

Handout for Class 1

Dharma Dictionary

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Note: "S" stands for Sanskrit, "T" for Tibetan

abhisheka - see empowerment

abhidharma - see Tripitaka

accumulations, two - (T. tsok-nyi) The accumulation of merit is developed through physical and material devotion to the spiritual path and compassionate action to living beings. This creates conditions favorable to enlightenment, and results in the accumulation of wisdom, which is the realization gained from meditation practice.

Amitabha - (S.; T. O-pa-me) The Sambhogakaya Buddha of Boundless Light, red in color and of the padma family. See buddha families

amrita - (S.; T. dutsi) The nectar of meditative bliss; also the consecrated liquid used in Vajrayana meditation practices.

arhat - (S.; T. dra-chompa, "foe destroyer") One who has attained the result of the Hinayana path by purifying the conflicting emotions and their causes.

auspicious coincidence - (T. ten-drel) A kind of synchronicity; the coming together of factors in a situation or event in a manner that is fitting and proper.

Avalokiteshvara - see Chenrezig

bardo - (T., "between two") A gap or intermediate state. Often used in reference to the chonyl bardo, the intermediate state between death and rebirth. Other bardos include the dream bardo and the meditation bardo.

bhumi - (S.; T. sa, "stage") One of the ten stages of realization on the bodhisattva path. The first bhumi begins with great joy and the stabilized realization of shunyata.

blessings - (T. chinlab, "splendor wave") The experience of bliss that results from one's devotion in opening oneself to the guru in meditation practice.

bliss - (S. sukha; T. dewa) A meditative experience of calm happiness.

bodhichitta - (S.; T. jangchup chi sem, "mind of enlightenment") Relative bodhichitta is the aspiration to develop loving kindness and compassion and to deliver all sentient beings from samsara. Absolute bodhichitta is actually working to save all beings. According to Gampopa, absolute bodhichitta is shunyata indivisible from compassion —radiant, unshakable, and impossible to formulate with concepts.

bodhisattva - (S., "awakened being"; T. jangchup sempa, "enlightenment-mind hero") In one sense, a person who has vowed to attain perfect buddhahood for the benefit of all beings, and who has begun to progress through the ten bhumis of the bodhisattva path. In another sense, a being who has already attained perfect buddhahood but who, through the power of the bodhisattva vow, returns to the world for the benefit of beings.

bodhisattva vow - (T. jang-dam) The commitment to work on the Mahayana path for the enlightenment of all beings; this is a vow taken in a formal ceremony in the presence of the guru.

Bodhisattvayana - see Mahayana

buddha - (S., "awakened, enlightened"; T. sang-gye, "eliminated and blossomed") May refer to the principle of enlightenment or to any enlightened being, in particular to Shakyamuni Buddha, the historical buddha of our age. A buddha is called a "Victorious One."

buddha families - (T. sang-gye chi rik) The families of the five Sambhogakaya buddhas and their five wisdoms. Everything in the world can be expressed in terms of the predominant energy of one of these five families, and all deities in Tibetan iconography are associated with one of the five buddhas. In samsaric experience, the five wisdoms become translated into the five poisons, which are conflicting emotions. The five families and their corresponding colors, buddhas, wisdoms, and conflicting emotions are, respectively. (1) white, buddha, Vairochana, all-pervading wisdom, and ignorance; (2) blue,

