



The following notes are drawn from Dr. Joel & Michelle Levey's teachings at the University of Minnesota Center for Spirituality and Healing on May 6th 2011 titled "Meeting the Medicine Buddha." These teachings were offered for the faculty, staff, and friends of the Center to help provide an introduction, orientation, and context for the teachings that the Dalai Lama offered with the Medicine Buddha Empowerment on Sunday May 8th at U Minn. These teachings offer a glimpse of a profound integral contemplative practice for health caring professionals who seek to develop their capacity to facilitate the healing and wholeness of themselves and all they treat in their practice. Traditionally, this practice is foundational for all who practice the Tibetan healing arts and medical tradition, and it holds great relevance for contemporary health care providers as well.



“Once you have adopted such an attitude of infinite interconnectedness, you naturally want to liberate not just yourself but all beings from suffering. The Buddha calls this ‘the conception of the spirit of enlightenment.’ It is the soul of the Bodhisattva, the person who dedicates him—or herself to helping all beings achieve total happiness. When you open to the inevitability of your infinite interconnectedness with other sensitive beings, you develop compassion. You learn to feel empathy for them, to love them, to want their happiness. You want to keep them from suffering, and you do so just as if they were a part of you. You don’t think your behavior makes you special. You don’t congratulate yourself for helping others, just as you won’t congratulate yourself for healing your own leg when you hurt it. It is natural for you to love your leg because it is one with you, and so it is natural for you to love others. You would certainly never harm another being. As the great Buddhist adept Shantideva (8th century Indian sage) wrote, ‘How wonderful it would be when all beings experience each other as limbs on the one body of life!’”

- Robert Thurman, excerpted from *Infinite Life*



"The Bodhisattva is like the mightiest of warriors;
 But her enemies are not common foes of flesh and bone.
 His fight is with the inner delusions,
 The afflictions of self-cherishing and ego grasping,
 Those most terrible of demons
 That catch living beings in the snares of confusion
 And cause them forever to wander in pain, frustration and sorrow.
 Her mission is to harm ignorance and delusion, never living beings.
 These he looks upon with kindness, patience, and empathy,
 Cherishing them like a mother cherishes her only child.
 She is the real hero, calmly facing any hardship
 In order to bring peace, happiness and liberation to the world."

--The Thirteenth Dalai Lama -From his "Discourse on the Great Lam Rim



“The best way to cure disease is by your own mind; in other words, through meditation. Not only is this the most effective method, but also there are no negative side effects. Then, the happiness you experience is transmitted to others, and thus you benefit them as well.

One of the best healing meditations is that on the Medicine Buddha, who is the manifestation of the healing energy of all enlightened beings.

This practice is especially beneficial if you are helping others, especially if you are doing healing work.”

- Lama Zopa Rinpoche (See: *Medicine Buddha Sadhana* translated by Lama Zopa)



Notes below are excerpted from:

Teachings on the ***Medicine Buddha Sadhana*** and ***Medicine Buddha Sutra***
given by Ven. Thrangu Rinpoche

<http://www.dharma-haven.org/thrangu-medicine-buddha.htm>

<http://www.shenpen-osel.org/issue9.pdf>

<http://www.shenpen-osel.org/issue10.pdf>

"The practice of the Medicine Buddha comes primarily from the uncommon tradition of the Vajrayana, which means that the transmission of the practice is done using three processes called the empowerment, which ripens; the instruction, which frees; and the reading transmission, which supports.

The function of empowerment, the formal ceremony or ritual of empowerment, is to introduce you to the practice and to the process of visualization and so forth, which will make up the practice.

The function of the instruction, which frees, is to give you complete access to the practice by means of telling you literally how to do it— what you do with your body, what you say with your speech, and what you think with your mind.

The function of the reading transmission, which supports, is to transmit the blessing of the lineage of the practice which serves to consecrate or bless your practice in the form of sound.

Because the lineage has been transmitted as the sound of the words of its transmission, when the reading transmission is given to you, you simply listen to the sound and think that by doing so you receive the blessing of the lineage."

"Most important is to understand that by visualizing yourself as the Medicine Buddha you are not pretending to be something that you are not, and that by visualizing the Medicine Buddha and his retinue in front of you, you are not pretending that they are in a place where they are not.

