



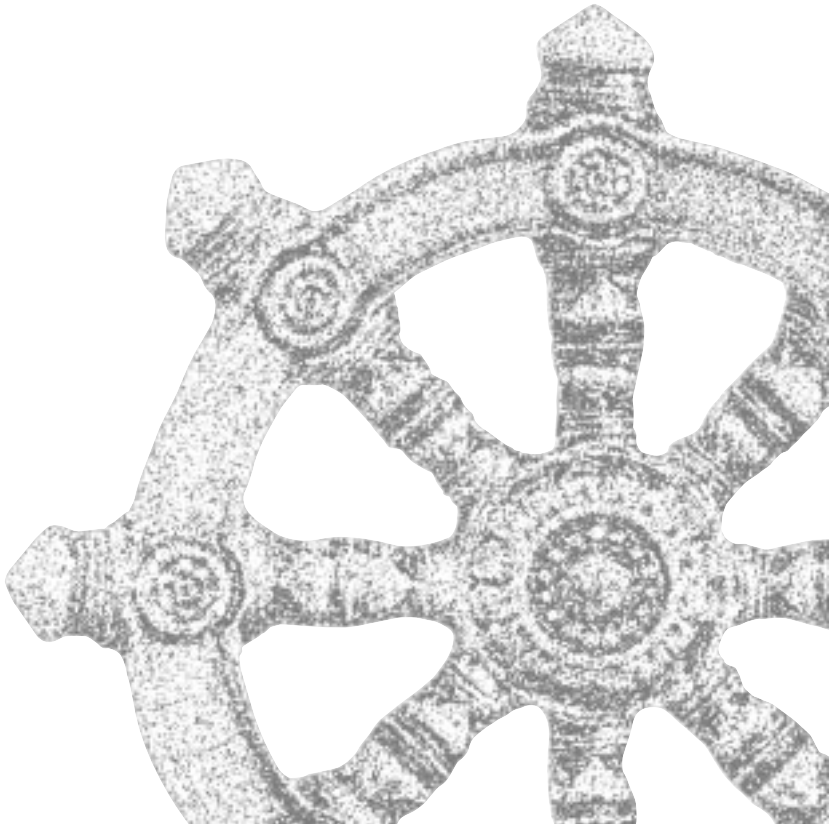
CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

MEDITATION PRACTICES

THE ASIAN CLASSICS INSTITUTE

2003 edition

# THE ACI Catalog





## CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

### FORMAL STUDIES AT HOME

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#### About the Asian Classics Institute

The Asian Classics Institute is dedicated to the serious study and personal practice of the original teachings of the Buddha. The Institute's activities include: Formal Study Courses to train Buddhist teachers; Tibetan language classes; a variety of general classes for those new to Buddhism; meditation instruction; and a Sangha of ordained westerners. The Institute was established by Geshe Michael Roach under the spiritual direction of Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, a distinguished scholar of Buddhism from Tibet.

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#### About the Formal Study Courses

The Formal Study Courses are designed as a teacher-training program, and cover the same basic core of information that a Geshe (Doctor of Philosophy) learns at a Tibetan Buddhist monastery. Obtaining a Geshe degree from a Tibetan Buddhist monastery requires approximately 20 years studying The Six Great Books of Buddhism: The Perfection of Wisdom (*Prajna Paramita*), Middle-Way Philosophy (*Madhyamika*), Higher Knowledge (*Abhidharma*), Buddhist Discipline (*Vinaya*), Logic and Perception (*Pramana*), and The Steps to Buddhahood (*Lam Rim*). The Asian Classics Institute has condensed the essence of these Six Great Books of Buddhism into a series of 18 Formal Study Courses that Geshe Michael taught to a group of teacher-trainees in Manhattan over a period of six years.

Each Formal Study Course consists of twelve classes. Each class is approximately two hours long and includes a lecture, a reading assignment, homework and a quiz. A final exam is also given. Monastic scriptures and original ancient texts are used as source materials for the Courses, some of which were translated into English for the first time.

Geshe Michael teaches in English with a clarity and content that is exceptional; the information contained in these teachings is of the highest accuracy, integrity and relevance to daily life. Classes are presented with humor and offer abundant, detailed instructions on how to live one's life as a spiritual practice.

