

Guru Yoga

By Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche

Mahamudra can first be practiced in the context of the withdrawal phase of sadhana practice and especially through the approach of mixing your guru's mind and your mind.

The practice of mixing your guru's mind and your mind brings the practice of devotion onto the path as an approach to mahamudra. What is traditionally recommended for daily practice is to begin by mixing the mind of your guru, or the Buddha, and your own mind. This approach is extolled in the writings of many members of the lineage as being the best approach to mahamudra.

You begin by visualizing the lama above your head or in front of you. He should be visualized as totally insubstantial. Even if the lama is visualized in his ordinary form, he should not be conceived of as being a solid form of flesh and blood. He should be visualized as being made of light rays and light and as the embodiment of the compassion and wisdom of all buddhas. Then you pray, either using a specific practice liturgy, or simply whatever you wish to say. You might be praying for wisdom or you might be using

the practice to reveal something or confess something that is bothering you. In any case you pray.

Then at the end of it you take the first three empowerments in the form of white rays of light from the [guru's] forehead to your forehead and red rays of light from the [guru's] throat to your throat, and blue rays of light from the [guru's] heart to your heart. When that happens, you think that all of the obscurations of the three doors [body, speech, and mind] are purified and removed. Then finally, the three lights come at the same time, which is the fourth empowerment.

Following that, you think that the lama melts into light and dissolves into you and that his mind and your mind are mixed like water being poured into water. This is effective if you have the confidence that the visualized lama is the embodiment of the wisdom of all the buddhas and not something solid made of flesh and blood. Through mixing your mind with the guru's, the qualities that are characteristic of the guru's mind will start to manifest in yours.