By definition, buddhas are omniscient. Whenever someone thinks of them, brings them to mind, or supplicates them, they are aware of it and respond with their compassion and blessing. In the final analysis, the situation is identical to their actually being present anywhere they are thought of.

Therefore, it is always appropriate to regard a buddha that is present in one's mind as actually being present in front of one. When you think that the Medicine Buddha, together with his retinue, is present in front of you, it is really true that they are.

Visualizing yourself as the Medicine Buddha is also appropriate, because your fundamental nature— what you truly are— is buddha nature. Buddha nature is essentially the potential to attain awakening.

At some point in the future you will attain the same awakening or buddhahood as the Medicine Buddha himself. By visualizing yourself as the Medicine Buddha, you are assuming the appearance of what fundamentally you are even now and what manifestly you will be upon your awakening.

It is to acknowledge this truth that you assume the aspect of the body, speech, and mind of the Medicine Buddha, which is, therefore, entirely appropriate."

"You can visualize yourself as the Medicine Buddha, if you wish, but the main focus is to actually visualize a small form of the Medicine Buddha, no larger than four finger-widths in height, in the actual part of your body that is afflicted.

So if it is an illness or pain in the head, visualize a small Medicine Buddha in the head

Visualize the Medicine Buddha in that place, and think that from this small but vivid form of the Medicine Buddha rays of light are emitted. These rays of light are not simply light, which is dry, but liquid light having a quality of ambrosia. This luminous ambrosia or liquid light actually cleanses and removes the sickness and pain— whatever it is.

You can do this not only for yourself, by visualizing the Medicine Buddha in the appropriate part/s of your own body...

And you can do it for others as well by visualizing the Medicine Buddha in the appropriate part of their body or bodies.

The radiation of rays of light of ambrosia and so on is the same."

More quotes from Thrangu Rinpoche's teachings on the Medicine Buddha practice:

"In most religious traditions, the deities of that tradition, when they are related to or imagined, are imagined in front of one. Then, visualizing the deity or deities as being present in front of one, one prays to them, and by doing so hopefully one receives their blessing, which benefits one in some way. In the Vajrayana tradition, however, we regard the blessing and the power and the qualities of the deities as being innate, as being within one's own mind."

"The primary technique in the meditation consists of imagining our self to be the Medicine Buddha, conceiving of yourself as the Medicine Buddha.

By replacing the thought of yourself as yourself with the thought of yourself as the Medicine Buddha, you gradually counteract and remove the fixation on your personal self.

And as that fixation is removed, the power of the seventh consciousness is reduced (which maintains a sense of a separate self.) And as it is reduced, the kleshas or mental afflictions are gradually weakened, which causes you to experience greater and greater well-being in both body and mind."

Sometimes we visualize the deity in front of us, separate from ourselves, thinking that rays of light from the deity's heart engulf and pervade us, granting the blessing of the deity.

And sometimes we visualize that rays of light, which embody the blessing of that deity in front of us, strike all beings, removing their obstacles, increasing their longevity, wisdom, and so on."

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"We supplement the visualization of ourselves as the deity with visualizations such as imagining the actual wisdom deities themselves dissolving into ourselves again and again, by means of which we receive their blessing.

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And sometimes we visualize that rays of light, which embody the blessing of that deity in front of us, strike all beings, removing their obstacles, increasing their longevity, wisdom, and so on."



Notes from Lama Tharchin Rinpoche's oral teaching on the Medicine Buddha Mantra:
 (See also: <http://www.heartteachings.com/singles.html>)

“Mantra is like having the phone number – anyone can call my name or mantra – and through that connection – the transmission of blessings and healing energies can flow. This is due to vows that were made by the Medicine Buddha at the time of his enlightenment.