- vajra, Akshobya, mirror-like wisdom, and aggression; (3) yellow, ratna, Ratnasambava, wisdom of equanimity, and pride; (4) red, padma, Amitabha, wisdom of discriminating awareness, and passion; (5) green, karma, Amoghasiddhi, all-accomplishing wisdom, and envy. (Lists taken from various sources may differ slightly.)
- buddha nature - (S. sugatagarbha; T. dezhin shekpa'i nyingpo) Refers to the basic goodness of all beings, the inherent potential within each person to attain complete buddhahood regardless of race, gender, or nationality.
- Buddhadharma - (S.; T. san-gye chi cho, ten-pay ten-pa) The teachings of the Buddha. Often is used in preference to the term "Buddhism."
- chakra - (S.; T. khorlo, "circle, wheel") One of the five primary energy centers of the subtle body, located along the central channel at the crown of the head, throat, heart, navel, and genitals.
- Chenrezig - (T.; S. Avalokiteshvara) The bodhisattva of compassion; the union or essence of compassion of all the buddhas. His Holiness the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa was believed to be an emanation of Chenrezig, as is His Holiness the Dalai Lama.
- coemergent wisdom - (S. saḥajajñāna; T. lhen chile the pay yeshe) The simultaneous arising of samsara and nirvana, giving birth to wisdom.
- compassion - (S. karuṇā; T. nying je) The motivation and action of a bodhisattva, and the guiding principle of the Mahayana path. Compassion arises from experiencing the suffering of oneself and others or from relinquishing one's attachment to samsara, or it may develop spontaneously from the recognition of shunyata.
- conflicting emotions - see poisons
- dakini - (S.; T. khandroma, "space walker") A wrathful or semiwrathful female yidam, signifying the feminine energy principle. The dakinis are crafty and playful, representing the basic space of fertility out of which both samsara and nirvana arise. They inspire the union of skillful means and wisdom. More generally, a dakini can be a type of messenger or protector. A daka is the male counterpart to a dakini.
- damaru - (S.) A small hand drum, usually two-headed, made of either skulls or wood, and used frequently in Vajrayana practice.
- dark age - The present world age, characterized by degraded society, warfare, perverted views, and lack of faith in spirituality, including the degeneration of all discipline, morality, and wisdom.
- Dewachen - (T., "great bliss"; S. Sukhavatī) The western pure land of Buddha Amitabha. One can practice meditation and achieve enlightenment in the pure lands without danger of falling into the cycle of samsara. Not to be confused with heaven, or the realm of the gods, which in Buddhism is considered to be only a materialistic paradise.
- dharma - (S.; T. cho, "truth, law") There are thirteen different meanings altogether for the word "dharma." It can refer to the ultimate truth, the Buddha's teaching, or the law governing all existence.
- Dharma protector - (S. dharmapala; T. cho Chong, "protector of the Dharma") A type of deity who protects the practitioner from deceptions and obstacles. Although usually wrathful, the Dharmapalas are compassionate, performing the enlightened actions of pacifying, enriching, magnetizing, and destroying, thus protecting the integrity of the teachings and practice.
- Dharmachakra - (S.; T. cho chi khorlo, "wheel of Dharma") Generally, this term is used in expressions such as Dharmachakra pravartana ("turning the wheel of Dharma"), which refers to teaching the Dharma. More technically, it can refer to the heart chakra.
- Dharmadhatu - (S.; T. cho-ying, "sphere of Dharma") The all-encompassing space or unconditional totality—unoriginating and unchanging—in which all phenomena arise, dwell, and cease.
- Dharmakaya - (S.; T. choku, "body of truth") Enlightenment itself, wisdom beyond any reference point — unoriginated, primordial mind, devoid of content. see Trikaya
- Dharmata - (S.; T. cho-nyi, "Dharma itself") The essence of reality, completely pure nature.
- doha - (S.) A verse or song spontaneously composed by Vajrayana practitioners as an expression of their realization, as for example the Dharma songs collected in the Rain of Wisdom.
- Dorje Chang - see Vajradhara
- elements - (T. jungwa) According to the Abidharma, all materiality can be seen as having the qualities of one of the four elements—earth, water, fire, and air.
- empowerment - (S. abhisheka; T. wangkur) An initiation conferred privately or to groups enabling those who receive it to practice a particular meditation or yogic method under a qualified spiritual master.

emptiness - see shunyata, Dharmakaya, Dharmata

enlightenment - (T. jangchup) Jang refers to the total purification of the two obscurations, and chup refers to perfected wisdom that encompasses both relative and ultimate truths.

Four Noble Truths - (T. pakpay denpa shi) The truths that unenlightened existence is permeated by suffering; that the cause of suffering is delusion operating through dualistic clinging and the resulting emotional and karmic patterns; that an experience beyond suffering is possible; and that there is a path that can lead beings to the experience of the cessation of suffering.

gates, three - (T. go-sum) Body, speech, and mind. The three modes through which one relates to the phenomenal world.

Gelug - (T.) The order of Tibetan Buddhism founded by Tsong Khapa (1357-1419). Gelug refers to the teachings of this lineage, and Gelugpa to its practitioners.

ghanta - (T. drilbu) Bell used with vajra (dorje) in Tantric rituals.

