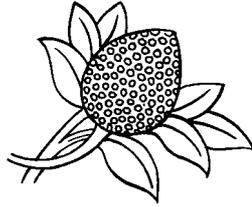


# *Food Offering Practices*



*Includes Extensive Food Offering, and  
Yogas of Eating According to  
Hinayana, Mahayana Sutra  
and Mahayana Tantra*



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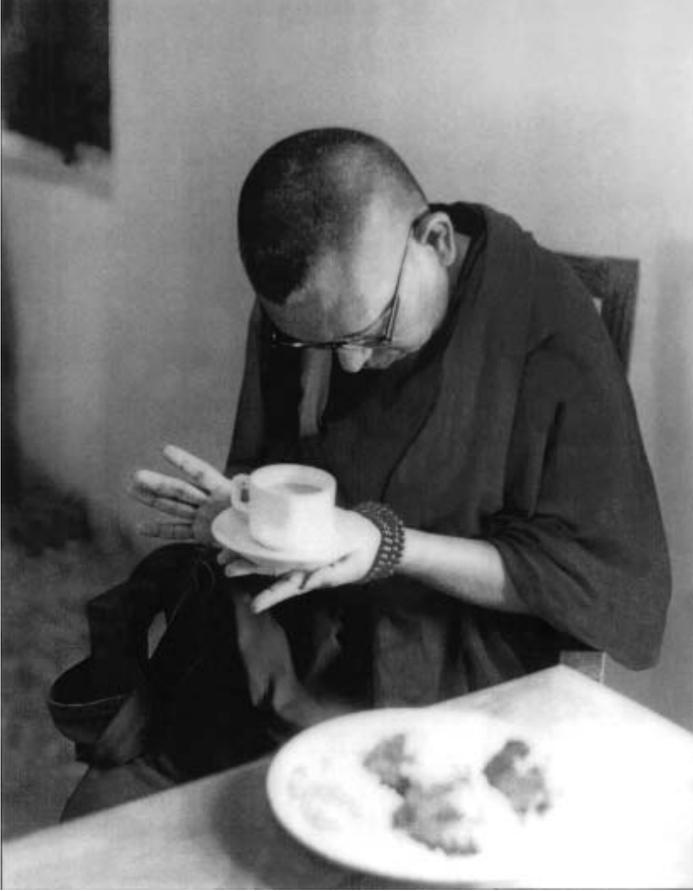
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Photo on page 4: Lama Zopa Rinpoche, courtesy of Venerable Roger Kunsang.

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# The Yoga of Offering Food

## *The Three Ways of Offering Food*

There are Hinayana and Mahayana ways of offering food. The Mahayana way includes both the Paramitayana and Secret Mantra, or Vajrayana. Making charity of food to all sentient beings, including those who live in our bodies, is the Mahayana way.

The Hinayana way of offering food is basically as expressed in the prayer by Nagarjuna, in which he says that the purpose of eating food is not to develop the body, to put on weight or become fit – purposes that come only from attachment – but simply to survive in order to practice Dharma. Food should be eaten without the three poisonous minds of ignorance, attachment, and anger. With the motivation seeking your own freedom from samsara, offer your food to the Triple Gem and then eat it.

The Mahayana sutra way of eating food is to dedicate every spoonful of food and mouthful of drink to all sentient beings, including those living in your body. In this way, you make a connection with all sentient beings so that when they become human in future lives, you can reveal the Dharma to them and lead them to enlightenment. The Mahayana way of offering food is thus done with bodhichitta motivation, as are all the daily actions of a Mahayana practitioner, thereby becoming a cause for achieving enlightenment.

The Mahayana tantra way of eating food is to see yourself, your guru, and the deity as one. Offer everything you eat and drink to the oneness of the three: the guru, the deity, and yourself. You understand that you are all the buddhas, but in the aspect of the deity you are practicing. If you make the food offering with that awareness, every single thing you eat and drink becomes a tsog offering. Every

bite and every sip becomes an extraordinarily powerful means of purifying all negative karma, defilements, and degenerated samaya vows and of collecting vast amounts of merit.

With this meditation – the guru yoga mind that sees yourself as one with your guru and the deity – you create more merit than that of making offerings to all the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and all the statues, scriptures, stupas, and thangkas of the buddhas in the ten directions. The merit of making offerings to all Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha and all statues, scriptures, stupas, and thangkas in the ten directions becomes insignificant when compared to the merit you create when you offer each spoonful of food and each mouthful of drink to yourself as one with your guru and deity.

The main thing is thinking of and making offering to yourself as the guru. Thinking of yourself as your Guru and making offering with guru yoga mind is an unbelievably powerful means of creating merit. There is a huge difference in the amount of merit created between offering to the Buddha without thinking of the Guru and offering by thinking of the guru. You create vastly more merit when you think of the guru and make offering.

You can apply this practice to all other daily activities in order to create extensive merit. When you enjoy objects of the five senses – beautiful sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and tangible objects – or when you receive something from somebody, if you think that you are making an offering to yourself as the guru-deity, you create an enormous amount of merit. In this way you can make everything you do in your daily life extremely meaningful. Similarly, when you wash yourself, if you do the washing yoga of offering a bath to the guru-deity, it becomes a very powerful means of purification.

As the great Tibetan yogi Milarepa, who attained enlightenment in just a few years of this brief lifetime of the degenerate age, said, “Every time I walk, I circumambulate all the holy beings; everything I eat becomes a tsog offering.” There is more to this quote, but in short, it means that everything he did became a powerful means of purifying his mind and creating merit and, therefore, a quick path to enlightenment.