The Medicine Buddha is not separate from you. He is past Buddha – you are future one. Like two flowers – one open, one opening. He has more power because he has realized the result. We are still on the path, blossoming. Your devotion – you need devotion – no way to make the connection or call if the wire's broken – devotion is that wire – has to be connected from your heart to Buddha's heart. Faith and devotion is really important. Like Buddha wisdom mind – is like snow mountain – your faith/devotion is like sun shining and melting the snow to flow as sweet waters of blessings. Devotion, compassion, wisdom – same meaning – when you have devotion your heart opens. When “I don't want to do this” – heart closes – when you have compassion and think about the other – selfishness is gone, mind is clear, open, pure. Same with devotion. Devotion can make your practice alive and full of juice. Without devotion, meditation is hard work. There's no softness or juice – it's hard work. With devotion, contemplate the incredible examples of your teachers, and the brilliance of the wisdom teachings (Dharma). Contemplate the great kindness of the Buddhas and their gifts of teachings. Without such gifts, life is dry, hard work, frustrating – no essence, little meaning or result - result is exhaustion. Buddha Dharma is so natural – devotion naturally comes – without pressing – genuine kind of feeling of devotion that naturally arises with that devotion. Then recite the mantra – visualize mantra around the heart radiating light – offerings to all the great healing Buddhas – drawing back their blessings, inspiration in form of light to bless your heart center – with devotion. Light activity is wisdom activity – wisdom activity – Buddha's activity – opposite of gross ordinary mode of being. Any kind of light – Blue is associated – but also light of the 5 colors is fine – then recite the mantra.

Mantra's power comes from repetition. Herbs, medicines, come from their freshness. Mantra comes through accumulation – each sound, vibration, vibrating your energy center/chakras, - the more repetition, the more power/benefit – for healing and for enlightenment, purification of delusions and defilements, cause (emotions) and effects (suffering). This kind of positive power increases... This is the essence of the speech yoga.”



Meditation on Healing: Medicine Buddha Mantra

<http://www.tc.umn.edu/~camer008/meditation.healing.html>

Notes from Lama Zopa

Visualize yourself as the Medicine Buddha

One of the best healing meditations is that on the Medicine Buddha, who is the manifestation of the healing energy of all enlightened beings. Visualize that you are the Medicine Buddha and that your bowl of medicine is extremely powerful and able to heal all diseases, including serious illnesses like cancer.

Ta dya tha Om beishajye beishajye Maha beishajye beishajye Raja samung gate svaha

Medicine Buddha Mantra

Tibetans ascribe great efficacy to the Medicine Buddha Mantra. Chanting this mantra promotes healing. Enhance medicines by chanting the mantra prior to taking them. The stronger your faith and the more mantras you recite, the greater will be the power of the medicine you take. When someone is dying, chant the mantra to help the person cross over peacefully to the next sphere of existence.

The best way to cure disease is through your own mind - in other words, through meditation. Not only is meditation the most effective method for healing, but also there are no negative side effects. Meditation promotes peace and calm, and boosts the immune system. You transmit to others the happiness you experience, and thus you benefit them as well. Keep your mind steady, and you can achieve great benefits for yourself and for others without deceiving yourself.

Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche. (2000). *Medicine Buddha sadhana*. Taos , NM: FPMT International Office Education Services.



Video of His Holiness' teachings at University of Minnesota, May 2011

<http://mediamill.cla.umn.edu/mediamill/embedqt/114250> - public talk afternoon

See other notes posted at:

<http://www.dalailama.com/news/post/677-his-holiness-promotes-secular-ethics-at-the-university-of-minnesota>

http://www.dalailama.umn.edu/prod/groups/ahc/@pub/@ahc/@csh/@dalai/documents/asset/ahc_asset_272124.pdf



“May I become at all times,
both now and forever
A protector for those without protection
A guide for those who have lost their way
A ship for those with oceans to cross
A bridge for those with rivers to cross
A sanctuary for those in danger
A lamp for those without light
A place of refuge for those who lack shelter
And a servant to all in need.”

- Shantideva from *The Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*

*“As long as space remains,
As long as sentient beings remain
Until then,
May I too remain
To dispel the miseries
of the world.”*

- Shantideva, from *The Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*



A deep bow to the Medicine Buddha potential in you and in all.

Dr. Joel & Michelle Levey

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<http://WisdomAtWork.com>

Meditation & Medicine (A copy of these notes are posted at this site and we invite you to join us in developing this on-line learning community):

<http://MeditationandMedicine.ning.com>

Hawaii Permaculture Farm and Learning Center

<http://KohalaSanctuary.com>

Contemplative Practices, Readings, Books, Resources, and Workshops

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