

1) Friday, Preliminaries

Liberation in Our Hands, Appendix F, description of standards of attainment:

Leisure and fortune

When you are overcome with joy, like a pauper who has found a treasure,
Then you have generated the realization of identifying leisure and fortune.

You will have realized the great value of leisure and fortune
When you become distressed if even an instant of time is vainly spent.

When you become as upset about being idle for even an instant
As another person would if he spilled a bag of gold dust into a river,
Then you have realized the difficulty of finding leisure and fortune.

Düdjom Lingpa (1835-1904), *Mud and Feathers*:

On this occasion when you have such a bounty of opportunities in terms of your body,
environment, friends, spiritual mentors, time, and practical instructions, without
procrastinating until tomorrow and the next day, arouse a sense of urgency, as if a spark
landed on your body or a grain of sand fell in your eye.

...The spirit of emergence and spiritual zeal of those who lack these three points are like
dew in the summertime.

The Three points in verse summary.

Hey!

...The appearances of this life, including your surroundings and friends, are like last
night's dream, and this life passes more swiftly than a flash of lightning in the sky.

There is no end to this meaningless work.

What a joke to prepare to live forever!

Wherever you are born in the heights or depths of saṃsāra, the great noose of suffering
will hold you tight.

...The root of all mind training and practical instructions is planted by knowing the nature
of existence. There is no other way.

I, an old vagabond, have shaken my beggar's satchel, and this is what came out.

Karma Chagme, *Spacious Path to Freedom*:

The critical point is to practice with zeal. Zeal does not entail mere diligence, but
enthusiasm and an enduring quality of delighting in practice.

If you practice with zeal, then signs of success in both the preliminary and main
phases of practice will occur.

Düdjom Lingpa, *Uncommon Preliminaries*:

The third point: All mother sentient beings:

In this limitless realm of saṃsāra, among all sentient beings, who are tormented and bound by unbearable suffering, there is not even one who has not been your father or mother.

What they all desire is happiness, but in terms of their behavior, these poor fools engage in the causes and sow the seeds of suffering.

Feeling compassion for each one, constantly reflect on this until heartfelt compassion causes tears to flow from your eyes and your mindstream is subdued.

Beyond that, make the resolution, “I shall bring them to the state of omniscient, unsurpassed, authentic, perfect buddhahood,” and apply yourself to the practice of the sublime, profound Dharma. Whatever Dharma you perform, dedicate it to all sentient beings, with no partiality toward those near or far. This is the third point.

Know that never being separated from these three points is like fertile ground for practice and like the foundation stones of a fortress.

2 Saturday, Asanga’s Mindfulness of Breathing

Padmasambhava:

According to the custom of some teaching traditions, you are first introduced to the view, and on that basis you seek the meditative state. This makes it difficult to identify pristine awareness. In this tradition, you first establish the meditative state, then on that basis you are introduced to the view. This profound point makes it impossible for you not to identify pristine awareness. Therefore, first settle your mind in its natural state, then bring forth genuine *shamatha* in your mindstream and reveal the nature of pristine awareness.

What is samsara? Gyatrul Rinpoche, *Spacious Path to Freedom*:

Enlightenment is nothing other than the nature of your own mind. Do not look elsewhere... A mind imbued with conceptual elaboration is a mind of samsara. A mind free of conceptual elaboration is liberated. The very nature of the mind-itself is primordially, intrinsically free from conceptual elaboration. Consequently, when we abide in that state, we are abiding in the essential nature of the mind. That is nirvana.

The Great Tantra of Samputa states:

Ideation is the great ignorance that casts one into the ocean of cyclic existence. Abiding in nonconceptual samadhi, there is stainless clarity like space.

“The Essential Instructions of the Mahasiddha Maitripa” states:

First there are three types of quiescence: 1) quiescence that depends on signs, 2) quiescence focused on conceptualization, 3) quiescence that is settled in nonconceptualization.