Similarly, whatever you do – eating, walking, washing, everything else – can become a very powerful method for quickly achieving enlightenment. As you purify and collect extensive merit, you bring yourself closer to enlightenment, every minute of every day. In this way, you make your life most beneficial, meaningful, satisfying, and fulfilling. Through this Mahayana practice, which is based on the Hinayana and adorned with the Vajrayana, your life becomes most beneficial, not only for yourself but for all sentient beings.



*On the following pages, you will find an Extensive Food Offering Practice, General Food Offering Prayers, and the Yogas of Eating Food According to Hinayana, Mahayana Sutra and Mahayana Tantra. Each of these are stand alone practices that one can combine according to time and inspiration.*

# Extensive Food Offering Practice

## Motivation

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Think:

---

The purpose of my life is to free all living beings from all suffering and its cause and lead them to full enlightenment.

There are numberless hell beings from whom I receive all my past, present and future happiness, all realizations and enlightenment. They are the kindest, most precious beings in my life. Therefore, I must liberate them from all suffering and its cause and lead them to enlightenment by myself, alone.

There are numberless hungry ghosts from whom I receive all my past, present and future happiness, all realizations and enlightenment. They are the kindest, most precious beings in my life. Therefore, I must liberate them from all suffering and its cause and lead them to enlightenment by myself, alone.

There are numberless animals from whom I receive all my past, present and future happiness, all realizations and enlightenment. They are the kindest, most precious beings in my life. Therefore, I must liberate them from all suffering and its cause and lead them to enlightenment by myself, alone.

There are numberless human beings from whom I receive all my past, present and future happiness, all realizations and enlightenment. They are the kindest, most precious beings in my life. Therefore, I must liberate them from all suffering and its cause and lead them to enlightenment by myself, alone.

There are numberless sura beings from whom I receive all my past, present and future happiness, all realizations and enlightenment. They are the kindest, most precious beings in my life. Therefore, I must liberate them from all suffering and its cause and lead them to enlightenment by myself, alone.

There are numberless asura beings from whom I receive all my past, present and future happiness, all realizations and enlightenment. They are the kindest, most precious beings in my life. Therefore, I must liberate them from all suffering and its cause and lead them to enlightenment by myself, alone.

There are numberless intermediate state beings from whom I receive all my past, present and future happiness, all realizations and enlightenment. They are the kindest, most precious beings in my life. Therefore, I must liberate them from all suffering and its cause and lead them to enlightenment by myself, alone.

In order to do all this, I must first achieve full enlightenment myself. Therefore, I am going to practice the yoga of eating and make charity to all sentient beings, including those who live in my body, and, through the connection with all sentient beings I have created by making food charity to them at this time, bring them to full enlightenment by teaching them Dharma when they become human.

## **Visualization**

---

If you are familiar with the visualization, visualize the *Guru Puja* merit field. If not, simply visualize the deity that you practice, for example, Chenrezig, Tara or Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. But when you visualize the single aspect, remember that in essence it is your root virtuous friend, who is, in essence, all gurus, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and the statues, stupas, scriptures, and thangkas of the ten directions.

---

Visualizing in one of these ways, make the offering, thinking that numberless buddhas throughout the ten directions receive an immeasurable amount of nectar.

## ***Blessing the Offerings***

OM AH HUM (3X)

### ***Mantra of Clouds of Offerings***

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE VAJRA SARA PRAMARDANE  
TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAKSAM BUDDHAYA /  
TADYATHA OM VAJRE VAJRE / MAHA VAJRE / MAHA TEJA  
VAJRE / MAHA VIDYA VAJRE / MAHA BODHICHITTA VAJRE /  
MAHA BODHI MÄNDO PASAM KRAMANA VAJRE / SARVA  
KARMA AVARANA VISHO DHANA VAJRE SVAHA (3X)

### ***Extensive Power of Truth***

By the power of truth of the Three Rare Sublime Ones,  
The blessings of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas,  
The great wealth of the completed two collections, and the sphere  
of phenomena being pure and inconceivable;  
May these piles of clouds of offerings arising through transforma-  
tion by the bodhisattvas Arya Samantabhadra, Manjushri, and so  
forth – unimaginable and inexhaustible, equaling the sky – arise  
and, in the eyes of the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten direc-  
tions, be received.

Also, bless all the extensive offerings in all FPMT center gompas, East and West, at Kopan, Tushita Dharamsala, and everywhere else. In the house where I live in America there are well over 400 water bowl offerings, thousands of light offerings and flowers as well, so you can offer all those offerings, too, along with any offerings at your own house. You can bless them all together here.

---

Again, recite the mantra to multiply the offerings:

---

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE VAJRA SARA PRAMARDANE  
 TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAKSAM BUDDHAYA /  
 TADYATHA OM VAJRE VAJRE / MAHA VAJRE / MAHA TEJA  
 VAJRE / MAHA VIDYA VAJRE / MAHA BODHICHITTA VAJRE /  
 MAHA BODHI MÄNDO PASAM KRAMANA VAJRE / SARVA  
 KARMA AVARANA VISHO DHANA VAJRE SVAHA (3x)

## *Offering the Food*

*Offering to the Guru Puja merit field or the one deity that you are visualizing as everything<sup>1</sup>*

Put your palms together and prostrate to each guru in the merit field (or to the one deity that you are visualizing as everything), meditating that their essence is your root virtuous friend. Visualize that each one receives numberless nectar food offerings and generate infinite bliss within their mind.

Do these three actions – prostrating, offering and generating infinite bliss – over and over again, as many times as possible or at least twenty-one times. This also applies to each of the following offerings to all the other holy objects.

