

PDN's Buddhist Glossary

A

Abhidharma: (Sanskrit; *Abhidhamma*, Pali) Lit: higher teaching. Third division of the Theravadan scriptures, largely a commentary/analysis of the Sermons.

Acharya (teacher). Meditation master.

Amitabha: Sanskrit; Amida (Japanese); one of the major buddhas of Mayahana; created Pure Land free from suffering in which one can attain rebirth by calling out his name. A deity of the tantric pantheon. The Buddha of Infinite Light, the perfected state of our faculty of perception/discrimination.

Anagarika: Lit: homeless one. Someone who has adopted a homeless life without formally ordaining as a monk.

Anapana Sati: (Pali) Meditation on mindful breathing.

Arhat: Sanskrit; literally, “worthy one”; one who has attained the highest level in the Theravada school; the fruition of arhatship is nirvana.

Ati: highest of the six tantric yanas of the vajrayana Nyingma school of Tibet (Old Translation School). The six are kriya, upa (carya), yoga, mahayoga, anu and ati.

Atisha: (982-1054) Indian scholar; in Tibet from 1038 till his death. Reformed prevailing Buddhism. Founded the Kadampa school of Tibetan Buddhism.

Avalokitesvara: Sanskrit;

Kannon (Japanese), Chen Resig (Tibetan), Kwan Um (Korean); the **bodhisattva** of compassion.

Ayatana: A category of the abhidhama, including the six sense organs (eye, ear, etc.) and their objects.

B

Bardos: (Tibetan) The state between two other states of being, especially the intermediate state between one life and the next.

Bhavana: (Sanskrit, Pali) Self-development by any means, especially meditation, mind development, and concentration; meditative practices.

Bhikshu: (Sanskrit, Bhikkhu, Pali) A monk who lives from alms or offerings given by laypersons.

Bhumi: usually refers to the ten stages on the path of a bodhisattva.

Bodhicaryavatara: (Sanskrit) A text of Shantideva (Indian seventh-century Bodhisattva).

Bodhichitta: (Sanskrit; Boddhicitta, Pali) Compassionate wish to gain Enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Bodhidharma: (ca. 470-543) Considered the first patriarch of Zen Buddhism; according to legend, he was the “Barbarian from the West” who brought Zen from India to China.

Bodhisattva: Sanskrit; Bosatsu (Japanese), Bosal (Korean); one who postpones his/her own enlightenment in order to help liberate other sentient beings from cyclic existence; compassion, or karuna, is the central characteristic of the bodhisattva.

Brahmaviharas: (Sanskrit, Pali) Four sublime states/virtues which elevate—loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity.

Buddha: Sanskrit; literally, “awakened one”; a person who has been released from the world of cyclic existence (**samsara**) and attained liberation from desire, craving, and attachment. **Shakyamuni**, also known as Siddhartha Gautama, the historical Buddha, is considered to be the first Buddha of this age who was preceded by many others and will be followed by Maitreya; Mahayanists believe that there are countless Buddhas for every age.

Buddhadharma: (Pali) The Buddha's teachings.

Buddha Families: The mandala of the five tatagatas or jinas (victorious ones). They embody the five wisdoms, but in samsara, these energies arise as the five confused emotions. Everything in the world is said to possess a predominant characteristic of one of these five. The five families, tathagatas, wisdoms, confused emotions, directions, and colors respectively, are as follows: 1) Buddha, Vairocana, Dharmadhatu wisdom, ignorance, center, white; 2) vajra, Aksobhya, mirror-like wisdom, aggression, east, blue; 3) ratna (jewel), Ratnasambhava, wisdom of equanimity, pride, south, yellow; 4) padma (lotus) Amitabha, discriminating awareness wisdom, passion, west, red; 5) karma (action), Amoghasiddhi, wisdom that accomplishes all actions, envy, north, green. Some of these qualities vary in different tantras, especially those of buddha and vajra.

C

Chenrezig: (Tibetan) Tibetan equivalent of Avalokiteshvara, embodiment of compassion. Supreme protector and patron deity of Tibet.