Tsongkhapa, *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, Vol.3:

The concentration that you will accomplish here has two special features: vivid intensity—an intense mental clarity—and non-discursive stability, staying one-pointedly on the object of meditation. Some add bliss to these, making three features.

...Since the development of this sort of vivid intensity is blocked as long as there is laxity, while one-pointed non-discursiveness is blocked as long as there is excitement, laxity and excitement are the chief obstacles to achieving genuine concentration.

...Two things are needed for this: (1) a technique in which your attention is not distracted from whatever it had as its original object of meditation, and (2) an accurate awareness of whether you are distracted and whether you are becoming distracted. The former is mindfulness; the latter is vigilance.

Classical definition of *mindfulness*, Buddhaghosa:

By means of [mindfulness] they [i.e., other mental processes] remember, or it itself remembers, or it is simply just remembering, thus it is *mindfulness*. Its characteristic is not floating; its property is not losing; its manifestation is guarding or the state of being face to face with an object.

3 Awareness of the Breath

The Buddha in *The Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra in Ten Thousand Stanzas*:

Śāriputra, take the analogy of a potter or a potter’s apprentice spinning the potter’s wheel: If he makes a long revolution, he knows it is long; if he makes a short revolution, he knows it is short.

Śāriputra, similarly, a Bodhisattva, a great being, mindfully breathes in and mindfully breathes out. If the *inhalation* is *long*, he knows the inhalation is long; if the *exhalation* is long, he knows the exhalation is *long*.

Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*:

Don’t concentrate too much on the breath. What is very important, the masters always advise, is not to fixate while practicing the concentration of Calm Abiding.

That’s why they recommend you place about 25 percent of your attention on mindfulness of the breath. But then, as you will discover, mindfulness alone is not enough. While you are supposed to be watching the breath, after only one or two minutes you can find yourself playing in a football game or starring in your own film.

So, another 25 percent should be devoted to a continuous and watchful awareness, one that oversees and checks whether you are still mindful of the breath. The remaining 50 percent of your attention is left abiding, spaciouly.

4 Intention & Introspection

Tsongkhapa, *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, Vol.3:

Intention and the way it stops laxity and excitement

What is intention? ...This is how you should understand it. For example, iron filings are compelled to move under the influence of a magnet. Similarly, the mental process of intention moves and stimulates your mind toward virtue, nonvirtue, or the ethically neutral.

... Here [it] refers to an intention that applies your mind to the elimination of laxity or excitement.

Śāntideva:

In brief, this alone is the definition of introspection: the repeated examination of the state of one's body and mind.

Asaṅga:

Mindfulness and introspection are taught, for the first prevents the attention from straying from the meditative object, while the second recognizes that the attention is straying.

Tsongkhapa:

Question: While mindfulness fixes your attention on the object of meditation as explained above, is it appropriate to monitor your meditation and think about whether you are holding the object of meditation well?

Reply: You have to do this, for Kamalasila's second Stages of Meditation states:

After you have thus set your attention on whatever your chosen object of meditation may be, fix it there continuously. While you stay right with the object, analyze and investigate your mind, thinking: "Is my mind apprehending the object of meditation well? Or is it lax? Or is it distracted by the appearance of external objects?"

Mindfulness directly and continually fastens your attention to the object of meditation. However, indirectly vigilance also focuses your attention on the object of meditation, for you depend on noticing actual or incipient laxity and excitement with vigilance and then stabilize your attention on the primary object without falling under their influence [meaning without shifting attention to them]

...It is not that you stop your concentration and then look at your mind. Rather, while maintaining your state of concentration, you just look to see whether your attention is

staying where it was previously set on the primary object of meditation and, if it is not, whether there is laxity or excitement. After you have settled into concentration, you monitor this at moderate intervals, neither too often nor too seldom. If you do this while the intensity and force of the previous awareness are not quite gone, it takes place within the perspective of this awareness. This has the purpose of both enabling long-lasting, intense stability, and letting you quickly recognize laxity and excitement.