*Offering to all the Buddhas, Dharma and Sangha in the ten directions*

Prostrate and make numberless nectar food offerings to all the Buddhas, Dharma and Sangha in the ten directions, meditating that their essence is your root virtuous friend. From your side, generate infinite bliss within them.

*Offering to all the statues, stupas, scriptures and thangkas of the ten directions*

Prostrate and make numberless nectar food offerings to all the statues, stupas, scriptures and thangkas of the ten directions, meditating that their essence is your root virtuous friend. Generate infinite bliss within them as many times as possible.

### *Offering to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and all other virtuous friends*

Prostrate and make numberless nectar food offerings to the Buddha of Compassion, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and all your other virtuous friends, meditating that their essence is your root virtuous friend. Generate infinite bliss within them as many times as possible.

### *Offering to all the holy objects in India*

Prostrate and make numberless nectar food offerings to all the holy objects in India, meditating that their essence is your root virtuous friend. Generate infinite bliss within them as many times as possible.

### *Offering to all the holy objects in Tibet*

Prostrate and make numberless nectar food offerings to all the holy objects in Tibet, including the stupa we built at Sera monastery and the Shakyamuni Buddha statue in the Jokhang,<sup>2</sup> Lhasa's central temple, meditating that their essence is your root virtuous friend. Generate infinite bliss within them as many times as possible.

### *Offering to all the holy objects in Nepal*

Prostrate and make numberless nectar food offerings to all the holy objects in Nepal, for example, the Swayambhunath stupa<sup>3</sup> and the Boudhanath stupa,<sup>4</sup> as well as all the other holy objects in Nepal, meditating that their essence is your root virtuous friend. Generate infinite bliss within them as many times as possible.

### *Offering to all the holy objects in all other Buddhist countries*

Prostrate and make numberless nectar food offerings to all the holy objects in all other Buddhist countries, such as Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand and the rest, meditating that their essence is your root virtuous friend. Generate infinite bliss within them as many times as possible.

### *Offering to the Medicine Buddhas, Ksitigarbha and Chenrezig*

Prostrate and make numberless nectar food offerings to the seven Medicine Buddhas for success, to Buddha Ksitigarbha so that you can fulfill the wishes of all the sentient beings, instantly bringing them all happiness up to enlightenment, and to Thousand-Arm Chenrezig so that you can develop great compassion and liberate numberless sentient beings from all their suffering and bring them to full enlightenment, meditating that their essence is your root virtuous friend. Generate infinite bliss within them as many times as possible.

### *Offering to all sentient beings*<sup>5</sup>

Then make numberless nectar food offerings to every hell being, every hungry ghost, every animal, every human being, every asura being, every sura being and every intermediate state being. They fully enjoy those offerings and become completely liberated from all suffering and its cause. They all become enlightened in the aspect of Shakyamuni Buddha or the deity you practice.

## *Additional Offerings*

### *Offering to the Guru Puja merit field or the one deity that you are visualizing as everything*

Now prostrate and make all those other offerings – the light offerings wherever you are, those in your own houses, the extensive offerings in all FPMT center gompas and all the extensive offerings in the house in America that I mentioned before – which are nature of infinite bliss, to each guru in the Guru Puja merit field (or to the one deity that you are visualizing as everything), meditating that their essence is your root virtuous friend.

Do these three actions – prostrating, offering and generating infinite bliss – over and over again, as many times as possible or at least twenty-one times.

Continue doing the three actions of prostrating, offering and generating infinite bliss as many times as you can while making offerings to all the other holy objects as follows:

---

***Make extensive blissful offerings to:***

All the Buddhas, Dharma and Sangha in the ten directions

All the statues, stupas, scriptures and thangkas of the ten directions

His Holiness the Dalai Lama and all other virtuous friends

All the holy objects in India

All the holy objects in Tibet

All the holy objects in Nepal

All the holy objects in all other Buddhist countries

The Eight Medicine Buddhas, Ksitigarbha and Chenrezig

---

Continue to present these offerings for a total of twenty-one times or however many times you are able by prostrating, offering, and generating great bliss in the guru's holy mind.

Then, refer to the following pages for General Food Offering Prayers and the visualization to use while eating. Extensive dedication prayers begin on p. 31.

---

# General Food Offering Prayers

## *Blessing and Visualization*

---

Recite OMAHHUM three times to consecrate the food or beverage and visualize it as blissful wisdom nectar inside a vast jeweled vessel. Visualize your guru at your heart in the aspect of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Then offer using any of the following verses.

As you eat or drink, imagine that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, who embodies the Triple Gem inseparable from your guru, experiences great bliss from the nectar that you have offered. He radiates light which fills your entire body.

---

OM AH HUM (3x)

---

OPTIONAL: To make the offerings as extensive as possible and bless them to actually be received, recite the Mantra of Clouds of Offerings and the Extensive Power of Truth (p. 10) before presenting the offerings with any of the offering verses below.