It is exceedingly rare to encounter the wisdom of ancient, authentic Buddhist teachings; to have the opportunity for a comprehensive Tibetan Buddhist education is even more rare. It is our sincere hope that you will investigate Tibetan Buddhism more deeply, that the information in these Courses will enrich your life, and that it will ultimately be of benefit to all.

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#### About the Correspondence Courses

The Correspondence Courses make all of the Formal Study Courses that Geshe Michael taught available to those who did not attend in person. You can pursue a comprehensive Buddhist education wherever you are, at your own pace and commitment level.

As a correspondence student, we will provide you with a copy of all the printed materials from the original classes taught by Geshe Michael at the Asian Classics Institute in New York, along with the audio from each class. We will provide you with a notebook containing: class notes, readings, homework, quizzes, a final exam, and answer keys. You may grade your own papers using the supplied answer keys or, if you wish to do so, you may mail your quizzes, homework and final examination to the Asian Classics Institute to be graded. Upon successfully passing, you will be presented with a certificate of proficiency from the Institute.

We recommend that you study the Courses in the order in which they were taught, as later Courses draw upon the foundational information presented in earlier Courses. It is possible, though, to pick any Course topic and study it without having studied the earlier Courses; each Course can stand alone without requiring prior studies.

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#### Correspondence Course Costs

Correspondence Courses are offered as a service to help those who wish to undertake Tibetan Buddhist studies, and the materials are supplied by volunteers, at cost. If you wish to receive a Correspondence Course consisting of the audio and supporting written materials, please mail an order form along with a check payable to the Asian Classics Institute to reimburse us for the materials we send to you. We will send Courses to anyone who requests them, even if they can not afford to pay anything. If you cannot afford the full cost of the Course materials, please pay whatever you can afford and we will attempt to find a sponsor to pay for your materials. Please note that paying less than the full cost may delay the delivery of your order while we search for a sponsor.

## Correspondence Course Tape Quality

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The Formal Study Courses began as a small group of students meeting around a table in an apartment in 1993. Those first classes were tape-recorded by a student for personal use. As time passed, people began to ask for copies. Demand for the class materials grew continually, and as a result of the consistent interest, the Correspondence Courses were established.

Because the recordings were made for personal use, the clarity of the audio is not of a professional quality. The quality is sufficient to clearly hear what is said, although there is plenty of extraneous background noise (sirens, dogs barking, coughing, etc.).

All of the Correspondence Courses are produced by volunteers who copy, assemble, ship, and grade the course materials in their spare time after work. Since the Correspondence Course program's inception, volunteers have copied and distributed more than 75,000 audio tapes and a million pages of written materials to individuals, study groups, prisoners, and Dharma centers worldwide.

If you or someone you know is interested in sponsoring the distribution of free Courses to those who sincerely wish to study but can not afford the materials (approximately one-third of all courses are supplied for free), please contact the Asian Classics Institute at (212) 475-7752, or email [aci@world-view.org](mailto:aci@world-view.org).

## About the Teacher

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Geshe Lobsang Chunzin, Michael Roach, is a fully ordained American monk who received his Geshe degree from Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery after 22 years of study there and in the United States with his root lama Khen Rinpoche, Geshe Lobsang Tharchin. (Khen Rinpoche is abbot emeritus of Sera Mey Monastery, a former administrator of Gyume Tantric College, and one of the last living Hlarampa [highest level] Geshe educated in Tibet.) Geshe Michael has been teaching Buddhism for more than 25 years. He received his undergraduate degree from Princeton University and worked for many years as a director of a large diamond firm in New York City. Geshe Michael is a scholar of Sanskrit, Tibetan and Russian, and has translated and published many works. Additionally, he founded The Asian Classics Institute, The Asian Classics Input Project, Godstow Retreat Center, Diamond Mountain Retreat Center, The Three Jewels Bookstore, and The Enlightened Business Institute. He has also been active in the restoration of Sera Mey Monastery. Geshe Michael completed a traditional three-year retreat in 2003.