...Not only must you develop vigilance that recognizes laxity and excitement as soon as they occur, you must also develop a vigilance that recognizes them when they are on the verge of occurring, before they have actually arisen. ...

How do you develop this vigilance? ... When mindfulness dwells at the gate of your mind for its protection, then vigilance will appear... Mindfulness, when fully present, is accompanied by vigilance.

6 Sunday, Four Modes of Mindfulness, Stillness and Motion

Pema Tashi (Düdjom Lingpa), *Essence of Clear Meaning*:

Taking aspects of the mind as the path:

Those of the class with inferior faculties, not having the fortune to identify [primordial consciousness] in that way [as those with Middling faculties], first recognize the difference between stillness with respect to consciousness and the movement of thoughts. And, by first taking the aspects of the mind as the path, finally they are led to the absolute space of pristine awareness.

Mindfulness of the Essential Nature of the Path:

According to the teachings, there are four types of mindfulness of the essential nature of the path. The first entails distinguishing between stillness and movement, and by the power of familiarizing yourself with their different appearances, there is single-pointed mindfulness of the unification of the two. Then, even while resting without strenuously observing them like before, as its natural power manifests, there is manifest mindfulness.

Abiding loosely without mindfulness in a vacuous, wide-open clarity, a spacious vacuity, constitutes lying down on a bed that is devoid of mindfulness, which is the substrate.

Once coarse mindfulness has subsided, resting in a luminous vacuity is called self-illuminating mindfulness, or the substrate consciousness.

The former two kinds of mindfulness [single-pointed mindfulness and manifest mindfulness] directly perceive whatever creative displays arise, while during the latter two [the absence of mindfulness and self-illuminating mindfulness], apart from abiding solely in dependence upon a subtle mode of apprehension, all radiant appearances and creative displays of thoughts cease, so there is only nonconceptuality.

7 Stillness & Motion of Appearances

The Essential Instructions of the Mahasiddha Maitripa:

First there are three types of quiescence: 1) quiescence that depends on signs, 2) quiescence focused on conceptualization, 3) quiescence that is settled in nonconceptualization.

2) quiescence focused on conceptualization

...Whatever virtuous and nonvirtuous thoughts arise, steadily and nonconceptually observe their nature. By so doing, they are calmed in nongrasping; awareness vividly arises clear and empty, with no object of grasping; and it is sustained in the nature of self-liberation, in which it recognizes itself. Again, direct the mind to whatever thoughts arise, and without acceptance or rejection, you will recognize your own nature.

Düdjom Lingpa, *Buddhahood Without Meditation*:

If you forcefully suppress the thought process while focusing your mind single-pointedly on such things as a stick or pebble, then many obsessive thoughts will arise, as if you had blocked an irrigation canal, and your body, speech, and mind may become sharply uncomfortable.

In that case, loosely relax and watch your thoughts from afar, clearly observing whatever arises. That which observes is called mindfulness, or awareness, that which is observed is called movement, and resting in that state is called stillness. Identify them as such and meditate!

The Tantra of the Blazing Clear Expanse of the Dakinis states (*Spacious Path to Freedom*):

All adventitious arising of ideation is the display of awareness, so there is no need to block it. While conceptualization arises, nonconceptuality grows... While suffering arises, bliss increases. The greater the mental afflictions, the mightier the primordial wisdom...

Rest as the knots of the snake suddenly release. Rest as if you were casting off a human corpse. Rest as if you were discarding a foul odor. If it is restrained, this will be a cause of its dispersing again. If it is rejected, this will be a cause of its returning again. If you clamp down on it, this will be a cause of its rebounding. If you subdue it, this will be a cause of its getting tough again. If you burn it, this will be a cause of its icing over. Stop blocking and affirming and rest in equality.