---

### *Offering to the Guru as the Triple Gem*

LA MA SANG GYÄ LA MA CHHÖ

**The Guru is Buddha, the Guru is Dharma,**

DE ZHIN LA MA GE DÜN TE

**The Guru is Sangha also.**

KÜN GYI JE PO LA MA TE

**The Guru is the creator of all (happiness).**

LA MA NAM LA CHHÖ PAR BÜL

**To all gurus, I make this offering.**

## *Offering and Request to the Three Jewels*

DAG SOG KHOR CHÄ TSHE RAB THAM CHÄ DU

**May we and those around us, in all future lives,**

KÖN CHHOG SUM DANG NAM YANG MI DRÄL ZHING

**Never be separated from the Three Jewels,**

KÖN CHHOG SUM PO GYÜN DU CHHÖ PA LA

**Continuously make offerings to the Three Jewels.**

KÖN CHHOG SUM GYI JIN LAB JUG PAR SHOG

**And receive the inspiration of the Three Jewels.**

## *Offering Prayer to Buddha, Dharma & Sangha*

TÖN PA LA ME SANG GYÄ RIN PO CHHE

**To the supreme teacher, the precious Buddha,**

KYOB PA LA ME DAM CHHÖ RIN PO CHHE

**To the supreme refuge, the precious Dharma,**

DREN PA LA ME GE DÜN RIN PO CHHE

**To the supreme guides, the precious Sangha,**

KYAB NÄ KÖN CHHOG SUM LA CHHÖ PA BÜL

**To the Triple Gem, the objects of refuge, I make offering.**



# *Yoga of Eating Food According to Hínayana (and for Sangha)*

## *Prayers to Recite Before Lunch*

OM AH HUM (3x)

Compassionate Lord,  
All-knowing guide,  
Field of merit and ocean of qualities,  
Tathagata, to you I pay homage.

Through purity free of attachment;  
Through virtue free of the lower realms;  
Uniquely ultimate supreme,  
Peaceful Dharma, to you I pay homage.

Showing the path that frees those seeking freedom;  
Well-established in the trainings;  
Pure among fields possessing qualities;  
To the Sangha I also pay homage.

To the principal Buddha, homage.  
To the Dharma that protects, homage.  
To the Sangha assembly, homage.  
Homage always to the three.

The qualities of Buddha are inconceivable.  
The qualities of Dharma are inconceivable.  
The Arya Sangha are inconceivable.  
Through generating faith in the inconceivable,  
The karmic ripening result will also be inconceivable.  
May we be born in a pure realm.

To the precious Buddha, the peerless guide;  
To the precious Dharma, the peerless refuge;  
To the precious Sangha, the peerless liberators.  
We offer to the three jewels of refuge.

This food, which has a hundred flavors,  
Which is mouth watering and well-made,  
To the king and his sons we offer with faith.  
Through this offering, may all migrators become wealthy  
And enjoy the food of concentration.

Seeing this food as medicine,  
We eat it without attachment or aversion,  
Not to become fat, not out of pride,  
Not to look strong, only to sustain the body.

## ***Prayers to Recite After Lunch***

### ***Mantra to offer food to the pretas***

OM UCCHISHTA PANDI AH SHI BHYA SVAHA

I prostrate to the Bhagavan the Tathagata, the Arhat, the fully accomplished Buddha, King of Jewel Light, Thoroughly Illuminating Fire Light (*Ratnaprabharaja Jvalanakaraprakritita*) (7x)

### ***Mantra to purify negativities associated with the offerings***

NAMA SAMANTA PRABHA RAJAYA / TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE  
SAMYAK SAMBUDDHAYA / NAMO MANJUSHRIYE / KUMARA

BHUTAYA BODHISATTVAYA / MAHA SATTVAYA / MAHA  
KARUNIKAYA / TADYATA / OM NIRALAMBHA NIRABHASE  
JAYA JAYE LAMBHE MAHA MATE DAKSHI DAKSHENAM  
MEPARISHVADHA SVAHA

May those who offered food to me attain the happiness of total peace. May all those who offered drink to me, served me, received me, respected me, and made offerings to me attain the happiness of total peace.

May all those who scold me, make me unhappy, hit me, attack me with weapons, and do things to me in every way up to the point of killing me attain the happiness of enlightenment and may they manifestly completely awaken to peerless, perfectly complete Buddhahood.

Through the merit of offering food, may they have good complexion, magnificence and strength, find foods having hundreds of tastes and be further sustained by the food of samadhi.

Through the merit of offering drink, may their hunger and thirst of delusion be pacified. May they possess good qualities such as generosity and take rebirth without sickness or thirst.

One who shows generosity, the recipient, and the action of generosity are not to be observed as existing inherently.

Through thinking in this way, may the benefactors receive all the merit equal to such generosity combined with wisdom.

Naga kings Nanda and Upananda,  
Gods with faith towards the Dharma,  
Leaders and patrons too,  
And other needy beings -  
May they win long life, health, abundance,  
And eternal happiness.

## *Dedication prayers*

Through the power of having been extensively generous,  
May I become a buddha for the sake of migrating beings  
And liberate through generosity the mass of beings  
Who have not been liberated by previous conquerors.  
Due to this merit, may all beings complete  
The accumulation of merit and wisdom  
And attain the two kayas  
Resulting from merit and wisdom.

Just as the brave Manjushri and Samantabhadra, too,  
Realized things as they are,  
I, too, dedicate all these merits in the best way,  
That I may follow their perfect example.

I dedicate all these roots of virtue  
With the dedication praised as the best  
By the victorious ones thus gone of the three times,  
So I might perform good works.

May the supreme jewel bodhichitta  
That has not arisen, arise and grow;  
And may that which has arisen not diminish  
But increase more and more.

---

For more extensive dedication prayers, go to p. 31.

---

# Yoga of Eating Food According to Mahayana Sutra

*There are three main activities: (1) make offerings to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, (2) make charity to sentient beings, and (3) practice eating yoga with a mind of bodhichitta.*

## Making Offerings

---

Recite OM AH HUM three times to consecrate the food or beverage and visualize it as blissful wisdom nectar inside a vast jewelled vessel.

---

OM AH HUM (3x)

---

To present the offerings in a more extensive way, continue with the following mantra and prayers. Otherwise, simply recite the Offering Prayer to the Three Jewels on p. 16.

---

## Offering Cloud Mantra

---

Multiplies the offerings so they become numberless.

