



## ANNUAL DZOGCHEN WINTER RETREAT

### Information for Newcomers

It is our hope that this guide will help you relax and get the most out of the retreat. If you are a new practitioner, please read the next two pages and then participate at whatever level you feel comfortable. It will be helpful if you also read the Protocol section of the separate General Information handout.

#### **General Information**

Those who are familiar with the practices are happy to answer any questions and assist you during practice. After removing shoes, you will see practitioners doing three prostrations. This is to honor the Buddha, the Dharma (Teachings), and the Sangha (Spiritual community). Please do these only if you feel comfortable. The large yellow prayer books are called sadhanas, and contain most of the prayers and practices we will do during the retreat. Please do not remove them from the shrine room. Most of these prayer/practices are also contained in the green and yellow sadhanas for sale in the bookstore. The leader of the practice is called the umdze or chantmaster. Usually, he or she will assist you by telling you the page in the sadhana. Some prayers are chanted in Tibetan and then in English; some only in Tibetan. When Ven Rinpoche is present he acts as the umdze. Practice begins (and ends) with three strikes on the singing bowl. Then Breath Purification is usually done. Please read over the explanation preceding page 1 of the yellow sadhana to learn the meaning of Breath Purification.

#### **Detailed information on prayers and practices**

All practices begin and conclude with the same set of prayers and mantras.

#### **Opening Prayers** - In the big yellow Sadhana

- ◆ **Seven Line Prayer - Page 1** - All practices begin with the recitation of Seven Line Prayer to call Guru Rinpoche/Padmasambhava and his enlightened mind to us and to ask him to support us in our practice. We are also calling up our own wisdom mind. This is done three times in Tibetan.

- ◆ **Guru Yoga Mantra - Page 2** - The first mantra about halfway down the page. This is repeated several times aloud and then the rest of the mala (string of prayer beads) is done quietly.
- ◆ **Prayers to the Lamas of the Lineage; Prayer to the Root Lama, Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche; & Prayer to the Root Lama - Pages 5 – 6.** These prayers are done to honor the unbroken lineage of Buddhas and great masters from the historical Buddhas, Shakyamuni and Padmasambhava, to our own teachers Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche.

**Main Body of Practice** - These practices are done according to the time of day, special feast days, and the Teaching being given. See below.

**Closing Prayers** - These are done at the end of every practice.

- ◆ **The Prayer for the Swift Reincarnation of Khenchen Palden Sherab Rinpoche, Prayer for the Swift Return of Lama Chimed Namgyal Rinpoche, Long-Life Prayer for H.H. The Dalai Lama, and Long-Life Prayer for Khenpo Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche- Pages 8 – 10**
- ◆ **Dedication & Aspiration Prayers - Pages 11 – 19.** These are done to dedicate the merit of our practice to benefit all sentient beings.

**Main Body for Specific Practices (inserted between Opening & Closing Prayers)**

- ◆ **Morning Practice - Buddha Shakyamuni Practice - Page 20** - Is usually done in the morning to honor the historical Buddha. This will take place at 7:30 AM at First Unitarian Universalist Church Monday - Friday during the retreat & the last Saturday at the Palm Beach Dharma Center.
- ◆ **Afternoon Practice - Dharmapala Practice - Red Sadhana (long version) or Blue Sadhana (short version)** - Is usually done at the Palm Beach Dharma Center at 3:30 PM. This practice, which is done to honor the protectors of the Dharma, follows a slightly different sequence of opening prayers than the other

practices but has the same closing prayers. This practice is not included in the yellow Sadhana. A limited number of texts will be available, so if you have your own copy, please bring it, or you may purchase a copy in the Bookstore.

- ◆ **Evening Practice - Prajnaparamita Practice/Heart Sutra - Page 42** - Is usually done in the evening and will take place at the Palm Beach Dharma Center at 7:30 PM, Monday – Friday of the retreat. This practice is the essence of a vast Teaching on Emptiness and the Path of the Bodhisattva taught by Buddha Shakyamuni on Vulture Peak mountain in northeastern India.

### **Additional Prayers Added to Practices with Ven Rinpoche during Teaching**

Again, practice always starts with Seven Line Prayer, Guru Yoga Mantra, and Prayers to the Lamas of the Lineage/Root Guru. It is also customary to make a Mandala Offering and ask for the Teaching. We may also do other prayers and mantras according to Rinpoche's instructions.

- ◆ **Mandala Offering - Page 7** - This is an offering of our body, wealth, speech, and mind, as well as other offerings such as our possessions, music, etc. in order to accumulate merit. It is done with the special hand mudra shown to the side on page 7. Fold your hands at your heart if you find the mudra too difficult at first.
- ◆ **Requesting the Teacher to Turn the Wheel of Dharma - Page 7**

### **Other prayers and notes about practices**

- ◆ **100 Syllable Mantra of Vajrasattva - Page 41** - This mantra of the Buddha Vajrasattva is done to purify and remove obscurations, and for those who are ill or have passed into the bardo. The complete mantra is done aloud several times and then is followed by the shorter mantra at the bottom of the page: OM VAJRA SATVA HUNG.
- ◆ **Tsok Offering Prayers** - Done for the Tsok or Food Offering. The loose sheet will be handed out.
- ◆ **Meditation** - There will be periods of meditation during many of the practices. Ven Khenpo or the umdze will indicate the beginning and end of meditation verbally and/or with a soft tap on the singing bowl.