8 Space of the Mind

The Essential Instructions of the Mahasiddha Maitripa states (*Spacious Path to Freedom*):

[3] The ultimate quiescence of maintaining the attention upon nonconceptualization:

...Let the mind, like a cloudless sky, be clear, empty, and evenly devoid of grasping, and settle it in utter vacuity. By so doing you will experience the quiescence of joy, clarity, and nonconceptuality.

Tsongkhapa, *The Medium Exposition of the Stages of the Path*:

Then this is the way ideation vanishes: by placing the attention in the absence of mindfulness and mental engagement as before, like bubbles emerging from water, any ideation that arises cannot be prolonged in great diffusion, but naturally subsides.

H.H. the Dalai Lama, *Heart of Meditation, Discovering Innermost Awareness*:

Conceptions are not self-sustaining. They require engagement of mental consciousness to replicate.

10 Cutting Through to Pristine Awareness

The Synthesis, Dūdjom Lingpa, *Essence of Clear Meaning*:

In short, these practices, from śamatha to luminous, cognizant consciousness and the substrate consciousness, as taught previously, constitute the phase of taking the aspects of the mind as the path. But as long as it is divorced from the vipaśyanā of knowing the nature of existence, this does not bring you even a hair's breadth closer to the path of liberation from the suffering of mundane existence and the path of omniscience that liberates from the two extremes. Thus, even if you strive diligently in these practices for a long time, this does nothing more than perpetuate saṃsāra. So understand how your life will certainly have been spent in vain!

Tsongkhapa, *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, Vol.3:

...The mark of meditative serenity [shamatha] is that your attention stays right where it is placed without distraction from the object of meditation. The mark of insight is that you know the reality of selflessness.

...If you engage in analysis with a wisdom possessed of the meditative equipoise of [shamatha] -a state undisturbed by laxity or excitement- then you will understand the meaning of reality.

How the world of “things” comes into existence, Dūdjom Lingpa, *Vajra Essence*:

Ground	Saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are wholly present as your own perceptions, and they are wholly included within the expanse of the essential nature. This essential nature is called the ground.
Substrate	The unaware aspect of the ground is called the substrate, and its pure aspect is called the dharmakāya. Due to its being exhausted in the darkness of unawareness, this very primordial ground, like space, which enables all appearances to arise, is the substrate.
Substrate Consciousness	From that state arises radiant, clear consciousness itself as the basis of the emergence of appearances, and this is the substrate consciousness. Moreover, no objects are established that are not expressions of its own luminosity, and while it can give rise to all kinds of appearances, it does not enter into anything.
Klista-Manas	[Afflicted Mentation] From that state, due to the mere appearance of the ‘I’ that appears as the self, consciousness arises; and by apprehending the self as being here, the ground appears to be over there.
Subtle Mentation Coarse Mentation Reification	As this becomes entrenched, it is made manifest, and so-called mentation arises— which is the basis for the emergence of appearances—revealing the aspect of luminosity. From this the five types of appearing objects arise, and with the reification of them, there is clinging and delusion.

Distinction between mind and pristine awareness, Dūdjom Lingpa, *Mud and Feathers*:

The substrate, as the essential nature of the mind, is darkness like the night; thoughts arise as dualistic grasping at the apprehender and the apprehended; and the close identification with joy and sorrow is like the reification of a dream as being truly existent.

It is not in the essential nature of the sky to change throughout the course of the day and night, but its manifest nature is affected by the sun. Likewise, in terms of its essential nature, the mind does not change, but a distinction is made between pristine awareness and the mind, based on the distinction between primordial consciousness and ignorance.

Then, after three years had passed, in a dream a young woman placed thirteen white mustard seeds on a bright, clear mirror and said, “Do not regard the mind and pristine awareness as two grounds. Do not mistake pristine awareness for the mind! The mind refers to something projected by pristine awareness. The night does not occur during the daytime, and the day does not occur during the nighttime. Space does not turn into either one. Distinguish between the mind and pristine awareness in this way.”