## Correspondence Course Descriptions

### COURSE 1 > THE PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS OF BUDDHISM

#### Level 1 of The Steps to Buddhahood (Lam Rim)

This Course is an excellent overview of the entire Buddhist path; all subsequent Courses elaborate upon the ideas presented here. This Course is based upon *The Three Principal Paths (Lamtso Namsum)* by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419), with the commentary of Pabongka Rinpoche (1878-1941). *Topics include:* what is a qualified teacher, how to evaluate and select a teacher, what is Buddha nature, what is authentic Dharma, what are samsara and renunciation, the principles of karma, the problems of human life, bodhichitta and its benefits, how to generate bodhichitta, the two levels of reality, ultimate reality (emptiness) according to each of the four schools of thought, and the relationship between karma and emptiness.

### COURSE 2 > BUDDHIST REFUGE

#### Level 1 of The Perfection of Wisdom (Prajna Paramita)

This Course is based upon *The Ornament of Realizations (Abhisamayalamkara)* of Maitreya and Master Asanga (350 AD), with a commentary by Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568). *Topics include:* what is the perfection of wisdom, what is refuge, the objects of refuge, the reasons for taking Buddhist refuge, the qualities of a Buddha, the different types of bodhichitta, descriptions of nirvana, the divisions of nirvana, descriptions of emptiness, five different proofs that emptiness is the ultimate nature of reality, and the five paths which lead to full enlightenment.

### COURSE 3 > APPLIED MEDITATION

#### Level 2 of The Steps to Buddhahood (Lam Rim)

This Course is a must for anyone who wishes to practice meditation effectively. It is based upon *The Stages of Meditation (Bhavanakrama)* by Master Kamalashila (750 AD), and presentations by Je Tsongkapa and Pabongka Rinpoche. *Topics include:* a description of the different types of meditation, the purpose and goals of meditation, how to select the best environment for meditation, the preliminaries to undertake prior to meditating, the parts of a meditation practice, the eight-point meditation posture, the objects of focus during meditation, the five standard problems that occur within meditation, the eight corrections to those problems, and the attainment of meditative realizations.

## **COURSE 4 > THE PROOF OF FUTURE LIVES**

### **Level 1 of Buddhist Logic and Perception (Pramana)**

This Course is based upon the *Compendium on Valid Perception (Pramanasamuchaya)* by Master Dignaga (440 AD), the *Commentary on Valid Perception (Pramanavarttika)* by Master Dharmakirti (630 AD), *Light on the Path to Freedom (Tarlam Selje)* by Gyaltsab Je (1362-1432), and *Jewel of the True Thought (Tsema Gong-gyen)* by Geshe Yeshe Wangchuk (1928-present). *Topics include:* the definition of valid perception, the three levels of perception, who has valid perceptions and how, evaluating things beyond our direct perception, how great compassion is developed, the nature of omniscience, the material cause of the mind, proofs of the mind's source, proofs for the existence of past and future lives, and how desire leads to rebirth – an explanation of crucial links in the chain of dependent origination.

## **COURSE 5 > HOW KARMA WORKS**

### **Level 1 of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma)**

All Buddhist practices are based upon the laws of karma, and so it is crucial to understand how karma works to succeed in any and every Buddhist path. This Course is based upon the *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharmakosha)* by Master Vasubandhu (350 AD), along with its commentary by the First Dalai Lama. *Topics include:* an Abhidharma overview; what is karma; good, bad and neutral karma; karma of body, speech, and mind; virtue and non-virtue; black and white deeds; how karma causes rebirth; karmic outcomes; how karma is carried; how emptiness allows karma to work; karmic paths; the five immediate karmic misdeeds; how to make a karma more powerful; the purification of negative karma; and how karma causes your every experience.

## **COURSE 6 > THE DIAMOND-CUTTER SUTRA**

### **Level 1 of Middle-Way Philosophy (Madhyamika)**

This Course is based upon the *Diamond Cutter Sutra (Vajrachedika)* by Shakyamuni Buddha, along with the only known native Tibetan commentary, by Chone Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748). *Topics include:* how to have a direct perception of ultimate reality (emptiness), what happens after the direct perception of emptiness, emptiness and the two extremes, how empty things function, the relationship between emptiness and karma, the relationship between emptiness and a Buddha, what is non-duality, how a bodhisattva should live, the future of Buddha's teachings, the perfection of wisdom, how understanding emptiness leads to the destruction of mental afflictions, and how the direct perception of emptiness leads to enlightenment and paradise.

