

— *A Spiritual Classic* —

LIBERATION  
IN THE  
PALM OF  
YOUR HAND

PABONGKA RINPOCHE



A CONCISE DISCOURSE ON THE  
PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT

Edited by Trijang Rinpoche  
*Translated by Michael Richards*

Courtesy of Wisdom Publications

LIBERATION IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND

Courtesy of Wisdom Publications



PABONGKA RINPOCHE

Courtesy of Wisdom Publications

LIBERATION IN THE PALM  
♦ ♦ OF YOUR HAND ♦ ♦

---

A CONCISE DISCOURSE ON THE PATH  
TO ENLIGHTENMENT

NEW REVISED EDITION

*Pabongka Rinpoche*

Edited in the Tibetan by Trijang Rinpoche

*Translated into English by Michael Richards*

Including a memoir of Pabongka Rinpoche by Rilbur Rinpoche



WISDOM PUBLICATIONS • BOSTON

Wisdom Publications, Inc.  
199 Elm Street  
Somerville MA 02144 USA  
www.wisdompubs.org

First Edition, 1991  
Revised Edition, 1993  
New Revised Edition, 2006

Text © Michael Richards 1991, 2006  
Illustrations pp. 2 & 246 © Robert Beer 1991; all others © Eva van Dam 1991  
All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photography, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system or technologies now known or later developed, without permission in writing from the publisher.

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

Pha-boñ-kha-pa Byams-pa-bstan-'dzin-'phrin-las-rgya-mtsho, 1878–1941.  
[Rnam sgröl lag bcañs su... English]  
Liberation in the palm of your hand: a concise discourse on the path to enlightenment / Pabongka Rinpoche; edited in the Tibetan by Trijang Rinpoche; translated into English by Michael Richards.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-86171-500-4 (pbk. : alk. paper)

I. Lam-rim. I. Richards, Michael, 1950– II. Title.

BQ7645.L35P4613 2006

294.3'923—dc22

2006022542

ISBN 0-86171-500-4

10 09 08

5 4 3 2

Cover and interior designed by Gopa&Ted2. Set in Adobe Garamond 10.9/13.7

Wisdom Publications' books are printed on acid-free paper and meet the guidelines for the permanence and durability of the Committee on Production Guidelines for Book Longevity of the Council on Library Resources.

Printed in the United States of America.

# 1. OUTLINE OF THE TEXT

HEADING NUMBER	OUTLINE NUMBER	SECTION HEADING	PAGE NUMBER
PART ONE: THE PRELIMINARIES			
I	I	The greatness of the authors, given to show the teaching has an immaculate source	27
2	II	How Atiṣha was born to one of the highest families	28
3	12	How he attained his good qualities in that very rebirth	28
4	13	The things he did to further the doctrine after gaining these qualities	39
5	13I	How he did this in India	40
6	132	How he did this in Tibet	40
7	2	The greatness of the Dharma, given to increase one's respect for the instruction	60
8	2I	The greatness of allowing you to realize that all the teachings are without contradiction	60
9	22	The greatness of allowing all the scriptures to present themselves to you as instructions	63
10	23	The greatness of allowing you to easily discover the true thinking of the Victorious One	67
11	24	The greatness of allowing you to save yourself from the worst misdeed	68
12	25	The lamrim is complete because it contains all the subject matter of sūtra and tantra	70
13	26	It is easy to put into practice because it emphasizes the steps for taming the mind	72

14	27	It is superior to the other traditions because it contains instructions from two gurus who were schooled in the traditions of the Two Great Champions	72
15	3	How to teach and listen to the Dharma that has these two greatness [of the authors and of the Dharma]	73
16	3I	The way to listen to the Dharma	73
17	3II	Contemplating the benefits of studying the Dharma	75
18	3I2	How to show respect for the Dharma and its teacher	80
19	3I3	The actual way to listen to the Dharma	81
20	3I3.1	Abandoning the three types of faults hindering one from becoming a worthy vessel	81
21	3I3.II	The fault of being like an upturned vessel	81
22	3I3.I2	The fault of being like a stained vessel	81
23	3I3.I3	The fault of being like a leaky vessel	82
24	3I3.2	Cultivating the six helpful attitudes	82
25	3I3.2I	[Developing] the attitude that you are like a patient	82
26	3I3.22	Developing the attitude that the holy Dharma is medicine	83
27	3I3.23	Developing the attitude that your spiritual guide is like a skillful doctor	84
28	3I3.24	Developing the attitude that diligent practice will cure the illness	84
29	3I3.25	Developing the attitude that tathāgatas are holy beings	88
30	3I3.26	Developing the attitude that this tradition should be preserved for a long time	88
31	32	The way to teach the Dharma	93
32	32I	Thinking about the benefits of teaching the Dharma	94
33	322	Being respectful to the Dharma and its teacher	96
34	323	What to think and do while teaching	96
35	323.I	What to think	96