The mind is just a part of pristine awareness that has wandered into samsaric confusion. By resting in the union of *movement*, *mindfulness*, and *stillness*, confused mind will effortlessly resolve back into the luminous substrate of the ground and the unfabricated nature of pristine awareness.

Using that method, all my earlier ways of grasping faded away, and I came to rest in the spontaneous vastness of the pure ground of being. ...Right there - in the absence of mental activity was ultimate reality, the self-emergent primordial consciousness. Without seeking, there was the spontaneously actualized dharmakaya, free of all partiality. Know that all appearances are self-resolving. They are just the creative expressions of pristine awareness; they slip back into the primordial womb like waves naturally subside into the ocean.

Orgyen Rinpoche says (*Spacious Path to Freedom*):

Oh, once you have calmed the compulsive thoughts in your mind right where they are, and the mind is unmodified, isn't there a motionless stability? Oh, this is called quiescence, but it is not the nature of the mind.

Now, steadily observe the very nature of your own mind that is being still. Is there a resplendent emptiness that is nothing, that is unestablished in the nature of any substance, shape, or color? That is called the empty essence.

Isn't there a luster of that emptiness that is unceasing, clear, immaculate, soothing, and luminous, as it were? That is called the luminous nature. Its essential nature is the indivisibility of sheer emptiness, not established as anything, and its unceasing, vivid luster--such awareness is resplendent and brilliant as it were.

Karma Chagme says (*Spacious Path to Freedom*):

... In the freshness of its own present, unfabricated way of being, there is the ordinary consciousness of the present. When it stares at itself, with this observation there is a vividness in which nothing is seen. This awareness is direct, naked, vivid, unestablished, empty, limpid luminosity, unique, nondual clarity and emptiness.

...It is not another than this very self-awareness. This is a real introduction to the primordial nature of being.

Gyatrul Rinpoche commenting on Stage of Generation practice (*Spacious Path to Freedom*):

The essential point is to purify our grasping onto impurity so that pure vision can arise... The whole thrust of Great Perfection practice is primordial reality. This has always been the case; it is not something that we fabricate or imagine. Rather, it is a reality to be discovered.

The various divine embodiments are all qualities of a single awareness--your own. Moreover, all the qualities of the Buddha, which far surpass our imagination, are qualities of our present awareness. It's astonishing that we fixate on the eight mundane concerns by pinning our hopes on them and ignoring our own treasure-trove of awareness.

...Enlightenment is nothing other than the nature of your own mind. Do not look elsewhere.

The Mahasiddha Maitripa says (*Spacious Path to Freedom*):

...There is pristine emptiness, for there is no grasping onto signs. It is luminous, for it is by nature clear light. It is unmediated, for it is not contaminated by the dualistic grasping of ideation. It is vivid, for it knows its own nature.

Appearances and the mind are indivisibly, unimpededly homogenous, for the grasping onto subjects and objects has dissolved. It is ordinary consciousness, for awareness is settled in its own unstructured nature. It is "fresh awareness," for the stream of ideation does not enter the heart, and this is the real essence of the practice of insight.

Regard the essence of the mind-itself as the empty Dharmakaya. As it is unceasingly clear, regard it as the Sambhogakaya. Regard self-arising, self-releasing, manifold appearances as the Nirmanakaya.

Pointing Out the Dharmakaya (Wangchuk Dorje, 9th Karmapa) says (*Spacious Path to Freedom*):

Now all objective appearances are like water and waves, all are apparitions of the mind and in reality are unestablished. By realizing this, one recognizes all appearances as the mind.

By analyzing the essence of the mind in terms of going, staying, and arising, it turns out not to be established as anything. So, like horses and elephants in a dream, it is unestablished in reality. By realizing this, one recognizes that the mind is empty.

From the state of emptiness, clarity, and limpidity in unceasing great joy, it spontaneously arises as manifold appearances, like the moon's reflections in water. By realizing this, one recognizes emptiness as spontaneous actualization.