## **COURSE 7 > THE BODHISATTVA VOWS**

### **Level 2 of Middle-Way Philosophy (Madhyamika)**

It is not possible to become fully enlightened without diligently keeping each bodhisattva vow, and to keep those vows you must understand them clearly. This Course teaches each of the vows, and is based upon Master Asanga's root text and its commentary called the *Highway for Bodhisattvas (Jangchub Shunglam)* by Je Tsongkapa. *Topics include:* a description of the various types of vows, bodhichitta, types of morality, the four black deeds and the four white deeds, how to purify negative karma, the sufferings of the world, the six perfections, the vows that correspond to each of the six perfections, how bodhisattva vows are taken, an explanation of the eighteen root bodhisattva vows and the forty-six secondary bodhisattva vows, exceptions to each vow, the four factors needed to break bodhisattva vows, how bodhisattva vows are broken, how bodhisattva vows are lost, how to keep your bodhisattva vows, how to restore your bodhisattva vows, and the benefits of keeping bodhisattva vows.

## **COURSE 8 > DEATH AND THE REALMS OF EXISTENCE**

### **Level 2 of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma)**

This Course offers an explanation of the unseen realms around us. It is based upon the *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharmakosha)* by Master Vasubandhu (350 AD), along with its commentary by the First Dalai Lama. *Topics include:* The three main categories of beings; the 17 levels of the form realm; the six types of beings of the desire realm; the four levels of the formless realm; ways of taking birth; all of the different realms of existence and the beings inhabiting them – an explanation of: the intermediate state (*bardo*), the hells, craving spirits, animals, humans, pleasure beings, and formless beings; the causes to be reborn in each realm; ways of taking rebirth; how and why rebirth occurs; the conditions needed for human birth; how world systems form, evolve and are destroyed; a description of different types of eons; the four principles of karma; the five degenerations of our age; the problems which result from not being aware of death; the advantages of cultivating an awareness of death; and how to meditate on death to make your life more meaningful.

## **COURSE 9 > THE ETHICAL LIFE**

### **Level 1 of Buddhist Discipline (Vinaya)**

*The Ethical Life* covers the Buddhist code of ethics and the relationship between an ethical way of life, meditating deeply, and experiencing ultimate reality. This Course is based upon the *Sutra on Vowed Morality (Vinaya Sutra)* by Master Gunaprabha (500 AD), with commentaries from *The Essence of the Ocean of Vinaya (Dulwa*

*Gyatsoy Nyingpo*) by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419), *The Wish-Fulfilling Jewel (Yishin Norbu)* by Choney Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748), and *Day Maker (Nyin Je)* by Master Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra (1772-1851). *Topics include:* the three trainings; one day vows; the five lifetime lay vows; the individual freedom vows; an outline of novice, intermediate, and fully ordained monastic vows; the essence of vows; the basic nature of vows; reasons to live an ethical life; reasons to take vows; why morality is the key to meditation and seeing emptiness directly; how to keep vows from being damaged; how vows are lost; the specific karma resulting from each of the ten non-virtues; how to find a teacher; the characteristics of a qualified teacher; taking refuge; the four forces of karmic purification; the four truths; and the six perfections.

#### **COURSE 10 > A GUIDE TO THE BODHISATTVA'S WAY OF LIFE, PART I**

##### **Level 3 of Middle-Way Philosophy (Madhyamika)**

This Course is the first in a three part series based upon *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life (Bodhisattvacharya Avatara)* by Master Shantideva (700 AD), and the commentary *Entry Point for Children of the Victorious Buddhas (Gyalse Juk-ngok)* by Gyaltsab Je (1364-1432). Master Shantideva's work is considered the best book ever written to learn how to live as a bodhisattva, and this is one of the most famous commentaries ever written; it has been translated into English for the first time for this Course. *Topics include:* the benefits of being a bodhisattva, the preliminaries you must undertake to become a bodhisattva, how to remove existing obstacles which prevent realization of true bodhichitta, how to collect the causes to develop true bodhichitta, the recollection and watchfulness required to think and act like a bodhisattva, *The Guide* as a description of the six perfections, the order in which to undertake practice of the six perfections, how to treat your mental afflictions, and an explanation of the perfection of giving and the perfection of an ethical way of life.