---

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE VAJRA SARA PRAMARDANE  
TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAKSAM BUDDHAYA /  
TADYATHA / OM VAJRE VAJRE / MAHA VAJRE / MAHA  
TEJA VAJRE / MAHA VIDYA VAJRE / MAHA BODHICHITTA  
VAJRE / MAHA BODHI MÄNDO PASAM KRAMANA VAJRE /  
SARVA KARMA AVARANA VISHO DHANA VAJRE SVAHA (3x)

## Extensive Power of Truth

---

Blesses the offerings, thus enabling the buddhas to actually receive them.

---

KÖN CHHOG SUM GYI DEN PA DANG

**By the power of truth of the Three Rare Sublime Ones,**

SANG GYÄ DANG JANG CHHUB SEM PA THAM CHÄ KYI JIN GYI LAB  
DANG

**The blessings of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas,**

TSHOG NYI YONG SU DZOG PÄI NGA THANG CHHEN PO DANG

**The great wealth of the completed two collections,**

CHHÖ KYI YING NAM PAR DAG CHING SAM GYI MI KHYAB PÄI TOB KYI

**And the sphere of phenomena being pure and inconceivable;**

CHHOG CHU NA ZHUG PÄI SANG GYÄ DANG JANG CHHUB SEM PA  
THAM CHÄ DANG PHAG PA JAM PÄL DANG KUN TU ZANG PO LA SOG  
PÄI NAM PAR CHHÖ PÄI TRIN GYI PHUNG PO SAM GYI MI KHYAB PA ZÄ  
MI SHE PA NAM KHA GANG WAR GYUR

**May these piles of clouds of offerings arising through transformation by the bodhisattvas Arya Samantabhadra, Manjushri, and so forth – unimaginable and inexhaustible, equaling the sky – arise and, in the eyes of the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions, be received.**

---

Think that numberless buddhas receive numberless offerings and generate great bliss. Then, with hands in the mudra of prostration, do the following offering practice with three steps for each group of offerings: visualize prostrating, making offerings, and generate great bliss in the guru's holy mind.

---

## Extensive Offerings

I prostrate and make offerings to all direct and indirect gurus in the  
*Lama Chöpa* merit field,

I prostrate and make offerings to all the buddhas of the ten  
directions,

I prostrate and make offerings to all the statues, stupas, scriptures,  
and thangkas throughout all worlds.

All these are in essence my root guru – they are empty from their  
own side.

I prostrate, make offerings, and the guru's holy mind experiences  
great bliss.

## *Offering Prayer to the Three Jewels*<sup>8</sup>

TÖN PA LA ME SANG GYÄ RIN PO CHHE

**To the supreme teacher, the precious Buddha,**

KYOB PA LA ME DAM CHHÖ RIN PO CHHE

**To the supreme refuge, the precious Dharma,**

DREN PA LA ME GE DÜN RIN PO CHHE

**To the supreme guides, the precious Sangha,**

KYAB NÄ KÖN CHHOG SUM LA CHHÖ PA BÜL

**To the Triple Gem, the objects of refuge, I make offering.**

## *Making Charity to Sentient Beings*

Make charity of the food to the numberless hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, suras and asuras and to the intermediate state beings. Think that they are fully satisfied and generate the complete path to enlightenment in their mind. Every one of them becomes enlightened in the aspect of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

### *For the sentient beings in one's own body*

Dedicate every spoonful of food and mouthful of drink to all sentient beings, including the 21,000 beings living in your body.<sup>9</sup> In this way, you make a connection with all sentient beings and when they become human in future lives, you can reveal the Dharma to them and lead them to enlightenment. This way, eating is done with a bodhichitta motivation, thereby becoming a cause for achieving enlightenment.

## *Eating yoga*

Eat the food by seeing oneself as a servant and other sentient beings as the master, and eat in order to be able to serve them. Dedicate every spoonful and mouthful as described above.

## *Meditation on emptiness*

I, the action of offering, making charity, performing the yoga of eating; as well as Buddha, Dharma, Sangha and sentient beings – all those for whom I am doing all these practices; all these are merely labeled by mind. They exist in mere name, merely labeled by mind. I does not exist from its own side; it is empty. All these actions do not exist from their own side; they are empty. All the members of the merit field, they exist but they do not exist from their own side; they are empty. Sentient beings exist but they don't exist from their own side; they are empty.

---

This way, the very important foundations of Buddhadharma – bodhichitta, which is based on renunciation, and right view – method and wisdom, are done.

Then use any of the dedication prayers that begin on p.31.

---

# *Yoga of Eating Food*

## *According to Mahayana Tantra*

### *Practice Requirements*

To do the yoga of eating food according to tantra, one must have received a great initiation in either a lower class of tantra or highest yoga tantra. Then, within emptiness, arise as the deity inseparable from the guru to bless, offer, and enjoy the offerings. If your empowerment is not a highest yoga tantra empowerment, then bless the food as nectar within a jeweled vessel (as on p. 21) rather than transforming the five meats and five nectars in a skullcup as contained within the practice included here.

### *Instructions*

Each time you partake of food and drink, offer it to yourself as the guru-deity. In this way, especially when making offering to yourself as the guru-deity, you collect merit far greater than having made offerings to all the numberless past, present, and future Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha; and to all the holy objects, statues, scriptures, and stupas of the ten directions. With this yoga practice, the food does not pollute your mind, become poison to be reborn in the lower realms and a cause to block realizations. This way, eating only becomes a great purification and collects the most extensive merit; with each time you eat or drink bringing you closer to enlightenment and making your life most beneficial.

