

Suggestions for Further Reading

Crystal Clear: Practical Advice for Mahamudra Meditators by Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche

This is a perfect companion to our required text, *Clarifying the Natural State* by Dakpo Tashi Namgyal, as the revered Thrangu Rinpoche, a highly learned meditation master (still alive and teaching!), offers very helpful, insightful and practical commentary on that classic manual of meditation. Heartfelt and plainspoken, this text illuminates the path of Mahamudra in a way that makes it even more readily accessible. As Rinpoche says, “The practice can be done in the solitude of retreat or while involved in the daily complexities of modern life. Mahamudra training is always applicable in any situation, at any moment of life.”

The Mahamudra: Eliminating the Ignorance of Darkness by the Ninth Gyalwang Karmapa Wangchuk Dorje

Renowned for its clarity and depth, this root text on Mahamudra meditation and its preliminary stages by the Ninth Karmapa is accompanied by commentary given by Beru Khyentse Rinpoche, based on teachings he received from his close teacher, the Sixteenth Karmapa.

Mahamudra: The Moonlight—Quintessence of Mind and Meditation by Dakpo Tashi Namgyal, Foreword by H.H. the Dalai Lama, translated by Lobsang P. Lhalungpa

A manual of meditation so clear, so precise and profound, it was the 16th Karmapa’s first choice of any Tibetan Buddhist book of meditation to be translated into English. It includes direct and heartfelt meditation instruction from not only early Buddhist masters in India, like the Mahasiddhas Saraha, Tilopa and Maitripa, but so too such great Tibetan masters as Milarepa, Gampopa and Marpa. Composed in the sixteenth century by the eminent yogi and scholar, Dakpo Tashi Namgyal, this comprehensive work remains not only fresh, but inspiring.

No Self, No Problem by Anam Thubten

An accomplished contemporary meditation teacher reveals the pathless path through the essential teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha and the lineage of great Buddhist masters. Expressed with simplicity, grace and warmth, this collection of Dharma teachings explores the art of resting in any moment, however we may find ourselves. “We are all carrying a big rucksack of internal stuff in our minds,” Rinpoche says, “wherever we go, whatever we do. Now and then, we have a deep aspiration to put it down.” This small and potent book helps us with exactly that.

The Magic of Awareness by Anam Thubten

“The higher spiritual teachings are often more vertical than linear. They invite us to be enlightened right now rather than pointing to a goal in the distant future,” Rinpoche says in this collection of Dharma teachings that in themselves are lit with the magic of awareness. Compassionate and gentle, Rinpoche beckons us to dignify our own experience and that of the seeming other by coming alive to ourselves as we are, in the very moment, through and beneath our personal conditioning. He invites us, in other words, to wake up to real life.

Carefree Dignity by Tsoknyi Rinpoche

A contemporary meditation teacher renowned not only for his realization, but for the vivid immediacy and play of his teaching style, Tsoknyi Rinpoche leads us to the heart of the spiritual path in this collection of Dharma teachings on mind essence. A Dzogchen yogi like his illustrious father, Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche, he shares with us that genuine self-confidence “comes from within oneself. We find that we can be free by simply resting in natural awareness, by simply letting be.” And the more loose and free we can be on the inside, Tsoknyi Rinpoche says simply, the more we can help others.

Fearless Simplicity by Tsoknyi Rinpoche

The eminent spiritual master invites us to train in the awakened state of mind, within which difficulties naturally dissolve. This collection of Dharma teachings is arranged in three sections—“Appetizer,” “Main Course” and “Dessert”—as though it is a delicious meal. But consider the rare and precious opportunity of ever meeting with such a feast! Rinpoche invites us here to not only taste, but practice and attain stability in the mind’s true nature, which is

suffused with bodhicitta. While the work is expressive overall of the Dzogchen view, there are excellent teachings in the “Appetizer” section on the practice of shamatha.