Guru Rinpoche - Guru Padmasambhava, also known as the "Lotus-Born"; with Atisa, responsible for the "second spreading" of the Dharma in Tibet.

guru - Religious teacher, also called spiritual friend. see Roots, Three

guru yoga - Last of the four special foundations or ngondro practices.

Gyalwa - A title meaning "victorious," as in Gyalwa Karmapa.

Hinayana - (S.; T. tek-chung, tek-men, "lesser vehicle") The first of the three yams, which is subdivided into the Shravakayana and Pratyekabuddhayana. The aim of Hinayana practice is personal liberation from suffering.

Immeasurables, Four - (S. apramana; T. tse-me shi) A prayer recited especially during ngondro practice. Maitri is loving kindness, the wish that all beings have happiness and the cause of happiness. Karuna is compassion, the wish that all beings be free from suffering and the causes of suffering. Mudita is great joy, the wish that all beings never be separated from the great bliss that is free from all suffering. Upeksha is equanimity, the wish that all beings dwell in the great impartiality that is free from all attraction and aversion.

impermanence - (S. anitya; T. mitakpa) The doctrine that the material world is characterised by constant change and the nonexistence of phenomena.

interdependence - (T. tendrel) The doctrine that all phenomena are related in their appearance and manifestation. No event arises that is not related to all other events.

Jetsun - (T., "revered") An honorific term applied to great teachers.

Jewels, Three - (S. triratna; T. konchok sum) Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha — the three objects of refuge. Buddha is an example of a human being who transcended confusion, and also refers to enlightenment itself. Dharma includes the teachings that are told and written, as well as their realization—the Dharma that is experienced. Sangha is the community of practitioners and also the assemblage of realized ones.

jnana - (S.; T. yeshe, "primordial knowing") Discriminating awareness wisdom that transcends all dualistic conception.

Kagyü - (T.; abbreviation for ka shi gyupa, "lineages of the four commissioned ones") One of the four main lineages of Tibetan Buddhism originating with Vajradhara Buddha and transmitted to the Indian master Tilopa. It was then transmitted in succession to Naropa, Marpa, Milarepa, and Gampopa. It is also called the "practice lineage" because of its emphasis on direct experiential practice and intuitive understanding of the teachings. There are four main subsects of the Kagyü lineage, the largest being the Karma Kagyü, or Karma Kamtshang—the lineage founded by Dusum Khyenpa, the first Gyalwa Karmapa, who was a disciple of Gampopa.

kalpa - (T.) An extremely long eon, sometimes reckoned at 4,320 million years.

Kangyur - (T.) Tantric teachings of the Buddha.

kapala - (S.; T. topa, "skull cup") A symbolic implement used in Vajrayana practices.

karma - (S., "action") The doctrine of cause and result, which states that one's present experience is a product of previous actions and volitions, and future conditions depend on one's present conduct.

Karmapa - (T. trin-le-pa, "activity") The head of the Karma Kagyü sect of Tibetan Buddhism, a fully enlightened bodhisattva and an emanation of Avalokiteshvara. Historically, the first line of recognized reincarnating lamas, of which Dusum Khyenpa was the first.

Kham - A province in eastern Tibet where the Kagyü lineage enjoyed great popularity.