#### **COURSE 11 > A GUIDE TO THE BODHISATTVA'S WAY OF LIFE, PART II**

##### **Level 4 of Middle-Way Philosophy (Madhyamika)**

This Course is the second in a three part series based upon *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life (Bodhisattvacharya Avatara)* by Master Shantideva (700 AD), and the commentary *Entry Point for Children of the Victorious Buddhas (Gyalse Juk-ngok)* by Gyaltsab Je (1364-1432). *Topics include:* an explanation of the perfection of patience, the perfection of joyful effort, and the perfection of meditative concentration; the results of anger; how to make a habit of not getting angry; how joyous effort supports the other five perfections; obstacles to joyous effort; obstacles to meditation; how selfishness produces pain; reasons to treat

others as well as yourself; the source of all the world's pain; compassion as a prerequisite for successful meditative concentration; meditation as a prerequisite for wisdom; where you, your world, and all of your experiences come from; and Buddha nature. It is recommended that you study Part I prior to studying Part II.

#### **COURSE 12 > A GUIDE TO THE BODHISATTVA'S WAY OF LIFE, PART III**

##### **Level 5 of Middle-Way Philosophy (Madhyamika)**

This Course is the third in a three part series based upon *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life (Bodhisattvacharya Avatara)* by Master Shantideva (700 AD), and the commentary *Entry Point for Children of the Victorious Buddhas (Gyalse Juk-ngok)* by Gyaltsab Je (1364-1432). *Topics include:* an explanation of the perfection of wisdom; the purpose and benefit of realizing emptiness; how to perceive emptiness directly; proofs of emptiness; the two types of emptiness; the emptiness of the body; the emptiness of the mind; the emptiness of feelings; the emptiness of functioning things; the emptiness of the three elements; wrong ideas about emptiness; the meaning of illusion; dependent origination; the two truths; the nature of ultimate reality; wrong ideas we have about existence; kinds of mental afflictions; the six steps which produce all the pain in the world; the five heaps; the three types of compassion; the importance of requesting blessings; the importance of dedicating good deeds; and how to reach nirvana and enlightenment. It is recommended that you study Parts I & II prior to studying Part III.

#### **COURSE 13 > THE ART OF REASONING**

##### **Level 2 of Buddhist Logic and Perception (Pramana)**

This Course is based upon the *Commentary on Valid Perception (Pramanavarttika)* by Master Dharmakirti (630 AD) with a commentary from *The Key for Starting the Logic Machine (Rik-lam Trul-gyi Deamik)* by Purbuchok Jampa Tsultrim Gyatso (1825-1901). The Course presents the structure of Buddhist logic and the forms of Buddhist debate. *Topics include:* the correct motivation for debate; debating tactics and the flow of a debate; the subject, quality, and reason of the debate; why logic is more valuable than faith; how studying logic leads to perceiving emptiness; what makes a reason correct; contradictions and relationships; relationships of identity, and relationships of cause and effect; proving the absence of something; material causes and contributing factors; valid perception; changing and unchanging things; an outline of all existing things; the concept of time according to each of the four schools of thought; and the reason why suffering has an end.