The Heart of the Matter by Tsele Natsok Rangdrol

Plain, heart-seeing, this slender book contains pithy advice from such spiritual masters as Gampopa, Maitripa, Marpa and Gotsangpa; it distills the essence of the Buddhist path, and “precisely covers the definitive meaning of the view, meditation, conduct and fruition, in their entirety,” Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche says, “so that their practice can take effect in our minds.” Tsele Natsok Rangdrol is a spiritual master who, though born in 17th century Tibet, offers us timeless wisdom appropriate in any personal or cultural circumstance. His practice, his accomplishment, was fueled by devotion.

Tilopa’s Mahamudra Upadesha: The Gangama Instructions with Commentary by Sangyes Nyenpa, translated by David Molk

Forefather of the Kagyu lineage in Tibetan Buddhism, the Mahasiddha Tilopa received guidance from a celestial dakini teacher who manifested at important moments in his life to set him in the right direction. Tilopa means sesame-grinder; this was the appearance he eventually assumed by day in the first part of his life. Each instant of his life, it is said, was devoted to the essence of spiritual practice. Each instant was fresh and alive with awakened heart. “Not one moment of his life, day or night, was ever wasted.” This precious tantric *doha*, or spontaneous song of realization, on fruition Mahamudra, is exquisite and profound. The commentary and translation, infused by their subject, are clear and direct.

A Spacious Path to Freedom: Practical Instructions on the Union of Mahamudra and Ati Yoga by Karma Chagme, with commentary by Gyatrul Rinpoche

Born in 17th century Tibet, the Mahasiddha Karma Chagme Rinpoche was renowned in his day for the immense profundity and depth of his spiritual realization. His realization was such that he was regarded as an emanation of Avalokiteshvara, the buddha of compassion. During his strict thirteen-year retreat, he wrote many important commentaries, including this text, on the nature of mind. This manual of meditation instruction includes the stages of practice through to Mahamudra and Dzogchen. More traditional in its presentation, more overtly complex, it assumes in the reader some familiarity and connection with Tibetan meditation practice.

Contemporary commentary by 20th century teacher Gyatrul Rinpoche interwoven throughout offers direct, practical, zesty and even humorous clarification, instruction and advice.

Journey to Enlightenment: The Life and World of Khyentse Rinpoche, Spiritual Teacher from Tibet, with a remembrance by H.H. the Dalai Lama, photographs and narrative by Matthieu Ricard (Also available in paperback as: ***The Spirit of Tibet: the Life and World of Khyentse Rinpoche, Spiritual Teacher***)

A treasure-trove of inspiring pith instructions, spontaneous songs of realization, and spiritual biography, accompanied by luminous photographs taken by Khyentse Rinpoche's attendant of thirteen years. "Khyentse Rinpoche was a model for all other holders of the teachings," H.H. the Dalai Lama reminds us. "We should not only admire his inconceivable knowledge, wisdom, and accomplishment, but, more importantly we should follow his example and emulate those qualities ourselves."

The Life of Shabkar: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Yogi, with a Foreword by H.H. the Dalai Lama, translated by Matthieu Ricard

This life story of one of the greatest of all Tibetan yogis is expressed primarily through spontaneous songs of realization. An amazing spiritual master, a great Dzogchen yogi, Shabkar Tsogdruk Rangdrol wandered across the entire range of Tibet, from the region of Amdo in the far Northeast (it was in solitary retreat on an island in Lake Kokonor that he composed *Flight of the Garuda*) to Mount Kailash in the West. Reading again and again these diamond-like songs of the heart—songs on the nature of bodhicitta and devotion, songs on meditation practice, songs of advice and personal encouragement—one's narrow concepts about what it is to be a human being become permeable, and begin to dissolve.

Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism by Chogyam Trungpa

A brilliant, psychologically astute collection of Dharma talks lit through with a refined discernment of how we may lose our way on the spiritual path. Egocentricity, self-deception, forsaking wisdom in attachment to spiritual techniques—all such expressions of substance habit mind fuel distortion of the spiritual path. In this text, Chogyam Trungpa reveals how we may come alive to our conditioning and open to ourselves as we simply are. "The basic problems of spiritual materialism," Rinpoche says, "are common to all spiritual disciplines."