- khatak - (T.) A long white scarf, customarily presented in Tibet as a sign of salutation and respect.
- Khenpo - (T.) Title of the abbot of a Tibetan monastery or a professor of sacred literature.
- klesha - (S.; T. nyonmong, “defilement, delusion”) A mental state that produces conflicting emotions and confusion, and thus disturbs mental well-being and peace.
- kriya yoga - (S.; T. ja-gyu) The first tantric yana, which emphasizes purity and the understanding that all phenomena are inherently pure and sacred. The deities are visualized as external and transparent, and the practitioner emphasizes purification and ritual action.
- lama - (T., “superior mother”; S. guru) A religious teacher or meditation teacher who has completed the traditional three-year, three-month retreat and been appointed by his or her teacher.
- lung - (T., “connection”) A transmission blessing in which a master reads through a sadhana or liturgy, usually quite rapidly, thereby empowering the hearers to practice it.
- Mahakala - (S.; T. Nakpo Chenpo, “great black one,” or Bernakchen, “black-gowned one”) (two-armed Mahakala). Mahakalas are the chief Dharmapalas, or wrathful protectors, of the Dharma. A female Mahakala is a Mahakali.
- Mahamudra - (S.; T. chak gya chenpo, “great symbol”) The great seal, or ultimate nature of the mind, which is not stained by the kleshas. Another term for enlightenment, Mahamudra refers to the meditative transmission handed down especially by the Kagyu school, from Vajradhara Buddha to Tilopa, and so on, in a direct line to the present lineage holders.
- Mahayana - (S.; T. tek then, “great vehicle”) The second teaching Buddha presented on Vulture Peak Mountain, where he emphasized the importance of uniting compassion and wisdom.
- Maitreya - (S; T. Jampa) The coming Buddha—in other words, the Buddha who will appear next after Shakyamuni in this present kalpa, or age. Maitreya Buddha will not appear for tens of thousands of years.
- mala - (S.; T. trengwa) A rosary, usually strung with 108 beads.
- mandala - (S.; T. chilkhor, “center and periphery”) Arrangement of deities or their emblems, usually in the form of a circle, representing a pattern, structure, or group. Mandalas may be painted, made of colored sand or heaps of rice, or represented by three-dimensional models.
- Manjushri - (S.; T. Jampalyang, “gentle and glorious”) One of the chief bodhisattvas, Manjushri is depicted with a sword and a book. The sword represents prajna. He is known as the Bodhisattva of Knowledge and Learning and is generally considered to be of the vajra family.
- mantra - (S.; T. ngak) Mantra is explained in the tantras as that which protects the cohesiveness of the vajra mind. It is a means of transforming energy through sound, expressed by speech, breathing, and movement. Mantra is usually done in conjunction with visualization and mudra, according to the prescriptions of a sadhana transmitted by one’s guru. Mantras are composed of Sanskrit words or syllables expressing the essence, quality, or power of a specific deity.
- Mantrayana - see Vajrayana
- mara - (S; T. du, “devil”) The tempter of Shakyamuni Buddha, who appeared just prior to his attaining enlightenment. The maras include misunderstanding the five skandhas as a self; being overpowered by conflicting emotions; death; and seduction by the bliss of meditation. Thus, maras are difficulties that the practitioner may encounter.
- mudra - (S.; T. chak gya, “sign, symbol, gesture”) A mudra may be any sort of symbol. Specifically, mudras are symbolic hand gestures that accompany sadhana practices.
- namo - (T. “homage”) Often used in the beginning of a song to pay homage to a buddha, deity, or teacher.
- nectar - see amrita
- ngondro - (T. “preliminary”) The four foundations, or preliminary practices, of Vajrayana Buddhism. They consist of refuge and prostrations, Vajrasattva’s mantra, mandala offerings, and guru yoga.
- Nirmanakaya - (S.; T. tulku, “emanation body”) The buddha who takes form in a physical body. see Trikaya
- nirvana - (S.; T. nya ngen le depa, “gone beyond suffering”) According to the Hinayana tradition, nirvana means the cessation of ignorance and of conflicting emotions, and therefore freedom from compulsive rebirth in samsaric suffering. According to Mahayana tradition, this Hinayana nirvana is only a way station. Complete enlightenment requires not only the cessation of ignorance but also the compassion and skillful means to work with the bewilderment of all sentient beings.