According to Mahayana tantra, there are two ways to do the yoga of eating:

- (1) As a **tsog offering** to yourself as the guru-deity. Offer the blessed nectar to the seed syllable at your heart or to the deity's body mandala (if there is one). Yourself as the guru-deity, the seed syllable at the heart and/or the deities at the heart – all are equal to the Guru and numberless Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. By eating in this way, you make offerings to all of them.

When you eat in the manner of tsog, it purifies negative karma, broken samayas, and collects extensive merit.

- (2) Eat the food in the manner of offering a **burning puja** to the deity. Of the two hands – the right is the *lug* – the ladle that puts things into the *gang*, that is the left hand. From there, it is offered to the guru-deity. Then generate great bliss that understands emptiness. In this way, eat in the manner of doing a fire puja.

When you eat as offering a fire puja, this purifies negative karma and collects merit.

You can also use the food as kundalini – which goes down and fuels the tummo fire whereby one experiences the four blisses.

This practice becomes an actual tsog offering if done together with the requisite tsog offering substances of *bala* and *mandana*. Lama Zopa Rinpoche has advised that you can keep a small container of these substances on your altar. Then, any time you eat and drink, you can offer it as tsog, inclusive of the requisite substances. Simply partake of the bala and mandana at any time that day after the offering has been made.

This offering practice may also be done without bala and mandana but then would not qualify as an *actual* tsog offering.

# The Actual Practice



## Blessing the Offering

E MA HO!

DE TONG NANG LÄ THÖ PÄI NANG

**Food, drink, five meats, five nectars – that which is in the skull –**

ZÄ THUNG SHA NGA DÜ TSI NGA

**is in the nature of bliss and voidness.**

DOR JE SUM GYI JANG TOG BAR

**Purified, actualized, and increased by the three vajras,**

ZAG ME DÜ TSI GYA TSHOR GYUR

**it becomes an ocean of uncontaminated nectar.**

OM AH HUM (3x)

## Offering Cloud Mantra

---

Multiplies the offerings so they become numberless.

---

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE VAJRA SARA PRAMARDANE  
 TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAKSAM BUDDHAYA /  
 TADYATHA / OM VAJRE VAJRE / MAHA VAJRE / MAHA  
 TEJA VAJRE / MAHA VIDYA VAJRE / MAHA BODHICHITTA  
 VAJRE / MAHA BODHI MÄNDO PASAM KRAMANA VAJRE /  
 SARVA KARMA AVARANA VISHO DHANA VAJRE SVAHA (3x)

## Extensive Power of Truth

---

Blesses the offerings, thus enabling the buddhas to actually receive them.

---

KÖN CHHOG SUM GYI DEN PA DANG

**By the power of truth of the Three Rare Sublime Ones,**

SANG GYÄ DANG JANG CHHUB SEM PA THAM CHÄ KYI JIN GYI LAB  
DANG

**The blessings of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas,**

TSHOG NYI YONG SU DZOG PÄI NGA THANG CHHEN PO DANG

**The great wealth of the completed two collections,**

CHHÖ KYI YING NAM PAR DAG CHING SAM GYI MI KHYAB PÄI TOB KYI

**And the sphere of phenomena being pure and inconceivable;**

CHHOG CHU NA ZHUG PÄI SANG GYÄ DANG JANG CHHUB SEM PA  
THAM CHÄ DANG PHAG PA JAM PÄL DANG KUN TU ZANG PO LA SOG  
PÄI NAM PAR CHHÖ PÄI TRIN GYI PHUNG PO SAM GYI MI KHYAB PA ZÄ MI  
SHE PA NAM KHA GANG WAR GYUR

**May these piles of clouds of offerings arising through transformation by the bodhisattvas Arya Samantabhadra, Manjushri, and so forth – unimaginable and inexhaustible, equaling the sky – arise and, in the eyes of the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions, be received.**

---

Think that numberless buddhas receive numberless offerings and generate great bliss. Then, with hands in the mudra of prostration, do the following offering practice with three steps for each group of offerings: visualize prostrating, making offerings, and then generate great bliss in the guru's holy mind.

---

## Extensive Offerings

I prostrate and make offerings to all direct and indirect gurus in the  
*Lama Chöpa* merit field,

I prostrate and make offerings to all the buddhas of the ten  
directions,

I prostrate and make offerings to all the statues, stupas, scriptures,  
and thangkas throughout all worlds.

All these are in essence my root guru – they are empty from their  
own side.

I prostrate and make offerings, and the guru's holy mind experi-  
ences great bliss.

### *Making charity to sentient beings*

I make offerings to all beings in the six realms. (Think that they are  
liberated and attain enlightenment in the aspect of the guru-deity.)

## *Yoga of Eating the Food as Tsog*

---

The following text may be chanted to the tune of the chantable  
English version of Nagarjuna's Praise of Four-Face Mahakala.

---

NYING WÜ CHHÖ KYI KHOR LO RÜ  
**HO! At Dharmachakra center of the heart,**

MI SHIG THRA WÄI LUNG SEM DANG  
**Indestructible subtle wind and mind,**

YER ME SÖ NAM SHING GI CHHOG  
**Inseparable with supreme merit field,**

LA MA YI DAM LHA TSHOG LA  
**Guru's assemblies mind-sealed deities,**

DÖ YÖN TSHOG KYI KHOR LO DI  
**To you we offer desire enjoyments**

BÜL LO DE CHHEN NGANG DÜ SHE  
**Of this circle of magnificent tsog.**

GYÄ SHING TSHIM NE DAG CHANG LA  
**Please take by being pleased and satisfied,**

KÜ SUNG THUG KYI NGÖ DRUB TSÖL  
**In state of uncontaminated bliss.**

THAB DANG SHE RAB YER ME PÄI  
**Grant us the holy body, speech, and mind.**

DOR JE NÄL JOR ZAB MO YI

**Please grant blessings to achieve in this life**

ZUNG JUG CHHAG GYÄ CHHEN PÖI NÄ

**Mahamudra profound vajra yoga,**

TSE DIR THÖ PAR JIN GYI LOB

**Inseparable with method and wisdom.**

---

With every mouthful, continue the yoga of eating and drinking with the meditation above. Then, dedicate, using any of the dedication prayers that begin on p. 31.