## **COURSE 14 > LOJONG, DEVELOPING THE GOOD HEART**

### **Level 3 of the Steps to Buddhahood (Lam Rim)**

This Course presents classical advices on how to be a good person, and is based upon *A Compendium of Texts on Developing the Good Heart (Lojong Gyatsa)* by Muchen Konchok Gyeltsen (1300 AD). *Lojong* texts from the *Compendium* include: *The Eight Verses (Tsik-gye Mar)* by Dorje Seng-ge (1044-1123), *the Wheel of Knives (Tsoncha Korlo)* by Master Dharma Rakshita (1000 AD), *Seven-Step Practice for Developing the Good Heart (Lojong Dun Dunma)* by Geshe Chekawa (1101-1175), *The Advices of the Victorious One (Danlak)* by Gyalwa Yang Gunpa (1213-1258), and *Freedom from the Four Attachments (Shenpa Shi-drel)* by Sachen Kunga Nyingpo (1092-1158). *Topics include:* How to develop a good heart, how to practice throughout the day, how to develop the wish for enlightenment, the eight verses of mind training, 18 pledges for developing a good heart, the six keys to successful practice, the five powers, the five mental poisons, seven steps to developing a good heart, the three virtues, how to respond to the eight worldly thoughts, the real meaning of freedom from attachment, how to behave in difficult situations, the difference between how things happen and why things happen, how to send your mind into death (*powa*), and seeing angels.

## **COURSE 15 > WHAT THE BUDDHA REALLY MEANT**

### **Level 2 of The Perfection of Wisdom (Prajna Paramita)**

This Course is based upon *The Commentary on the True Intention of the Sutras (Dode Gong Drel)* and *The Sutra Requested by the Arya Named Never-Ending Wisdom (Pakpa Lodru Misepe Shupay Do)* by Shakyamuni Buddha, with a commentary from *The Essence of Eloquence on the Art of Interpretation (Drange Lekshe Nyingpo)* by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419). *Topics include:* the importance of evaluating spiritual teachings, how to interpret when spiritual teachings are literal or figurative, how to evaluate apparently conflicting teachings, a summary of the teachings Lord Buddha gave in each of the three Turnings of the Wheel of the Dharma, the goal of each of the three Turnings of the Wheel, an explanation of the ideas held by each of the main schools of Buddhism, ultimate reality (emptiness) according to each of the schools, the three progressively higher understandings of emptiness, the three attributes of reality, a comparison of the Mind-Only School and the Middle-Way School explanations of emptiness and dependent origination, how to use an understanding of emptiness to stop all your suffering, and how to stop your aging and death by stopping your ignorance.

## **COURSE 16 > THE GREAT IDEAS OF BUDDHISM, PART ONE**

The fifteen Formal Study Courses cover the main ideas of the entire course of study followed by a Tibetan monk-scholar (or *geshe*) at one of the great monasteries of Tibet. The three-part *Great Ideas* series summarizes all fifteen ACI Courses, along with the teachings of the traditional training of a Tibetan Buddhist Master. In part one, we cover the first five ACI Courses: The Principal Teachings of Buddhism, Buddhist Refuge, Applied Meditation, Proof of Future Lives, and How Karma Works. The first half of each class in this Course was taught by Geshe Michael, and the second half of each class occurred in smaller study groups. Therefore, only the first half of each class is recorded in the audio portion of this series, and this Course is not available for correspondence course grading by the Institute. Successful completion of all three parts of this series, with a teacher in person, is required for a final, comprehensive ACI diploma.

## **COURSE 17 > THE GREAT IDEAS OF BUDDHISM, PART TWO**

This is the second part of a review of the great ideas of Buddhism over the last two millennia. The three-part *Great Ideas* series summarizes all fifteen ACI Courses, along with the teachings of the traditional training of a Tibetan Buddhist Master. In part two, we cover ACI Courses six through ten: The Diamond Cutter Sutra, The Bodhisattva Vows, Death and the Realms of Existence, The Ethical Way of Life (*Vinaya*), and A Guide to the Bodhisattvas Way of Life. The first half of each class in this Course was taught by Geshe Michael, and the second half of each class occurred in smaller study groups. Therefore, only the first half of each class is recorded in the audio portion of this series, and this Course is not available for correspondence course grading by the Institute.

## **COURSE 18 > THE GREAT IDEAS OF BUDDHISM, PART THREE**

This is the last part of a review of the great ideas of Buddhism over the last two millennia—including some exciting explorations into emptiness and compassion, all from the original ancient sources. In part three of the series, we cover ACI Courses eleven through fifteen: A Guide to the Bodhisattvas Way of Life, parts two and three; The Art of Reasoning; *Lojong*, Developing the Good Heart; and What the Buddha Really Meant. The first half of each class in this Course was taught by Geshe Michael, and the second half of each class occurred in smaller study groups. Therefore, only the first half of each class is recorded in the audio portion of this series, and this Course is not available for correspondence course grading by the Institute. Successful completion of all three parts of this series, with a teacher in person, is required for a final, comprehensive ACI diploma.