- Nyingma - (T. "ancient ones") One of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism. The original form of Vajrayana Buddhism brought to Tibet in the eighth century by Padmasambhava (Guru Rinpoche) and others. Practitioners are called Nyingmapas.
- obscurations, two - (T. drippa nyi) Conflicting emotions that obstruct liberation from suffering, and fundamental ignorance (primitive beliefs about reality) that obstruct omniscience.
- paramitas, six - (S.; T. parol tu chinpa, "gone to the other side") The main practices of the Mahayana. They are generosity, moral conduct, patience, exertion, meditation or concentration, and insight. They are called "gone to the other side" because, through the nondualistic mind, they transcend karmic entanglements of conventional virtue.
- path - (T. lam) The practitioner's way to enlightenment.
- pecha - (T.) Text.
- poisons - (T. duk) Conflicting emotions. The three root poisons are attachment, anger, and ignorance. The five poisons include also pride and jealousy, and the six poisons include also greed.
- practice lineage - (T. drup-gyu) A name for the Kagyu lineage, which emphasizes its strong allegiance to meditation practice.
- prajna - (S; T. sherab, "knowledge") The ordinary sharpness of awareness that sees, discriminates, and also sees through conceptual discrimination.
- prajnaparamita - (S; T. sherab chi parol tu chinpa, "perfection of knowledge") The sixth paramita. Without prajna the other five transcendent actions would be impure.
- puja - see sadhana
- realization - (T. tokpa) The fruition of the path; the attainment of enlightenment or of a particular higher practice.
- realms, six - (T. rikdruk) All samsaric beings belong to one of the six realms. The higher realms are those of the gods, demigods, and humans. The lower realms are those of animals, hungry ghosts, and hell beings. In each realm there is a typical psychosocial pattern of recreating experience based on one of the six kleshas (pride, jealousy, attachment, ignorance, greed, or anger).
- refuge - (T. chap-dro) By taking the refuge vow, one formally becomes a Buddhist. One takes refuge in the Triple Gem - Buddha as goal, Dharma as path, and Sangha as guide along the path.
- rinpoche - (T.; "precious") A title used with the name of a high lama or as a form of address to him.
- root guru - (T. tsa-way lama) One of one's main gurus.
- Roots, Three - (T. tsa-wa sum) Guru, yidam, and protector.
- sadhana - (S.; T. choga, "liturgy") A type of Vajrayana ritual text, describing the visualization and worship of a deity; the actual meditation practice it sets out.
- Sakya - One of the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism.
- samadhi - (S; T. ting-ngele-dzin, "fixing the mind, meditative absorption") A state of total involvement in which the mind rests unwaveringly.
- Samantabhadra - (S; T. Kuntu Zangpo, "all good") The primordial Dharmakaya buddha, blue in color and naked, often depicted in consort with Kuntu Zangmo, who is white in color.
- samaya - (T. dam-tsik, "sacred words") The sacred vow which binds the practitioner to his or her practice and lama.
- Sambhogakaya - (S.; T. longku, "enjoyment body") The environment of compassion and communication. The visionary and communicative aspect of Dharmakaya.
- samsara - (S.; T. khorwa, "circumambulating") In contrast to nirvana, samsara is the vicious cycle of transmigratory existence. It arises out of inability to purify oneself of the six conflicting emotions. Samsara is characterized by suffering.
- sangha - (S.; T. gendun, "the virtuous ones") The ordinary sangha are all the practitioners of Buddhism, and the exalted Sangha are those who are liberated from samsara.
- Shakyamuni - (T. Shakya-tuppa) The historical Buddha. Shakya is a tribe of ancient India, and Shakyamuni means "sage of the Shakyas."
- shamata - (S.; T. zhi-ne, "peaceful abiding") A basic meditation practice common to most schools of Buddhism. Its aim is to quiet the mind and focus it free from distraction. It lays the foundation for vipashyana.
- shunyata - (S.; T. tongpa nyi, "emptiness") A doctrine emphasized in Mahayana, which stresses that all phenomena are devoid of inherent, concrete existence.