Chogyal: (Tibetan) Title. Lit: Dharma Raja or Religious King or Protector of the Buddhist Religion.

D

Dana: (Sanskrit, Pali) Basic Buddhist virtue, the opposite of greed and translates as “generosity” or “giving.”

Dathun: Month-long meditation retreat.

Dharma: Sanskrit; dhamma (Pali); truth or reality; the central notion of Buddhism; teachings of the Buddha; it is considered one of the three “jewels” of Buddhism; often used as a general term for Buddhism.

Dharmata: (Sanskrit) Ground for being, the essence of everything; unifying spiritual reality; the absolute from which all proceeds.

Dogen: (1200-1253) Japanese founder of Soto Zen; brought Soto school to Japan; he stressed shikan taza, or just sitting, as the means to enlightenment.

Dojo: (Japanese) Zen training hall.

Dokusan: (Japanese) In Zen, a question-and-answer session with the Master or Roshi during which progress is tested.

Dön: Malevolent spirit, usually of the preta realm, who tends to cause disease—physical or psychological—due to a lack of mindfulness on the part of the practitioner.

Dzogchen: Tibetan; literally, “great perfection”; supreme teachings of the Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism; its adherents believe these teachings are the highest and that no other means are necessary; also known as ati-yoga.

E

Empowerment: ritual performed by eminent Tibetan Lamas; an essential prerequisite for the practice of tantra.

Enlightenment: The word used to translate the Sanskrit term bodhi (“awakened”); generally used by Mahayanists instead of the Theravada term nirvana; connotes awakening to the mind’s true nature. State of perfect wisdom and limitless compassion. Achievement of a Buddha.

G

Gampopa: (1079-1153) Tibetan scholar, disciple of Milarepa and Marpa, whom he succeeded; one of the founders of the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism.

Garuda: Bird of Indian mythology said to hatch fully grown and hence symbolizes the awakened state of mind.

Gelugpa: One of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism; His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama is the spiritual head of this school.

Geshe: (Tibetan) Gelugpa title equivalent to Doctor of Divinity.

Gompa: (Tibetan) Teaching and practice hall; isolated place or monastic site.

Guru: (Sanskrit) Teacher, particularly a spiritual master.

H

Hannya Shingyo: (Japanese) Diamond Sutra. Main Buddhist sutra chanted by Zen practitioners.

Hatha Yoga: (Sanskrit) yoga of physical exercises/breath control.

Hatto: (Japanese) Dharma hall.

Hevajra: (Sanskrit) One of the Tantric texts of Tibetan Buddhism.

Hondo: (Japanese) Sanctuary.

I

Ikebana: (Japanese) Flower-arranging used as a meditative practice in some Zen traditions.

J

Jodo-shin-shu: literally, “True School of the Pure Land”; school of Japanese Buddhism founded by Shinran; no monastic aspect—purely a lay community; emphasis on relying on the power of Amida Buddha (Amitabha) for salvation is more extreme than that of the Jodo-shu school; most important school of Buddhism in Japan today.

Jodo-shu: literally, “School of the Pure Land”; school of Japanese Buddhism derived from the ideas of the Pure Land School of China which were brought to Japan in the ninth century; officially founded by Honen in the twelfth century as a means to open up an “easy path” to liberation by calling out the name of Amida Buddha (Amitabha); in contrast to the Jodo-shin-shu school, its adherents enter the monastic life and understand calling out the name of Amida as an act of gratitude rather than a means to strengthen trust in Amida.

Jukai: (Japanese) Precept-taking ceremony.

K

Kagyū: One of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism; the teaching was brought to Tibet in the 11th century by Marpa; emphasis on transmission of knowledge from master to student.

Kaisando: (Japanese) In Zen, founder's hall and dokusan room.

Kanna-Zen: (Japanese) Form of Rinzai Zen founded in the twelfth century.

Karma: Sanskrit; literally, "action"; universal law of cause and effect which governs rebirth and the world of samsara; our willed actions (including mental and vocal) will have consequences for us in the future.

Kesa: (Japanese) Zen monk garment.

Khenpo: (Tibetan) Title usually of an Abbot; indicates high scholarship in Nyingma, Sakya, and Kagyu schools.

Khyentse: (Tibetan) Lit: one in whom wisdom and compassion are perfectly combined, name of a number of exceptional Nyingma lamas during past two hundred years.

Kinhin: (Japanese) Formal marching during periods of rest from zazen to loosen stiff joints/ exercise the body.

Klesha: see poison

Koan: Seemingly paradoxical riddle or statement used as a training device in Zen to force the mind to abandon logic and dualistic thought.

Kusen: (Japanese) Oral teachings.

Kuti: Accommodation for individual meditation.

Kuan Yin: (Chinese; Japanese, Kannon; Tibetan, Avalokiteshvara) Bodhisattva of infinite compassion and mercy.

Kyudo: (Japanese) Art of archery used as a meditation practice in some Zen traditions.

L

Lama: (Tibetan) Spiritual teacher who may or may not be a celibate monk venerated as an authentic embodiment of the Buddhist teachings. Conducts and teaches rituals. Today, often used as a polite form of address for any Tibetan monk regardless of spiritual development.

Lamrim: (Tibetan) Lit: Graduated Path. System of teaching founded by Atisha (eleventh-century Indian Master) in which all the stages of the path are laid out in a very clear and systematic manner. All four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism have produced Lamrim texts.

Lojong: (Tibetan) Lit: mind training. Based on Lamrim teachings- explains how to train the mind in daily life for the development of Bodhicitta.

Longchen: (1308-1363) Greatest scholar of the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism.

M

Mahamudra: (Sanskrit) As a practice it is popular in Kagyu and Gelug schools of Tibetan Buddhism; as a path it is a sequence of systematic advanced meditations on emptiness and pure appearance.

Mahathera: Title for Bhikku of twenty years' standing, usually called Theras.

Mahayana: Sanskrit; literally, "the Great Vehicle"; one of the three major schools of Buddhism which developed in India during the first century; it is called the "Great Vehicle" because of its all-inclusive approach to liberation as embodied in the bodhisattva ideal and the desire to liberate all beings; the Mahayana school is also known for placing less emphasis on monasticism than the Theravada school and for introducing the notion of sunyata.

Maitreya: the Buddha expected to come in the future as the fifth and last of the earthly Buddhas; he is believed to reside in the Tushita heaven until then (about 30,000 years from now); the cult of Maitreya is widespread in Tibetan Buddhism. Embodiment of loving-kindness of all the Buddhas; historical figure—Bodhisattva disciple of Shakyamuni.

Mandala: (Sanskrit) In the context of tantra, a symmetrical design used as an object of meditation.

Mantra: (Sanskrit) String of sound symbols recited to concentrate and protect the mind.

Mara: (Sanskrit) Lit: death. Evil influences that impede one's spiritual transformation. Personified as a "tempter" whose baits are the sensory pleasures. More generally maras are difficulties the practitioner may encounter, often classified as : skandha-mara, misunderstanding the five skandhas as self; klesa mara, being overpowered by the klesas; mrtyu-mara, death, which interrupts one's practice unless the yogin knows how to make it part of the path; and devaputra-mara, seduction by the bliss of meditation—still dwelling in the god realms of samsara.

Marpa: (1012-1097) Tibetan founder of the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism; most famous pupil was Milarepa.

Metta Bhavana: (Pali) Meditation on loving-kindness.

Milarepa: (1038-1122) Tibetan poet-saint; a great figure in the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism.

Mudra: (Sanskrit) Lit: seal, sign. Bodily posture or symbolic gesture imbued with symbolic significance which may be used in ritual. In tantra, may refer to a female consort.

N

Naropa: (eleventh century) Indian master/accomplished scholar; teacher of Marpa and Milarepa; particularly famous for his Six Yogas of Naropa.

Nembutsu: (Japanese) Recitation of The Name of Amida Buddha, which in Japanese form that most Shin Buddhists use is *Namu Amida Butsu* or *Namuamidabu*, which literally means "I take refuge in Amida Buddha." Principal practice of Pure Land Buddhism.

Ngondro: (Tibetan) Preliminary practices normally undertaken by a meditator prior to engaging in tantric practice.

Nichiren: (1222-1282) Japanese monk who believed in the supreme perfection of the Lotus Sutra; he advocated the devout recitation of "Namu myoho renge kyo," the title of the sutra, in order to attain instantaneous enlightenment.

Nirvana: Sanskrit; literally,

"extinction, blowing out"; the goal of spiritual practice in Buddhism; liberation from the cycle of rebirth and suffering.

Nyingma: One of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism; the Dzogchen teachings are the supreme embodiment of this school.

Nyinthun: (Tibetan) Meditation practice for a whole day.

Nyung-Neh: (Tibetan) Fasting ritual normally led by a monk or nun.

O

Oryoki: (Japanese) Zen, formal meal.

Osho: (Japanese) Zen priest.

P

Padmasambhava: (eighth century) Indian Buddhist who visited Tibet at the invitation of the king and taught various Buddhist principles; credited with founding the Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism.

Panna: (Pali) Wisdom.

Paramitas: (Sanskrit) The Ten Perfections cultivated by a Bodhisattva. They are generosity, morality, renunciation, wisdom, energy, patience, truthfulness, determination, loving-kindness, and equanimity.

Phowa: (Tibetan) Ejection of consciousness at the moment of death. Transmission of consciousness.

Poisons, five, three: Synonymous with *Klesha*. Three root poisons are passion, aggression and ignorance. The five poisons

include the above plus arrogance and envy.

Prajna: Natural sharpness of awareness that sees, discriminates, and sees through conceptual discrimination. "Lower prajna" includes any sort of worldly knowledge (e.g. how to run a business, how to cook a meal). "Higher prajna" includes two stages: seeing phenomena as impermanent, egoless and suffering; and a higher prajna that sees shunyata—direct knowledge of things as they are.

Prajnaparamita: the sixth paramita. Prajna is considered the eye without which the other five transcendent actions would be blind. According to Gampopa, prajnaparamita is the awareness that reality is without origination or basis. It sees through any solid existence as well as through any nihilistic interpretation of reality. Even the duality between samsara and nirvana is transcended.

Pratyekabuddha: One who attains liberation from samsara without the benefit of a teacher and does not teach others. In the Tibetan tradition, the pratyekabuddha became a symbol of a stage of enlightenment. Concentrates on individual liberation through examining the twelve-fold chain of dependant co-origination, *pratityasamutpada*. Also the name of the second of the nine yantras. Regarded positively he is worthy of veneration as among the awakened ones. Regarded negatively, his spiritual arrogance/fear of samsara prevent him from completely developing skillful means/compassion. Hence his enlightenment is only partial.

Precepts: 5, 8, 10, or 16 guides to behavior.

Preta: Pretas inhabit one of the three lower realms of samsara. They suffer the obsession of hunger and craving. It is said that even if they came upon a lake of pure fresh water, due to their heavy karmic obscurations, they would experience it as an undrinkable pool of pus. Pretas are depicted with very large bellies and very thin necks.

Puja: (Sanskrit) Sacramental offering which may be associated with body, speech, and mind.

Pure Land: Realm free from suffering in which it is easier to attain nirvana; the most famous one, Sukhavati, is the Pure Land of Amitabha Buddha and requires only calling out his name in order to be reborn in it; "Pure Land Buddhism" refers to this devotion directed towards Amitabha.

R

Rakusu: (Japanese) Zen monk garment.

Realms, Lower or Higher: All beings of samsara belong to one of the six gates or realms. The higher realms include: deva (god), asura (jealous god), and nara (human). The lower realms include: tiryak (animal), preta (hungry ghost), and naraka (hell). In each realm, there is a typical psychophysical pattern of recreating your experience, based on a predominant klesha: pride (god), paranoia or jealousy (asura), passion or dissatisfaction (human), ignorance (animal), craving (preta), and aggression (hell). The karmic momentum in most of the realms is so intense and overlapping that exiting from the realms only comes about when a being's karma in that realm happens to wear thin. Our human realm is considered very fortunate because the maintenance of ego is some-

what haphazard. Therefore there is the possibility of altering our situation by cutting the cycle of samsara.

Refuge: Generally, in the buddhadharma the practitioner takes the refuge vow, he commits himself to the Buddha as an example, the dharma as teaching, and the sangha as fellow practitioners on the path. The refuge vow marks the practitioners formal entry on the path. In the vajrayana, the refuge is fourfold, including root guru, or sixfold, including the three roots and the three jewels.

Renunciation: arises from insight into the hopelessness/poison of samsara. Often said in the nontheistic tradition that renunciation is not something you do; rather, out of your experience, renunciation comes to you.

Retreat: Intensive periods of meditation which may be long- or short-term.

Revulsion: strong sense of disgust for samsara. Nausea combined with clear seeing, rather than aggressive disgust. Revulsion leads to renunciation.

Right Livelihood: Fifth stage of the Noble Eightfold Path. Earning a living in accordance with Buddhist ethics.

Rinpoche: (Tibetan) Lit: precious one. Honorific of a high lama, denotes reincarnation of a realized master.

Rinzai: Japanese; Lin-chi (Chinese); one of the two major schools of Zen Buddhism; it was founded by the Chinese master Lin-chi I-hsuan (Japanese; Rinzai Gigen) and brought to Japan by Eisai Zenji at the end of the 12th century; it stresses koan Zen as the means to attain enlightenment.

Roots, Three: guru, yidam and dharmapala. These three are objects of refuge in the vajrayana in addition to the three jewels. Lineage gurus are the source of blessings. Yidams are the root of attainment (siddhi). Dharmapalas are the root of enlightened action (the four karmas: pacifying, enriching, magnetizing, destroying). Root guru embodies all.

Roshi: (Japanese) Lit: old venerable master. Title of a Zen master who can be either monk or lay, man or woman.

S

Sadhana: (Sanskrit) In Tantra, a type of text and the meditation practices presented in it which relate to deities to be experienced as spiritual realities.

Sakya: One of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism; it is named after the Sakya Monastery in southern Tibet and had great political influence in Tibet during the 13th-14th centuries .

Sakyamuni: Sage of the Sakyas. Title applied to the Buddha.

Samadhi: (Sanskrit) Lit: union. Profound meditative state; focus on a single object through calming of mental activity; one-pointedness of mind. Samadhi refers to the principle of absorption in meditation, but does not specify the degree of insight (vipasyana, prajna) that is present. Thus, it could refer to a conditioned state of concentration in the six realms in which the sense faculties are halted, or to an unconditioned, flowing, and unobstructed experience.

Samsara: (Sanskrit, Pali) World of rebirth and death; the succession of rebirths until liberation is attained; cyclic existence.

Samu: (Japanese) Manual work

used as part of meditative practice in Zen schools.

Sangha: Sanskrit; The Buddhist community as a whole, sometimes referring to the community of Buddhist monks, nuns, and novices; it is considered one of the three jewels of Buddhism (along with the Buddha and the Dharma).

Sangye Menla: (Tibetan) Prayer ritual for sick people.

Satipatthana: (Pali) System of mind development by the analysis of consciousness.

Sayadaw: (Myanmar) Equivalent of Mahathera/Bhikku of 20 years' standing; title given to respected Bhikkus.

Sensei: (Japanese) Teacher.

Sesshin: (Japanese) Lit: to search the heart. Intensive Zen retreat.

Shakyamuni: (ca. 563-422 BCE) The historical Buddha; Theravadins believe that he was the first to attain enlightenment in this age.

Shamatha: (Sanskrit; Samatha, Pali) Basic meditation practice common to most schools of Buddhism, aim is to tame/sharpen the mind as a springboard for insight (Vipashyana; Vipassana).

Shantideva: (7th century) Indian compiler and writer of important Buddhist works.

Shikantaza: (Japanese) A form of zazen consisting of just sitting with no supportive techniques such as counting the breath.

Shine: Meditation for developing calmness.

Shinran: (1173-1262) Founder of the Jodo-shin-shu school of

Japanese Buddhism; taught that attempting to attain enlightenment through effort is futile; instead liberation can be attained exclusively through the help and grace of the Buddha Amida (Amitabha); he advocated calling out the name of Amida as the only practice necessary in order to be reborn in his Pure Land.

Shuryo: (Japanese) Study hall.

Siddha: Enlightened master in the tantric tradition.

Silas: (Pali) Lit: obligations, precepts. Morality or virtue.

Six Yogas of Naropa: System of advanced tantric meditation originating from Naropa. Used by the Kagyu and Gelug schools of Tibetan Buddhism.

Skandha: aggregates of the dharma which make up the individual and his experience—form, feeling, perception, formation, and consciousness. In the confused state, we cling to one or another aspect of these five as a concrete self. When the skandhas are actually seen, no self is found in them, singly or taken together. Moreover, one does not find an individual apart from them. In vajrayana correlated to the five buddhas of the mandala.

Soji: (Japanese) Temple-cleaning after a practice session.

Soto: Japanese; Ts'ao-tung (Chinese); one of the two major schools of Zen Buddhism; it was brought to Japan by Dogen in the 13th century; emphasizes zazen, or sitting meditation, as the central practice in order to attain enlightenment.

Stupa: (Sanskrit) Originally a structure built to commemorate a

Buddha or other highly developed person, often containing relics; became a symbol for the mind of a Buddha.

Sugata: an epithet for a buddha.

Sunyata: Sanskrit; sunnata (Pali); literally, "emptiness"; a central Buddhist idea which states that all phenomena are "empty," i.e. dependent and conditioned on other phenomena and therefore without essence; Theravadins applied this idea to the individual to assert the non-existence of a soul; Mahayanists later expanded on this idea and declared that all existence is empty; emptiness became the focus of the Madhyamika school of the Mahayana Buddhism; the notion of emptiness has often led to Buddhism being wrongfully confused with a nihilistic outlook.

Sutra: Sanskrit; a discourse attributed to the Buddha; sutras comprise the second part of the Buddhist canon, or they traditionally begin with the phrase "Thus have I heard. . . ." and are believed to have been written down by the Buddha's disciple Ananda one hundred years after his death.

T

Tantra: uses yogic practices of visualization, mantra, mudra, and mandalas, as well as symbolic ritual and meditations which work with subtle psychophysical energies; the texts or teachings in which these are described. Tantra refers to the root texts of the vajrayana. Tantra means continuity, and refers to continuity throughout the ground, path and fruition of the journey. Continuity of ground means that the basic nature, whether it is called suchness, ground mahamudra or tathagatagarba, remains like the sky, encompassing everything from sentient beings to buddhas—

luminous and untainted by habitual patterns. For the practitioner, it means that the body, speech and mind, in all their confused and wakeful manifestations are included in the path. Path tantra means applying profound techniques to overcome basic ego. Fruition tantra means finally realizing who and what you are. You realize your being as one with the body, speech and mind of the *tatagatas*. That is you realize the ground that was there continuously from the beginning.

Tara: (Sanskrit) An emanation from the *Bodhisattva* *Avolokiteshvara*. The feminine aspect of compassion, seen in both peaceful and wrathful depictions and in various colors, the Green Tara and the White Tara being the forms most frequently seen.

Tatagata: epithet for a buddha.

Teisho: (Japanese) Presentation by Zen Master addressing students directly in the moment.

Thangka: (Tibetan) Tibetan religious painting.

Three Jewels: The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

Theravada: Sanskrit; “the School of the Elders”; one of the three major schools of Buddhism widely practiced in Southeast Asia; its teachings focus on the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path; also referred to as the Hinayana, or “Lesser Vehicle,” school due to its emphasis on personal rather than collective liberation.

Transmission: Passing on of oral teachings and scriptures with related commentary in an uninterrupted lineage or succession from person to person from ancient times.

Tripitaka: Sanskrit; literally, “the

three baskets”; this term is commonly used for the Buddhist canon, which consists of three parts: the Vinaya, or monastic code; the Sutras; and the Abhidharma, or Buddhist philosophical treatises.

Trikaya: Dharmakaya (enlightenment, wisdom beyond reference point, primordial mind), Sambhogakaya (environment of compassion and communication), and Nirmanakaya (Buddha who takes form as a human).

Tsok: (Tibetan) Feast offerings.

Tsongkhapa: (1355-1417) Tibetan reformer of Buddhism. Founded Gaden Monastery and founded the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism.

Tulku: (Tibetan) Voluntary reincarnation of a religious figure of some distinction.

U

Upasaka: (Sanskrit, Pali) Buddhist lay member who takes refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha and who vows to observe the five precepts.

Upaya: Skillful means. Conveys the sense that enlightened beings teach the dharma skillfully, taking into consideration the various needs, abilities and shortcomings of their students. Upaya is an expression of compassion. In the *bodhsattva*’s discipline, it corresponds to the first five paramitas and to relative *bodhichitta*. By *prajna* alone, without *upaya*, one remains bound to *samsara*. Therefore the practitioner must unify them.

V

Vajrasattava: (Sanskrit) One of the meditational deities of Tantric Buddhism.

Vajrayana: Sanskrit; literally, “the Diamond Vehicle”; one of the three major schools of Buddhism; developed out of the Mahayana teachings in northwest India around 500 C. and spread to Tibet, China and Japan; it involves visualizations, rituals, and mantras which can only be learned by study with a master; also known as Tantric Buddhism due to the use of tantras, or sacred texts. Characterized by a psychological method based on highly developed ritual practices.

Vajrayogini: (Sanskrit) One of the female meditational deities of Tantric Buddhism.

Vihara: Buddhist temple or monastery.

Vinaya: (Sanskrit, Pali) Lit: discipline. Third part of the Tripitaka containing the rules and regulations for running and living in a monastery or nunnery, especially the ethical codes involved.

Vipassana: Pali (*Vipashyana*: (Sanskrit); insight, clear seeing; intuitive cognition of the three marks of existence (*trilakshana*), namely, the impermanence (*anitya*), suffering (*duhkha*), and no-self (*anatman*) of all physical and mental phenomena. In Mahayana Buddhism, *vipassana* is seen as analytical examination of the nature of things that leads to insight into the true nature of the world—emptiness (*shunyata*). Such insight prevents the arising of new passions. *Vipassana* is one of the two factors essential for the attainment of enlightenment (*bodhi*); the other is *shamatha* (calming the mind).

Y

Yana: (Sanskrit, Pali) Vehicle or means of progress to salvation from the wheel of Samsara as in Mahayana. The vehicle that carries the practitioner along the path to liberation.

In the vajrayana teachings there are three yanas—hinayana, mahayana, and vajrayana. They can be practiced simultaneously. According to the Rime (ecumenical) and the Nyingma traditions, there are a total of nine yanas: sravakayana and pratyekabuddhayana (together comprising hinayana), mahayana, and six tantric yanas—kriya, upa, yoga, mahayoga, anuyoga, and atiyoga.

Yidam: (Tibetan) In Tantra, a personal meditational deity embodying an aspect of Enlightenment whose nature corresponds to the psychological make up of the practitioner.

Yoga: Lit: union. A method of meditation or physical exercise designed to bring about spiritual development.

the sixth and seventh centuries after Bodhidharma arrived; it later divided into the **Soto** and **Rinzai** schools; Zen stresses the importance of the enlightenment experience and the futility of rational thought, intellectual study and religious ritual in attaining this; a central element of Zen is zazen, a meditative practice which seeks to free the mind of all thought and conceptualization.

Zendo: (Japanese) Zen training hall.

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Z

Zabuton: (Japanese) Thick rectangular mat used under the zafu in Zen meditation.

Zafu: (Japanese) Round cushion used in Zen schools.

Zagu: (Japanese) Zen monk's garment.

Zazen: (Japanese) Sitting meditation used in Zen schools.

Zazenkai: (Zen-soto) All-day sitting retreat.

Zen: Japanese; Ch'an (Chinese); a branch of Mahayana Buddhism which developed in China during