Thus, from simple spontaneous actualization arising and release occur spontaneously, without wavering from immutable great bliss that is clear, empty, spontaneous, and free of elaboration, like a snake that unravels its own knots. By ascertaining this, one recognizes spontaneous actualization as self-liberating.

The Pith Instructions on the Clear Expanse states (*Spacious Path to Freedom*):

In this ineffable reality free of elaboration, by simply not impeding its radiance, everything appears. Know that the essence of appearances is empty, without an object, and free of the intellect. Not being separated from that reality is called vividness.

11 Vipashyana, the Nature of Appearances

Düdjom Lingpa, *Mud and Feathers*

3. Collapse the False Cave

... Even though you recognize the phenomenal world as consisting of mental apparitions, if you grasp at the deluded agent as being internal and the delusive appearances as being

external — like an illusion and an illusionist or a dream and a dreamer — you are tightly bound by chains of dualistic grasping.

Instead, know that the conceptualized self that is grasped as “I” and all its aspects that are established as the external physical world and its internal sentient inhabitants are arising within the expanse of the all-pervasive essential nature of the mind, devoid of a center and periphery.

... Saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are wholly present as your own perceptions, and they are wholly included within the expanse of the essential nature. This essential nature is called the ground.

H.H. the Dalai Lama, *Heart of Meditation*:

IDENTIFYING THE CLEAR LIGHT IN THE MIDST OF ANY CONSCIOUSNESS

In the New Translation Schools, actualization of the fundamental innate mind of clear light simultaneous with manifestation of the six operative consciousnesses--the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mental consciousnesses--is said to be impossible. According to the New Translation Schools, it is necessary first to dissolve all coarser consciousnesses, to render them as though incapacitated; only then will the fundamental mind nakedly appear.

According to the New Translation Schools, it is impossible for coarse and subtle consciousnesses to occur simultaneously. In the Old Translation School of the Great Completeness, on the other hand, it is possible to be introduced to the clear light without the cessation of the six operative consciousnesses.

...Since the mind of clear light has the general character of mind as an entity of mere luminosity and knowing, the general factor of the clear light can be identified even in the midst of any coarse afflictive consciousness such as desire or hatred.

As Dodrubchen says, mere luminosity and knowing pervades all consciousnesses and can even be identified during the generation of a strong afflictive emotion without having to cease the six operative consciousnesses.

Thus, the difference between the Old Translation School and the New Translation Schools is that when beginning the practice of identifying innermost awareness in the Great Completeness, such stoppage of the six operative consciousnesses is not necessary. Rather, leaving the coarser consciousnesses as they are, the yogi identifies the clear light.

When this identification has been accomplished, it is not necessary purposely to eliminate conceptions of goodness and badness. Instead, no matter what type of conception may arise, it has no power of deception over the practitioner, who is able to remain one-pointedly focused on the feature of mere luminosity and knowing.

***Perfection of Wisdom in 20,000 Lines*:**

Subhūti: “...a Bodhisattva reviews all phenomena as... similar to an apparition, a dream, a mirage, an echo, an image, a reflection of the moon in the water, a magical creation, a village of the sprites... Even Nirvana, I say, is like a dream, like an illusion. If I could apprehend any phenomenon more exalted than Nirvana, of that also I should say that it is like a dream, like an illusion.”

...The Lord has said that dream and waking are indistinguishable...ultimately all phenomena are like a dream.”

Ratnameghasūtra:

All phenomena are preceded by the mind. When the mind is comprehended, all phenomena are comprehended. By bringing the mind under control, all things are brought under control.