---

## *Dedication Prayers*

Due to all the merits of the three times collected by me, buddhas, bodhisattvas and all other sentient beings, may all those sentient beings suffering unimaginably now in the hell, hungry ghost and animal realms, any FPMT students who have passed away recently, those whose names were given to me, for whom I promised to pray, who rely on me, may they all be liberated from all the suffering immediately, especially the suffering of the three lower realms, and find rebirth in a pure land where they can become enlightened right away. Otherwise, may they receive a perfect human body, meet a perfectly qualified Mahayana Guru and in that way achieve enlightenment as quickly as possible.

Due to all the merits of the three times collected by me, buddhas, bodhisattvas and all other sentient beings, may my simply hearing that a sentient being is sick cause that sentient being to recover immediately; may my simply hearing that somebody has died cause that sentient being never to be reborn in the lower realms ever again but immediately be reborn in a pure land and become enlightened there.

Due to all the merits of the three times collected by me, buddhas, bodhisattvas and all other sentient beings, may those sentient beings who have been born human being but have no opportunity to practice Dharma achieve enlightenment quickly by meeting a perfectly qualified Mahayana Guru, receiving Mahayana teachings and putting those teachings into practice.

Due to all the merits of the three times collected by me, buddhas, bodhisattvas and all other sentient beings, may all the members of

my family, all FPMT students and benefactors, those who sacrifice their lives serving others through the FPMT, those who rely on me, those for whom I promised to pray, those whose names have been given to me and those serving me now, be healthy, have long lives, and may all our wishes succeed immediately according to the holy Dharma. May we be able to actualize the entire path, from guru devotion up to enlightenment, especially bodhicitta and the clear light, without even a second's delay, this being the purpose of life.

Due to all the merits of the three times collected by me, buddhas, bodhisattvas and all other sentient beings, may the holy wishes of all my virtuous friends, including His Holiness Dalai Lama, the Buddha of Compassion, succeed immediately; may they all have stable lives, and may all the FPMT Sangha be able to complete their scriptural understanding and realize the entire path to enlightenment in this very lifetime by receiving all protection and needs.

Due to all the merits of the three times collected by me, buddhas, bodhisattvas and all other sentient beings, may all the projects in the FPMT succeed immediately by receiving everything required. May all the social service centers, the meditation centers, hospices, schools and so forth immediately pacify all physical and mental suffering of all sentient beings by spreading the complete stainless teaching of Lama Tsongkhapa in the minds of all the sentient beings by receiving everything required.

Due to all the merits of the three times collected by me, buddhas, bodhisattvas and all other sentient beings, may all the projects, buildings, temples, statues, stupas, scriptures, the five-hundred-foot Maitreya statue and all other projects in the West and in the East, including the Mongolian nunnery, monastery and other buildings, succeed immediately by receiving everything required. May the five-hundred-foot Maitreya statue and all our other projects cause bodhicitta to arise in the minds of all sentient beings. And due to that, may everybody have perfect peace and happiness and may nobody experience war, famine, disease, torture, poverty, sicknesses or the

dangers of fire, water, air, earth or car or airplane accident, from now on. May all these projects cause all sentient beings to achieve enlightenment as quickly as possible.

Due to all the merits of the three times collected by me, buddhas, bodhisattvas and all other sentient beings, from now on, whatever action I do, whatever I experience – ups and downs, happiness or misery, health or illness, gain or loss, wealth or poverty, praise or criticism, life or death, even rebirth in hell – whatever happens to me, may all my life experiences become most beneficial and, by myself achieving enlightenment, cause all sentient beings to achieve enlightenment as quickly as possible.

May the numberless sentient beings who worked for, suffered, died, or created negative karma in the evolution of this food, the benefactors who provided this food, and all other sentient beings as well never separate from the Triple Gem, always collect merit by making offerings to the Triple Gem, and always receive the blessings of Triple Gem.

May the realizations of the path, from guru devotion up to enlightenment, especially bodhicitta and the clear light, be actualized in my own mind and in the minds of all sentient beings without even a second's delay.

Due to all the merits of the three times collected by me, buddhas, bodhisattvas and all other sentient beings, which are empty from their own side, may the I, which is empty from its own side, achieve my personal deity's or Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which is empty from its own side, and lead all sentient beings who are empty from their own side, to that enlightenment, which is empty from its own side, by myself alone, who is also empty from its own side.