36	323.2	What to do while teaching	97
37	324	The difference between the people you should teach and those you should not	99
38	33	What things the disciples and teacher should do together at the end	100

PART TWO: THE PREPARATORY RITES

39	4	The sequence in which the disciples are to be taught the actual instructions	104
40	4I	The root of the path: devotion to a spiritual guide	104
41	4II	What to do in your meditation sessions	104
42	4II.1	The preparatory rites	105
43	4II.1I	Cleaning your room and arranging the symbols of enlightened body, speech, and mind	105
44	4II.12	Obtaining offerings without deceit and arranging them beautifully	115
45	4II.13	Adopting the eight-featured sitting posture— or whatever posture is convenient for you— on a comfortable seat, and then taking refuge, developing bodhichitta, and so on, in an especially virtuous frame of mind, making sure that these practices properly suffuse your mindstream	121
46	4II.14	Petitioning the merit field	150
47	4II.15	Offering the seven-limbed prayer and a world maṇḍala—practices that contain all the key points for accumulating merit and self-purification	170
48	4II.15I	The first limb: homage	171
49	4II.152	The second limb: offering	175
50	4II.153	The third limb: confession of sins	184
51	4II.154	The fourth limb: rejoicing	190
52	4II.154.1	Rejoicing over your own virtue	191
53	4II.154.1I	Rejoicing over your past lives' virtue, which you can discern by means of inferential valid cognition	192



54	4II.154.12	Rejoicing over your present life's virtue, which you can discern by means of direct valid cognition	192
55	4II.154.2	Rejoicing over the virtue of others	193
56	4II.155	The fifth limb: requesting the wheel of Dharma to be turned	193
57	4II.156	The sixth limb: petitioning the merit field not to enter nirvāṇa	194
58	4II.157	The seventh limb: the dedication	195
59	4II.16	Further petitions, which follow the oral instructions, made in order to be sure your mindstream is sufficiently imbued by your meditations	201
60	4II.2	How to pursue the main part of the session	211

### PART THREE: THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE PATH

61	4II.2I	The advantages of relying on a spiritual guide	218
62	4II.2II	You will come closer to buddhahood	218
63	4II.2II.1	You will come closer to buddhahood by practicing the instructions he taught you	219
64	4II.2II.2	You will also come closer to buddhahood through making offerings to the guru and serving him	221
65	4II.2I2	It pleases the victorious ones	222
66	4II.2I2.1	The buddhas of the ten directions are willing to teach you Dharma, but you are not even fortunate enough to see the supreme <i>nirmāṇakāya</i> , let alone the <i>saṃbhogakāya</i> , because these appear only to ordinary beings with pure karma	222
67	4II.2I2.2	If you do not rely properly on your guru, you will not please the buddhas, no matter how many offerings you make to them	223
68	4II.2I3	You will not be disturbed by demons or bad company	223
69	4II.2I4	You will automatically put a stop to all delusions and misdeeds	224