Düdom Lingpa, *Essence of Clear Meaning*

i. Establishing the Mind as Baseless and Rootless

The shape and color of the all-creating sovereign, as well as its origin, location, and destination, are objectless openness. This is the spontaneous actualization of the essential nature of the path of cutting through. By examining in that way whether the mind that is the all-creating sovereign of the body, speech, and mind — or of all phenomena — is really existent or really nonexistent, the mind is found to have no basis or root, so it is not established as having any shape or color. The five elements and five [sensory] objects appear like objects of the mind, and your own body appears as its base. But if all these are investigated from an ultimate perspective, they are found to be like space, not truly established as either one thing or many. Ascertaining the origin, location, and destination [of the mind] as objectless openness is the spontaneous actualization of the essential nature of the path of cutting through. This is not something freshly achieved but is simply the knowledge of the mode of being of the nature of existence.

Pabongka Rinpoche, *Liberation in Our Hands:*

As Losang Chökyi Gyeltsen declared:

The way the object to be negated by reasoning appears to the mind is not any different from the way that entities usually appear to ordinary persons like ourselves. This is because every mental state of an ordinary person is tainted by ignorance and, therefore, every object that appears to the mind of such a person possesses the quality of appearing to be truly existent.

If we don't properly discern the way objects give the appearance of being truly existent, we will end up identifying the object to be refuted as some abstract notion of self-existence that is not a part of our actual experience.

Having failed to recognize the object to be negated as it naturally appears in the mind, we will invent some new way of perceiving the self as the object to be negated and apply logical analysis to this, which only results in a philosophical view that was created from artificial speculation.

...If you correctly identify this object, you can refute it easily.

Nagarjuna states in *A Commentary on the Spirit of Awakening*:

The mind is a mere label, and it is nothing other than a label. Recognize awareness as a mere label. Moreover, a label has no intrinsic nature.

Thus, the mind is of the nature of an apparition, and the nature of the mind does not exist as any type of color or shape, as something apprehended or as an apprehender, as a man, a woman, or a neuter, and so forth.

In short, the Buddhas have not seen it and they will not see it; they accurately see it as having the nature of being without an intrinsic nature.

Düdjom Lingpa, *Mud and Feathers*:

...The essential nature of the ground is like the essential nature of space, which is not transformed by the day and night, does not turn into anything else, and enables the appearances of light and darkness.

... The reflection of the planets and stars in the ocean are none other than the ocean. The physical world and its sentient inhabitants are none other than space. Samsara and nirvana are none other than displays of ultimate reality."

From *Vajra Essence*:

The unaware aspect of the ground is called the substrate, and its pure aspect is called the dharmakāya. Due to its being exhausted in the darkness of unawareness, this very primordial ground, like space, which enables all appearances to arise, is the substrate. The appearing aspect of dualistic conceptualization manifests as the delusive experiences of displays of the three realms.

The Tantra of the Blazing Clear Expanse of the Dakinis states (*Spacious Path to Freedom*):

The meaning of the self-releasing of signs is like water merging into water. All phenomena that appear as real signs are none other than reality-itself. For example, once bubbles have arisen, they dissolve back into the water. Likewise, all phenomena arise from reality-itself, then all phenomena are released in their own state.

In the early phases of the practice your mind is overwhelmed by layers of ideation. There are so many thoughts that you can't possibly recognize all of them. But step by step, through engaging in the practice, you refine your awareness so that the moment they arise you recognize them and simultaneously see their nature.

Gyatrul Rinpoche, *Spacious Path to Freedom*:

As paradoxical as it may seem, nonconceptual realization of emptiness can be sustained in the midst of conceptualization, but only if the nature of the mind-itself has been realized.

Sogyal Rinpoche, *Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*:

Just as the ocean has waves or the sun has rays, so the mind's own radiance is its thoughts and emotions. The ocean has waves, yet the ocean is not particularly disturbed by them. The waves are the very nature of the ocean. Waves will rise, but where do they go? Back into the ocean. And where do the waves come from? The ocean.

In the same manner, thoughts and emotions are the radiance and expression of the very nature of the mind. They rise from the mind, but where do they dissolve? Back into the mind. Whatever arises, do not see it as a particular problem. If you do not impulsively react, if you are only patient, it will once again settle into its essential nature.

