

## The “Foundation Prayer” Followed by the “Mini Lam-Rim” in Outline Form

The Foundation of All Good Qualities is the kind and venerable Guru.  
Correctly devoting to Guru is the root of the path.  
By clearly seeing this and applying great effort,  
Please bless me to rely upon the Guru with great respect.

Understanding that the precious freedom of this rebirth is found only once,  
Is greatly meaningful and difficult to find again;  
Please bless me to generate the mind that unceasingly,  
Day and night, takes its essence.

This life is as impermanent as a water bubble;  
Remember how quickly it decays and death comes.  
After death, the effects of black and white karma pursue us  
As a shadow follows the body.

Finding firm and definite conviction in this,  
Please bless me always to be careful;  
To abandon even the slightest negativities  
And to accomplish all virtuous deeds.

Seeking samsaric pleasures is the door to all suffering;  
They are uncertain and cannot be relied upon.  
Recognizing these shortcomings,  
Please bless me to generate the strong wish for the bliss of liberation.

Led by this pure thought,  
Mindfulness, alertness, and great caution arise.  
The root of the teachings, is keeping the pratimoksha vows:  
Please bless me to accomplish this essential practice.

Having seen that all beings, my kind mothers,  
Have fallen, like myself, into the ocean of samsara,  
May I train in supreme bodhichitta, and  
Bear the responsibility of freeing all migratory beings.

If I develop bodhichitta without practicing the three types of morality,  
I will not achieve enlightenment.  
With my clear recognition of this,  
Please bless me to practice the bodhisattva vows with great energy.

By pacifying distractions to wrong objects  
And correctly analyzing the meaning of reality,

Please bless me to generate quickly with in my midstream  
The path uniting calm abiding and special insight.

Having become a pure vessel by training in the general path, Please bless me to  
The holy gateway of the fortunate ones:  
The Vajrayana, the highest of vehicles.

The basis of accomplishing the two attainments  
Is keeping pure vows and commitments.  
Having become firmly convinces of this,  
Please bless me to protect these vows and pledges with my life.

Having realized the importance of the two stages,  
The essence of the Vajrayana,  
By practicing with great energy, never giving up the four sessions,  
Please bless me to realize the teachings of the holy guru.

May the gurus who show the noble path  
And the spiritual friends who practice it have long lives.  
Please bless me to pacify completely  
All outer and inner hindrances.

In all my lives, may I never be separated from  
Perfect gurus and the magnificent Dharma.  
By completing qualities of the stages and paths,  
May I quickly attain the state of Vajradhara.

## **Mini Lam-Rim**

by Arjia Rinpoche

**One Dharma tree with three linguistic branches,  
Two reasons, three jewels and merit has ten,  
Four noble truths, three trainings and a twelve link of chain,  
Seven points of training and exchanging the position;  
Six paramitas for wisdom and compassion.**

Notes on the poem

- I. Two reasons why we practice
  - A. Fear of suffering, life is full of stress. Basically we feel we don't have enough so we want to earn or gain more. It's this process that causes suffering because the attitude behind it if checked is fear.

Success=happiness, No Success=unhappiness, End of Success=unhappiness

B. Solution to the fear of suffering from the Buddhist point of view is taking refuge in the three jewels; namely the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

## II. The Three Jewels

A. Buddha: he found the solution. If he had become a king he would definitely have been able to manage the country better. Instead he found a way to help all sentient beings.

B. Dharma: teachings of his experience show how to control ourselves in 3 parts

1. Temporary
2. Long-term
3. Long-term for self or others (for this life or for the next life)
4. Sangha: the evaluation of his teaching, a proving ground.
  - a. A model for actions
  - b. Support from friends

III. Once we take refuge our **homework**\* becomes the 10 virtues or eliminating the 10 non-virtues to control ourselves in order not to harm others via the three entrances.

### A. Body/ physical actions

1. Killing: If we kill someone its legally and ethically wrong. If we kill a fish we think it's less wrong. If we kill a bug or a spider we don't even think about it. Buddha says all sentient beings are equal. If we think we could become a mosquito in some life then we wouldn't kill it. We kill it because we are searching for happiness. In order to eat, not be eaten or bother. We cannot get happiness from others' suffering.
2. Stealing: Limitations related to rate of currency and time; can be verbal misrepresentation. e.g: A quarter lying on a table in California doesn't compare to one lying on a table in Calcutta. One must check their feelings about whether it's O.K. or not. In Calcutta might feed an entire family whereas the one in CA. wouldn't get you a tomato.
3. Sexual misconduct: For monks: vows are very clear in teachings about why they don't marry: Purpose is to teach & attain enlightenment. Families need taking care of and attachment is created. For General Population: If married; no cheating.

### B. Speech

1. Lying
  - a. White lie- depends on result, i.e.: to save life
  - b. False pretenses- if breaking a vow it's as severe as killing
  - c. Slander or divisiveness: to create disharmony among a group
2. Harsh speech: causing hurt by what is said
3. Idle gossip: irresponsible speech that can lead to misconduct. Light but easy to fall into

### C. Mind: the 3 poisons

1. Desire: covetousness; attachment
2. Hatred or Malicious intent which is the seed of anger. A wish to harm and therefore hidden anger, it is the motivation
3. Wrong View is the basis of all Ignorance: finding justification for our actions, e.g. killing for food

**(\* The four opponent forces/ remedies to purify negativities**

1. Forces of reliance: meditating on emptiness purifies the mind
2. Overcoming misdeeds: prostrations; liberate helpless creatures
3. Repentance-regret: motivation to restrain ourselves
4. Not repeating misdeeds

IV. The four noble truths

- A. The truth of suffering
- B. The desire to find happiness and avoid suffering
- C. Everything changes (suffering can be ended)
- D. The path to the end of suffering

Environmentally there is suffering; it surrounds us. First there is the IDEA to stop it which can lead to action (the path)

V. The 3 baskets of training

- A. Morality (path)
- B. Concentration (path)
- C. Wisdom (goal)

There are two types of fire:

Fire in the house (here and now) goal is to get away and save self (arhat)

Fire is in the area, the house is safe now but the fire will come, unavoidable (self-realizer)

VI. Twelve links of dependent origination: no ending, no beginning

- A. Ignorance- seed or motor connect to..Karma the result leads to...
- B. Consciousness (action)
- C. Conception- nam che
- D. Name and form- the 5 senses come out
- E. Sources of perception: contact to everything
- F. Feeling: feedback to senses
- G. Mind: craving/ aversion
- H. Grasping
- I. Existing
- J. Birth
- K. Old age, sickness, death

VII. How to achieve or generate compassion has two ways:

- A. Seven point training or seven fold cause and effect practice
  1. See all sentient beings as your mother
  2. Be mindful of their kindness and how they benefit us
  3. Repay their kindness

4. Heartwarming love
5. Compassion
6. Resolute intention/ loyalty
7. Exchange self with others; put others before self in actions and mind (bodhicitta)

B. The six paramitas

1. Generosity
2. Morality
3. Forbearance
4. Wise effort (with enthusiasm)
5. Concentration
6. Wisdom

VIII. Compassion

Four conclusions or means of conversion

1. Giving whatever is necessary
2. Speaking pleasantly which benefits others
3. Helping others
4. Consistency between words and deeds

IX. Enlightenment has 2 categories

- A. Wish: aspiring mind of enlightenment
  - B. Action: engaging mind of enlightenment
- Taking Vows:

1. Bodhisatva vows (metal)
2. Tantric vows (metal)
3. Ordination vows (ceramic)