete the extensive merits of virtue, thereby quickly becoming a perfectly complete buddha.

Colophons:

Original Colophon:
Apart from the title, these precious verses, which accord with the teachings in Je Rinpoche Tsongkhapa’s *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path* on correctly devoting to the virtuous friend with the nine attitudes, were compiled by the ascetic mahasiddha Tshogdrub Rangdröl.

Publisher’s Colophon:

Lama Zopa Rinpoche gave the instruction to change the title from *Practicing Guru Devotion with the Nine Attitudes* to *Advice to Correctly Follow the Virtuous Friend with Thought and Action: The Nine Attitudes of Guru Devotion* in Bendigo, Australia, 2014.

Notes
1. It has been suggested to change “son” to “child.” However, according to Lama Zopa Rinpoche: “The term ‘son’ is not used in dependence upon the characteristics of the body, but of the mind. This term is used because it is normally the son who becomes the king. The daughter becomes the queen, but does not become the king. Because this example is applied here, the disciple is called ‘the son of the vajra master,’ but it has nothing to do with the body.”
Dharma materials contain the teachings of the Buddha and thus protect against lower rebirth and reveal the path to enlightenment. Therefore, they should be treated with respect.

Printed Dharma materials, as well as phones, tablets, laptops, and hard drives containing Dharma, should be kept off the floor, beds, chairs, meditation cushions, and all other places where people sit or walk. Dharma materials should not be stepped over or put in places where the feet or buttocks will point at them. They should be covered or protected for transporting and kept in a high, clean place separate from more mundane materials. Other objects, including statues, stupas, ritual implements, malas, reading glasses, and so forth, should not be placed on top of Dharma books and devices containing Dharma materials. Avoid licking the fingers to turn the pages of Dharma texts.

If it is necessary to dispose of printed Dharma materials, they should be burned rather than thrown in the trash. When burning Dharma texts, visualize that the letters transform into an A (ༀ) and the A absorbs into your heart. Imagine burning blank paper. As the paper burns, recite ОṂ ĀḤ HŪṂ or the Heart Sutra, while meditating on emptiness.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche recommends that images of holy beings, deities, and holy objects not be burned. Ideally, if undamaged, they should be put in a stupa. Otherwise, put them high up in a tree inside a well-sealed structure, something like a bird house, so that the images are protected from the weather and do not end up on the ground.
Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition