



**Dharma Talk #7:  
Buddhist Deities and  
Meditation**  
March 19, 2009

**Khenpo Drimed Dawa**  
(Dr. Dean Pielstick)  
**Dharmakirti College**  
[www.dharmakirti.org](http://www.dharmakirti.org)

- **Who are all these deities?**
  - Peaceful, wrathful, 100's of variations
- **Purpose of meditation**
  - Training the mind*
  - Deity practice – a faster path!*
- **Basic steps**
  - ❖ Focused attention – *shamata*
  - ❖ Expanding complexity
  - ❖ Increasing detail
  - ❖ Adding context
  - ❖ Mantra recitation
  - ❖ Dissolution
- **Shamata** – Single-pointed calm abiding
  - ❖ Focus on an “object”
  - ❖ Focus on a white “bindu”
  - ❖ Focus on red bindu in hollow body
  - ❖ Focus without object
  - ❖ Deity practice as *shamata*
- **Focus on object: outer tantras**
  - ❖ Peaceful deity
  - ❖ Single figure
  - ❖ Outside of ourselves
  - ❖ Seated on “moon disk”
- **Use of practice text – *Sadhana***
  - ❖ Describes the deity
  - ❖ Guides the process
  - ❖ May include the meaning
- **Examples of peaceful deities**
  - ❖ *Chenrezig*
  - ❖ *Green Tara*
  - ❖ *White Tara*
  - ❖ *Vajrasattva*
- **Increasing complexity**
  - ❖ Wrathful deities
  - ❖ Male & female in union
  - ❖ “Self” as the deity
  - ❖ Seated on sun and moon disks
- **Examples from inner tantras** – Highest yoga tantra ...
  - ❖ *Guhyasamaja*
  - ❖ *Hayagriva*
  - ❖ *Vajrayogini*
  - ❖ *Chakrasamvara*
  - ❖ *Kalachakra*
- **Adding detail & context – Mandala**
  - ❖ Offerings, protection circle & descent of blessings
  - ❖ Base, mansion, & seat of the deity
  - ❖ Generating the deity & consort
  - ❖ Inviting the deities & retinue
  - ❖ Offerings, praises & transformation into the deity
- **Mantra recitation**
  - ❖ “Mantrayana”
  - ❖ 7, 21, 108, ... millions!
  - ❖ Mantra = “name of the deity”
  - ❖ Visualized as circling “seed syllable” of the deity at one’s heart
- **Mantra examples**
  - ❖ Chenrezig: OM MANI PADME HUNG
  - ❖ Tara: OM TARE TUTARE TURE SOHA
  - ❖ Short Vajrasattva:  
OM VAJRASATTVA HUNG or  
OM BENZRA SATO AH
- **Dissolution**
  - ❖ Sequential or instant
  - ❖ Abide in “the natural state”...
    - ♦ Emptiness
    - ♦ Suchness
    - ♦ Pure non-conceptual awareness
    - ♦ Similar to, but not *Shamata*
  - ... abide as long as you can...
- **Conclusion**
  - ❖ Dedication of merit
  - ❖ Closing prayers
  - ❖ Long-life prayers
  - ❖ Prayers of auspiciousness
- **Post-meditation**
  - ❖ Transition slowly
  - ❖ Remain as the deity
  - ❖ Maintain “pure view” throughout the day

***Next Dharma Talk*** - *What is Shunyata: Emptiness?* April 16 (last of the season)

***Dharmakirti College*** - [www.dharmakirti.org](http://www.dharmakirti.org)

- ❖ *Classes start March 22*
  - *Cont. Trekcho*
  - *Cont. Madhyamaka*
  - *White Tara (Wed. eve)*
- ❖ *eCollege online classes*