- siddhi - (S.; T. ngodrup, “accomplishment”) Blessings or accomplishments. The ordinary siddhis involve mastery over the phenomenal world. Supreme siddhi is enlightenment.
- skandha - (S.; T. pungpo, “heap”) The five skandhas are the psychological aggregates which make up the personality of the individual and his or her experiences. They are form, feeling, perception, formation, and consciousness. In Vajrayana, the skandhas correspond to the five buddha potentials.
- stupa - (S.; T. choten) Originally a memorial mound containing the relics of the Buddha, symbolizing the mind of the Buddha, the Dharmakaya. Later, the relics of other enlightened beings, scripture, statues, and so on were included in stupas. Choten means the objects of veneration, ranging from simple altar pieces to very large structures that may be seen for miles around.
- sugatagarbha - (S.; T. deshek nyingpo) Buddha nature as it manifests on the path.
- sutra - (T. do) see Tripitaka
- Svabhavikakaya - (S.; T. ngo-wo nyid-kyi-ku) The essential body of intrinsic nature that encompasses and transcends the three kayas. see Trikaya
- tantra - (S.; T. gyud, “continuity”) Tantra means continuity, and refers to continuity throughout the ground, path, and fruition of the journey. For the practitioner, this means that body, speech, and mind, in all their confused and wakeful manifestations, are included in the path. Tantra specifically refers to the root texts of the Vajrayana and the system of meditation they describe.
- Tara - (S., “savioress”; T. Drolma, “liberator lady”) An emanation of Avalokiteshvara, Tara is said to have arisen from one of his tears. Embodying female enlightenment and the feminine aspect of compassion, she removes fears and obstacles, and is a very popular deity in Tibet. Her two common iconographic forms are white and green.
- tashi dekk - (T., “may all be auspiciously well”) An all-purpose greeting used on holidays and special occasions.
- Tathagata - (S.; T. dezhin-shekpā) Synonymous with “buddha,” used especially for the five Sambhogakaya buddhas.
- torma - (T.; S. bali) A sculpture often made out of flour and molded butter, used as a shrine offering, a feast offering substance, or a representation of deities.
- Trikaya - (S.; T. kusum, “three bodies”) The three aspects of Buddhahood — Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Nirmanakaya.
- Tripitaka - (S., “three baskets”) The teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni, later organized into the vinaya, the sutras, and the abhidharma. The vinaya is primarily concerned with monastic discipline or moral conduct; the sutra is usually in the form of dialogues between the Buddha and his disciples, concerning meditation and philosophy, and the abhidharma contains the higher metaphysical treatises regarding the nature of reality.
- Triyana - (S.; T. tek-pa sum) Three stages or vehicles of practice.
- Truths, Two - (T. denpa-nyi) Ultimate truth is emptiness or shunyata. Relative truth belongs to the conventional level of truth. The two truths are inseparable from each other.
- tsok offering - Blessing and offering of food and drink made in the context of a deity practice.
- tulku - (T.; S. Nirmanakaya, “emanation body”) An incarnation of a previous realized being.
- upaya - (S.; T. tap, “skillful means”) Enlightened beings, through the development of wisdom and the omniscient state of mind, know exactly how, when, and in what form to present the teachings to make them suitable to each individual being, without error. Upaya is an expression of compassion.
- vajra - (S., “adamantine, diamond, indestructible”; T. dorje, “noble stone”) One of the five buddha families, the vajra family is associated with the buddha Akshobhya of the eastern direction. Its quality is pristine clarity and indestructibility. In general, the term vajra conveys the sense of what is beyond arising and ceasing and hence indestructible. A vajra is also a ritual scepter used in Vajrayana practice.
- Vajradhara - (S.; T. Dorje Chang) The name of the Dharmakaya buddha. He is depicted as dark blue, and is particularly important to the Kagyu lineage, as it is said that Tilopa received Vajrayana teaching directly from Vajradhara.
- Vajrasattva - (S.; T. Dorje Sempa) A buddha of the vajra family, Vajrasattva is white and is associated with purity. The Vajrasattva mantra is used in many practices, most notably ngondro.
- Vajrayana - (S.; T. dorje tekpa, “indestructible vehicle”) The vehicle, or yana, of tantra. Vajrayana incorporates both Hinayana and Mahayana disciplines. see also yana, tantra
- Vidyadhara - Holder of knowledge or insight.

vinaya - see Tripitaka

vipashyana - (S.; T. lhak thong) Having calmed the mind through shamata meditation, the practitioner may begin to have insight into an unimaginable experience of the qualities within one. This clear seeing of the patterns of mind is known as vipashyana. It expands into wisdom.

yana - (S.; T. tekpa, "vehicle") The vehicle that carries the practitioner along the path to liberation. In different yantras, the landscapes of the journey, the nature of the practitioner, and the mode of transportation are seen differently. There is a distinctive outlook, practice, action, and fruition in each yana. The particular yana presented depends on the evolutionary readiness of the student and the accomplishment of the teacher.

yidam - The Vajrayana practitioner's personal deity, who embodies the practitioner's awakened nature. Yidams are Sambhogakaya buddhas, who are visualized in accordance with the psychosocial makeup of the practitioner. The student first develops intense devotion toward the guru. This relationship makes it possible for the student to experience intuitive kinship with the lineage and then with the yidam. Identifying with the yidam means that the student identifies with his or her own characteristic expression of buddha nature, free of distortions. Through seeing one's basic nature in this universalized way, all aspects of it are transmuted into the wisdom of the spiritual path. This leads directly to compassionate action—skillful and lucid.

yoga - (S.; T. naljor) A psychophysical method of spiritual development, concerned with the direction of energy and consciousness. A method to release the intuitive knowledge latent in the heart by learning to control the dispersive tendencies of mind and body.

yogin/yogini - (S.; T. naljorpa/naljorma) A male or female practitioner of yoga.