### Notes for the Yoga of Offering Food

1. Where it says, “to the Guru Puja merit field or the one deity that you are visualizing as everything,” if you are visualizing just one aspect, the essence of which is the many gurus of the Guru Puja merit field, each time you make offerings, prostrate or generate infinite bliss with that meditation, you create numberless causes of enlightenment, liberation from samsara and good rebirths in hundreds of thousands of future lives; numberless causes of all those different levels of happiness. You create numberless causes each time because you are visualizing that one buddha as everything – your root Guru, all other gurus, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha and all other holy objects.
2. The most precious Shakyamuni Buddha statue in the Jokhang, Lhasa’s central temple, was built for Buddha’s mother according to Buddha’s own instructions, blessed by Buddha himself and liberates thousands and thousands of sentient beings every day.
3. The Swayambhunath stupa is the most precious stupa in Kathmandu. It contains a natural crystal stupa that appeared from the lake that used to fill the Kathmandu valley and is the embodiment of the holy mind of all the buddhas, the Dharmakaya. Shakyamuni Buddha himself predicted its discovery. This precious stupa is inside the Swayambhunath stupa. That’s why this stupa is the most precious holy object in Nepal.
4. The Boudhanath stupa, which is also called the All-encompassing Wish-fulfilling Stupa, was constructed by a woman who passed away when it had been built only up to the vase. After her death, her four sons completed it. As they were making prayers upon its completion, all the buddhas and bodhisattvas absorbed into it; that’s why it’s called “All-encompassing.” The eldest brother prayed to become a Dharma king in the Land of Snows, Tibet. The next brother prayed to the stupa to become a minister and offer service to his brother, the king, when he spread Dharma in Tibet. The next brother prayed to become an abbot in order to pass on the lineage of the ordinations and spread Dharma in Tibet.

The youngest prayed to become a powerful yogi in order to pacify the obstacles to his brothers’ spreading Dharma in Tibet. In their next lives, all four brothers became important holy beings in Tibet, just as they had prayed – a Dharma king, a minister, an abbot and a powerful yogi.

The powerful yogi was Padmasambhava. When Samyé, the first monastery in central Tibet, was being built, spirits would come at night and tear down what the people had built during the day. There were many obstacles. So the people invited Padmasambhava to come from India and subdue those spirits. He did so and converted them into protectors, to protect the Dharma in Tibet. Thus, Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism was spread and preserved in Tibet for many years and many achieved realization of the path and became enlightened. Now this tradition has spread to many countries all over the world,

- and the fact that every year, many tens of thousands of people are able to follow the path to enlightenment and make their lives meaningful is due to the power of that stupa. The lam-rim teachings we receive and practice, making our everyday life meaningful, came from that stupa, and the wishes made by anybody who makes offerings to or circumambulates that stupa get fulfilled.
5. Sometimes Rinpoche offers the food to all sentient beings at the beginning of the practice. In that way, since the food is no longer yours – it now belongs to all sentient beings – your attachment to it is eliminated or reduced, and you make the offering on their behalf.
  6. See Lama Zopa Rinpoche's Teachings from the Vajrasattva Retreat, Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive, 2000, p. 625, for the ten benefits of offering.
  7. See Teachings from the Vajrasattva Retreat, pp. 224–5, for the eight benefits of putting the palms together in prostration.
  8. One can use any of the three offering prayers in General Food Offering Prayers (pp. 15-16) to present the offerings to the Three Jewels. This prayer has been included for convenience and is commonly known in the Tibetan tradition.
  9. According to the *Kangyur* in the section on Vinaya, there are 21,000 sentient beings who live in our human body.

## Colophons:

*Yoga of Offering Food* is from a teaching first given by Lama Zopa Rinpoche in Brisbane, Australia in 2000. Edited by Nick Ribush and posted as “The Yoga of Offering Food” on the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive website, [www.lamayeshe.com](http://www.lamayeshe.com). “Extensive Power of Truth” was added and further editing by Kendall Magnussen and Sarah Shifford, March 2010.

*General Food Offering Prayers* are from various sources; the first is from the Guhyasamaja Tantra and is very rare in the Tibetan tradition, but was used from the early days of FPMT by Lama Thubten Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. The other food offering prayers are commonly done in the Tibetan tradition.

The *Yoga of Eating Food According to Hinayana* prayers are traditionally recited by the ordained Sangha before and after lunch. This version has circulated within FPMT for many years, but the translator, compiler, and original source are unknown by the editor at the time of publication. Lightly edited by Sarah Shifford. Lightly edited by Kendall Magnussen in consultation with Steve Carlier on translation, October 2011.

*Yoga of Eating According to Mahayana Sutra* was compiled based on a short practice lead by Lama Zopa Rinpoche found on the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive website ([www.lamayeshe.com](http://www.lamayeshe.com)), and other instructions. Edited by Kendall Magnussen, September 2011. All faults are those of the editor.

*The Yoga of Eating Food According to Mahayana Tantra*. Originally written by Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche and translated into English by Ven. Thubten Dekyong (Tsenla). Rendered into chantable English by Ven. Paula Chichester. Instructions on transforming meals into tsog offerings and brief extensive offering practice are taken from oral instructions from Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Lightly edited by Kendall Magnussen, FPMT Education Services, March 2004.

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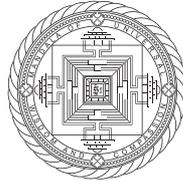
# Care of Dharma Books



Dharma books contain the teachings of the Buddha; they have the power to protect against lower rebirth and to point the way to liberation. Therefore, they should be treated with respect – kept off the floor and places where people sit or walk – and not stepped over. They should be covered or protected for transporting and kept in a high, clean place separate from more mundane materials. Other objects should not be placed on top of Dharma books and materials. Licking the fingers to turn pages is considered bad form as well as negative karma. If it is necessary to dispose of written Dharma materials, they should be burned rather than thrown in the trash. When burning Dharma texts, it is taught to first recite a prayer or mantra, such as OM, AH, HUM. Then, you can visualize the letters of the texts (to be burned) absorbing into the AH and the AH absorbing into you, transmitting their wisdom to your mindstream. After that, as you continue to recite OM, AH, HUM, you can burn the texts.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche has recommended that photos or images of holy beings, deities, or other holy objects not be burned. Instead, they should be placed with respect in a stupa, tree, or other high, clean place. It has been suggested to put them into a small structure like a bird house and then seal the house. In this way, the holy images do not end up on the ground.

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