70	4II.215	Your insights and realization into the levels and the path will increase	224
71	4II.216	You will not be deprived of virtuous spiritual guides in all your future rebirths	225
72	4II.217	You will not fall into the lower realms	227
73	4II.218	You will effortlessly achieve all short- and long-term aims	228
74	4II.22	The disadvantages of not relying on a spiritual guide, or of letting your devotion lapse	228
75	4II.221	If you disparage your guru, you insult all the victorious ones	229
76	4II.222	When you develop angry thoughts toward your guru, you destroy your root merits and will be reborn in hell for the same number of eons as the moments [of your anger]	230
77	4II.223	You will not achieve the supreme state, despite your reliance on tantra	230
78	4II.224	Though you seek the benefits of tantra, your practice will achieve only the hells and the like	231
79	4II.225	You will not develop fresh qualities you have not already developed, and those you have will degenerate	231
80	4II.226	In this life you will suffer undesirable illnesses and so on	232
81	4II.227	You will wander endlessly in the lower realms in your next lives	233
82	4II.228	You will be deprived of spiritual guides in all future lives	234
83	4II.23	Devoting yourself through thought	238
84	4II.23I	The root: training yourself to have faith in your guru	239
85	4II.23I.1	The reason you must regard the guru as a buddha	240
86	4II.23I.2	The reason you are able to see him this way	241
87	4II.23I.3	How to regard him properly	242
88	4II.23I.3I	Vajradhara stated that the guru is a buddha	242

89	4II.23I.32	Proof that the guru is the agent of all the buddhas' good works	243
90	4II.23I.33	Buddhas and bodhisattvas are still working for the sake of sentient beings	245
91	4II.23I.34	You cannot be sure of appearances	247
92	4II.232	Developing respect for him by remembering his kindness	252
93	4II.232.I	The guru is much kinder than all the buddhas	252
94	4II.232.II	He is much kinder than all the buddhas is general	252
95	4II.232.I2	He is kinder specifically than even Śhākyamuni Buddha	253
96	4II.232.2	His kindness in teaching the Dharma	254
97	4II.232.3	His kindness in blessing your mindstream	256
98	4II.232.4	His kindness in attracting you into his circle through material gifts	257
99	4II.24	Devoting yourself through deeds	263
100	4II.3	What to do in the last part of the session	267
101	4I2	What to do between meditation sessions	267
102	42	The proper graduated training you should undertake after you have begun to rely on your spiritual guide	270
103	42I	The stimulus to take the essence from your optimum human rebirth	270
104	42I.I	A short discussion to convince you	270
105	42I.II	Identifying the optimum human rebirth	271
106	42I.III	The freedoms	271
107	42I.II2	The endowments	273
108	42I.II2.1	The five personal endowments	273
109	42I.II2.2	The five endowments in relation to others	274
110	42I.2	Thinking about the great benefits of the optimum human rebirth	275
III	42I.2I	Its great benefits from the short-term point of view	276

112	421.22	Its great benefits from the ultimate point of view	276
113	421.23	Thinking briefly about how even every moment of it can be most beneficial	278
114	421.3	Thinking about how difficult the optimum human rebirth is to acquire	278
115	421.31	Thinking about the causes for its being so hard to acquire	278
116	421.32	Some analogies for the difficulty of acquiring it	281
117	421.33	It's difficult by nature to acquire	283

#### PART FOUR: THE SMALL SCOPE

118	422	How to extract the essence from your optimum human rebirth	294
119	422.I	Training your mind in the stages of the path shared with the small scope	294
120	422.II	Developing a yearning for a good rebirth	294
121	422.III	Recalling that your present rebirth will not last long and that you will die	294
122	422.III.I	The drawbacks of not remembering death	295
123	422.III.II	The drawback that you will not remember Dharma	295
124	422.III.I2	The drawback that you will remember [the Dharma] but not practice it	295
125	422.III.I3	[The drawback that] you will practice but not practice properly	295
126	422.III.I4	The drawback of not practicing seriously	300
127	422.III.I5	The drawback of acting vulgarly	300
128	422.III.I6	The drawback of having to die with regrets	300
129	422.III.2	The advantages of remembering death	301
130	422.III.21	The advantage of being most beneficial	301
131	422.III.22	The advantage of being most powerful	303
132	422.III.23	It is important at the beginning	303

133	422.III.24	It is important in the meantime	303
134	422.III.25	It is important at the end	303
135	422.III.26	The advantage that you will die happily and gladly	303
136	422.III.3	The actual way to remember death	304
137	422.III.3I	The nine-part meditation on death	304
138	422.III.3II	The first root: thinking about the inevitability of death	304
139	422.III.3II.1	The first reason: the Lord of Death will inevitably come, and no circumstance at all can prevent this	304
140	422.III.3II.2	The second reason: thinking how nothing is being added to your lifespan and it is always being subtracted from	307
141	422.III.3II.3	The third reason: thinking about how you will definitely die before getting round to practicing Dharma	309
142	422.III.3I2	The second root: thinking about the uncertainty of when you will die	310
143	422.III.3I2.1	The first reason: the lifespan of people from the Southern Continent is not fixed, and this is especially so for lifespans during these degenerate times	310
144	422.III.3I2.2	The second reason: when you will die is uncertain because there are many factors contributing toward your death and few toward your life	313
145	422.III.3I2.3	The third reason: when you will die is uncertain because the body is extremely fragile	313
146	422.III.3I3	The third root: thinking of how nothing can help you when you die except Dharma	315
147	422.III.3I3.1	The first reason: wealth cannot help you	315
148	422.III.3I3.2	The second reason: friends and relatives cannot help you	316
149	422.III.3I3.3	The third reason: even your body cannot help you	317
150	422.III.32	Meditation on the aspects of death	318

151	422.II2	Thinking about what sort of happiness or suffering you will have in your next rebirth in either of the two types of migration	323
152	422.II2.I	Thinking about the sufferings of the hells	325
153	422.II2.II	Thinking about the sufferings of sentient beings in the great, or hot, hells	325
154	422.II2.III	The Hell of Continual Resurrection	326
155	422.II2.II2	The Black Line Hell	327
156	422.II2.II3	The Assemble-and-be-crushed Hell	327
157	422.II2.II4	The Hell of Lamentation	328
158	422.II2.II5	The Hell of Great Lamentation	328
159	422.II2.II6	The Hot Hell	328
160	422.II2.II7	The Extremely Hot Hell	328
161	422.II2.II8	The Hell Without Respite	329
162	422.II2.I2	The Surrounding Hells	332
163	422.II2.I3	Thinking about the sufferings of the cold hells	333
164	422.II2.I4	Thinking about the sufferings of the occasional hells	335
165	422.II2.2	Thinking about the sufferings of the hungry ghosts	338
166	422.II2.2I	Thinking of the general sufferings of hungry ghosts under six headings—heat, cold, hunger, thirst, exhaustion, and fear	339
167	422.II2.22	Thinking of the sufferings of particular types of hungry ghosts	340
168	422.II2.22I	Ghosts with external obscurations	340
169	422.II2.222	Those with internal obscurations	340
170	422.II2.223	Those with obstructions from knots	341
171	422.II2.3	Thinking about the sufferings of the animals	346
172	422.II2.3I	Thinking about their general sufferings	346
173	422.II2.32	Thinking about the sufferings of particular animals	348
174	422.II2.32I	Thinking about the suffering of animals living in overcrowded environments	348

175	422.112.322	[Thinking about the suffering of] the more dispersed animals	348
176	422.12	Teaching the means for happiness in your next rebirth	352
177	422.121	Taking refuge: the holy gateway for entering the teachings	353
178	422.121.1	The causes on which one's taking refuge depends	353
179	422.121.2	What to take refuge in	353
180	422.121.21	The actual identification of the things to take refuge in	354
181	422.121.22	The reasons why they are fitting objects of refuge	357
182	422.121.221	The first reason	357
183	422.121.222	The second reason	358
184	422.121.223	The third reason	358
185	422.121.224	The fourth reason	358
186	422.121.3	The measure of having taken refuge	359
187	422.121.31	Taking refuge by knowing the good qualities of one's refuge	359
188	422.121.311	The good qualities of the Buddha	360
189	422.121.311.1	The good qualities of his body	360
190	422.121.311.2	The good qualities of his speech	362
191	422.121.311.3	The good qualities of his mind	364
192	422.121.311.4	The good qualities of his good works	366
193	422.121.312	The good qualities of the Dharma	367
194	422.121.313	The good qualities of the Saṅgha	368
195	422.121.32	Taking refuge by knowing the differences between the Three Jewels	370
196	422.121.33	Taking refuge owing to one's beliefs	371
197	422.121.34	Taking refuge and not asserting another [religion]	371
198	422.121.4	The benefits of taking refuge	375
199	422.121.5	Advice after one has taken refuge	380
200	422.121.51	Advice concerning each of the Three Jewels in turn	380