## DAILY PRACTICES



The Asian Classics Institute presents ten different Daily Practices that represent the classics of a Tibetan Buddhist monastery. It is recommended that those seeking a complete Buddhist path pursue both intellectual studies and meditation practice. Neither meditation nor intellectual studies alone is enough to become spiritually advanced; each complements and balances the other. By studying ideas, meditating upon, and putting them into practice in daily life, you can develop great spiritual range and capacity. Formal Study Course 3: Applied Meditation, thoroughly describes all aspects of meditation and should be studied as a foundation for the Practices offered here.

Some of these Practices are meditations, and others are advices to be used as one is active throughout the day. They range in length from three to fifteen sessions. All Practices have audio, and most—but not all—have written materials. Please note that Daily Practice homework is not available for grading by the Institute. Each Practice and its content is described below.

We would like to emphasize that, although recordings and written materials can be extremely helpful, it is essential for serious Buddhist practitioners to meet and study directly with a qualified Teacher who can give the necessary guidance and personal instructions of the lineage.

### *Meditation Practices*

#### **PRACTICE 1 > MEDITATION ON THE STEPS TO ENLIGHTENMENT (Lam Rim)**

Each step along the spiritual path should be taken in its proper sequence to bring one to the end of the path. This meditation reviews the steps of the path, and the order in which to move through those steps. We visualize the mandala of the *Lam Rim*, contemplating each and every step of the path, as we travel through the rooms of the mandala in the same order that one should progress through their spiritual practice. By visualizing the spiritual path as a mandala, and seeing ourselves journeying through the rooms of the mandala, we deeply internalize the stages of the path. This meditation Practice consists of six sessions recorded during the original retreat, along with the corresponding written materials, which are comprised of readings. Cost \$48.

#### **PRACTICE 2 > THE REAL MEANING OF REFUGE**

We regularly go for refuge during our normal lives. We take refuge in food, money, sex, government, the police, a job, friends, family, etc. We routinely take refuge in ordinary things or people, thinking that they will be able to protect us or shield us from unhappiness and suffering. Those types of refuge can only help us temporarily, and we are eventually disappointed by their inability to bring us a lasting, permanent happiness. Spiritual refuge is very different. It is to rely upon things which are infallible and provide true happiness, without fail. This practice teaches what it really means to take ultimate refuge, and why one must pursue infallible, extraordinary objects of refuge to reach a complete, lasting happiness. This mindfulness Practice consists of four sessions recorded during the original retreat. There are no corresponding written materials. Cost \$38.

#### **PRACTICE 3 > MEDITATIONS ON THE PRACTICE OF GIVING AND TAKING**

##### **(Tong Len)**

This is an excellent meditation practice to develop a caring attitude in our hearts toward everyone in our lives, especially those that we have difficulty with. And it's a wonderful meditation to do when one has an illness, to cultivate empathy, or to generate happiness. *Tong Len* practice cultivates love and compassion for ourselves, those we are indifferent toward, and those who harm us. It's a great way to learn to be kind to yourself and others. This meditation Practice consists of seven sessions recorded from the original retreat, along with corresponding written materials, which are comprised of readings. Cost \$48.

#### **PRACTICE 4 > THE SEVEN POINT PRACTICE FOR DEVELOPING A GOOD HEART (Lojong)**

Developing a good heart is the cornerstone of spiritual practice. These teachings and meditations provide concise, efficient methods to develop heartfelt love and compassion for all those around us. Lojong is an inspiring practice that trains you to make the most of life by caring about others, and to integrate that attitude into your daily life. This Seven Point Lojong is based upon the *Advices for Training Oneself in the Greater Way* by Geshe Chekawa (1101-1175), and contains many powerful advices on how to practice thinking and acting like a bodhisattva. These teachings and practices were kept secret for centuries because masters of the past did not want their seemingly mystical verses to be misunderstood. This mindfulness Practice consists of fifteen sessions recorded from two original retreats, along with corresponding written materials, which are comprised of readings, homework, quizzes, and answer keys. This topic was covered twice, each time with a different emphasis, and both versions have been provided. Cost \$48.