12 The practice of śamatha and vipashyana in Yangthang Rinpoche's *A Summary of the View, Meditation, and Conduct*:

If you wish to look into the mirror of the actual nature of your mind,
Do not look outward.
Rather, look inward.
Looking outward involves the delusion of reification.
By looking inward, you observe your own mind.

Do not follow after past thoughts,
Or anticipate thoughts to come.
As soon as you encounter the agitated thoughts
Of the present, by directing your mind inwards,
Loosely rest right there,
Without modifying them in the slightest.

This natural settling of thoughts
Is a way of resting but is not the main practice.
However, in that very way of resting
You are ready to encounter pristine awareness, which is the main practice.

As soon as you rest in your natural state,
Thoughts spontaneously cease and depart.
Right where the luster of thoughts disappears,
Is the empty, transparent nature of the mind.

Without focusing on anything, free of falling to any extreme,
A space-like experience arises.
Its empty nature is the dharmakāya.

In the *essential* nature of that emptiness
Is the transparently luminous *manifest* nature of the mind.

Devoid of any expressible, substantial characteristics,
Its spacious and unimpeded self-illumination,
Which is naturally clear, is the saṃbhogakāya.

There is no other perceiver
Of this luminous, empty pristine awareness.
That which is perceived is the empty dharmakāya.
That which perceives is luminous primordial consciousness.

These two may be expressed as emptiness and luminosity,
And they may be called absolute space and primordial consciousness.
These two are not separate.
The manifest nature of that emptiness is luminosity,
And the essential nature of that luminosity is emptiness.

So luminosity and emptiness are unitary.
They are not separate, for they are of one taste.
There is no duality of the perceived and the perceiver.
This is perceived nondually,
So it is called discerning self-awareness,
In which the mind sees itself.

That very nature of the one taste of luminosity and emptiness
Is the equal taste of the good and bad, of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.
So there is no difference between the two, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.
Just that is the Great Perfection.

In the mindstream of one who realizes this Great Perfection
Impartial compassion
And impartial pure vision
Emerge effortlessly and naturally.
That all-pervasive compassion is the nirmāṇakāya.

The pristine awareness of the three kāyas is just that,
So recognize that it is nothing other than that.

As long as there is vague uncertainty,
Realization of the nature of existence will never come.
So you must ascertain this from within.
This is the view of the Great Perfection.

Resources:

The Foolish Dharma of an Idiot Clothed in Mud and Feathers collected in *Heart of the Great Perfection: Düdjom Lingpa's Vision of the Great Perfection, Volume 1*, translated by B. Alan Wallace.

Buddhahood Without Meditation collected in *Heart of the Great Perfection: Düdjom Lingpa's Visions of the Great Perfection, Volume 2*, translated by B. Alan Wallace.

A Spacious Path to Freedom: Practical Instructions on the Union of Mahamudra and Atiyoga, Karma Chagme, with commentary by Gyatrul Rinpoche and translated by B. Alan Wallace

Liberation in Our Hands, Geshe Lobsang Tharchin and Artemus B. Engle, Mahayana Sutra and Tantra Press, 1990, Howell New Jersey

The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment, Volume 3 Tsongkhapa Lama Yeshe, *Mahamudra: How to Discover Our True Nature*, Wisdom Publications

The Heart of Meditation, Discovering Innermost Awareness, The Dalai Lama, Shambhala 2018
Mahamudra: How to Discover Our True Nature, Lama Yeshe, Wisdom Publications

<http://media.sbinstitute.com/> link to podcasts of Alan Wallace teaching 8-week 2015 Mahamudra retreat and other 8-week retreats.

Video courses based on Allan Wallace's 8-week retreats are available online at Wisdom Academy (Wisdom Publications).

Website Link: <http://learn.wisdompubs.org/academy>

Doug's website: www.douglasveenhof.com