#### **PRACTICE 5 ➤ MEDITATION ON DEATH AND THE END OF DEATH**

Death is feared, avoided, and denied in ways that often causes us to live as if we will never die. At the end of life, people often die with intense regret from not having done the important things they wanted to do in their life. Acknowledging the fact that we will die, and that we have a limited, unknown amount of time left is essential to making our life choices. By meditating on death in the proper way, we can make every moment of life precious and meaningful. A good death meditation results in a happy, clear mind, free of anxiety and fear. One learns to live each day of life as if it were the last, thereby avoiding meaningless activity and spending each moment in the most fulfilling way possible. This meditation Practice consists of six sessions recorded from the original retreat, along with corresponding written materials, which are comprised of readings, homework, quizzes, and answer keys. Cost \$48.

#### **PRACTICE 6 ➤ FOUR POWERS TO REMOVE NEGATIVE KARMA**

To become enlightened and be happy all the time, one must be virtuous towards every living being all the time. Unfortunately, at present, most of us can not do this. Instead, we routinely behave badly towards others, harming with our thoughts, words, and actions. The result is that we collect negative karma throughout our lives. Karmically, every instance of negativity we generate towards others will definitely come back to us as a similar unpleasant, painful experience in our lives. The good news is that it's possible to purify and remove the past negative karma we collected, before it can ripen upon us as our own personal suffering and pain. This practice teaches how to clean up and purify our past negativity to prevent that old bad karma from ripening upon us as difficulties, problems, pain, or suffering in our life. This mindfulness Practice consists of six sessions recorded from the original retreat, along with corresponding written materials, which are comprised of readings, a reading supplement, homework, quizzes, and answer keys. Cost \$48.

#### **PRACTICE 7 ➤ THE MARRIAGE OF KARMA AND EMPTINESS**

This presentation provides a good overview of how karma and emptiness (ultimate reality) interact to form you, your world, and all of it's experiences. Ultimate reality is described along with the principles of karma, and how those two come together to form all things and experiences. The union of karma and emptiness is the basis of all reality, and this practice explores what you can do to affect and change your reality. It is a wonderful practice to transform the world around you by understanding the laws of karma, and the idea of ultimate reality, in your everyday life. This mindfulness Practice consists of three sessions recorded from the original retreat, along with corresponding written materials, which are comprised of readings. Cost \$38.

#### **PRACTICE 8 ➤ MEDITATION ON EMPTINESS, THE HEART SUTRA**

The Heart Sutra is one of the most popular prayers in Buddhism. It contains seemingly mystical, impenetrable verses that describe how reality does exist, and the way in which it does not exist. This meditation penetrates into the real meaning of the sutra, which describes how our very nature, including our bodies, minds and identities are not what they appear to be. We meditate on the very nature of ultimate reality (emptiness) to discover where things come from and how they really exist. This is an excellent introductory overview meditation on emptiness. This meditation Practice consists of fifteen sessions recorded from two original retreats, along with corresponding written materials, which are comprised of readings, homework, and answer keys. This topic was covered twice, each time with a different emphasis, and both versions have been provided. Cost \$48.

#### **PRACTICE 9: ➤ MEDITATION ON THE EMPTINESS OF THE MIND, (Mahamudra)**

This meditation practice focuses on understanding ultimate reality (emptiness) on a more advanced level. Mahamudra is meditation on the ultimate nature of one's own mind. We meditate on our mind, examining it on six different levels, each one leading to a more sophisticated understanding of our mind and it's nature. Meditating on the ultimate nature of one's own mind is an important part of a larger practice that leads to the direct perception of ultimate reality. The direct experience of ultimate reality is a key meditative realization that assures very quick enlightenment. This meditation Practice consists of six sessions recorded from the original retreat, along with corresponding written materials, which are comprised of readings, homework, quizzes, and answer keys. Cost \$48.

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