201	422.121.511	Advice on what not to do	380
202	422.121.512	Advice on what to do	381
203	422.121.512.1	Respecting all Buddha images, even those poorly crafted	381
204	422.121.512.2	Respecting even a single letter as if it were the real jewel of Dharma	381
205	422.121.512.3	Respecting pieces from Saṅgha members' clothes, or even maroon-colored rags fallen on the ground, as you would the people who wore them	382
206	422.121.52	Advice concerning all Three Jewels in common	383
207	422.122	Developing believing faith in the law of cause and effect—the root of all health and happiness	386
208	422.122.1	Thinking about cause and effect in general	388
209	422.122.11	The actual way to think about cause and effect in general	388
210	422.122.111	How karma is fixed	389
211	422.122.112	Karma shows great increase	390
212	422.122.113	One does not meet with something if one has not created the karma for it to happen	393
213	422.122.114	Karma once created will not disappear of its own accord	395
214	422.122.12	Thinking about some of the specifics of cause and effect	397
215	422.122.121	Thinking about the black side of cause and effect	397
216	422.122.121.1	The actual black karmic process	397
217	422.122.121.11	Killing	398
218	422.122.121.12	Taking what is not given	401
219	422.122.121.13	Sexual misconduct	401
220	422.122.121.14	Lying	402
221	422.122.121.15	Divisive speech	402
222	422.122.121.16	Harsh words	403
223	422.122.121.17	Idle gossip	403
224	422.122.121.18	Covetousness	404



225	422.122.121.19	Harmful intent	404
226	422.122.121.110	Wrong views	405
227	422.122.121.2	The differences that make for heavy or light karma	405
228	422.122.121.21	Heavy by nature	405
229	422.122.121.22	Heavy because of the intention	405
230	422.122.121.23	Heavy because of the deed	406
231	422.122.121.24	Heavy because of the basis	406
232	422.122.121.25	Heavy because of always being done	406
233	422.122.121.26	Heavy because no antidote has been applied	406
234	422.122.121.3	Teaching what the results of these karmas are	406
235	422.122.122	Thinking about the white side of cause and effect	408
236	422.122.122.1	Teaching the actual white karmic process	408
237	422.122.122.2	Teaching its results	409
238	422.122.122.21	The ripened result	409
239	422.122.122.22	Results congruent with the cause	409
240	422.122.122.23	Environmental results	410
241	422.122.123	Teaching about the doors that unintentionally lead to powerful karma	410
242	422.122.123.1	Powerful owing to the field	410
243	422.122.123.2	Powerful because one had been a candidate for vows	410
244	422.122.123.3	Powerful because of the things being done	412
245	422.122.123.4	Powerful because of the intention	413
246	422.122.2	Thinking about some of the specifics	414
247	422.122.21	The ripened qualities	414
248	422.122.22	The functions of the ripened qualities	415
249	422.122.23	The causes to achieve these ripened qualities	415
250	422.122.3	After thinking about these things, the way to modify your behavior	419
251	422.122.31	The general teaching	419

252	422.122.32	In particular, how to purify oneself with the four powers	421
-----	------------	---	-----

PART FIVE: THE MEDIUM SCOPE

253	422.2	Training your mind in the stages of the path shared with the medium scope	427
254	422.2I	Developing thoughts of yearning for liberation	427
255	422.2II	Thinking about the general sufferings of saṃsāra	431
256	422.2II.1	The bane of uncertainty	431
257	422.2II.2	The bane of being dissatisfied	433
258	422.2II.3	The bane of repeatedly leaving bodies	434
259	422.2II.4	The bane of being conceived and born over and over again	436
260	422.2II.5	The bane of moving from high to low over and over again	438
261	422.2II.6	The bane of having no companion	439
262	422.2I2	Thinking about saṃsāra's specific sufferings	440
263	422.2I2.1	Thinking about the sufferings of the lower realms	440
264	422.2I2.2	Thinking about the sufferings of the upper realms	440
265	422.2I2.2I	Thinking about human sufferings	440
266	422.2I2.2II	Thinking about the suffering of birth	440
267	422.2I2.2I2	The suffering of aging	442
268	422.2I2.2I3	The suffering of illness	446
269	422.2I2.2I4	The suffering of death	446
270	422.2I2.2I5	The suffering of being separated from the beautiful	447
271	422.2I2.2I6	The suffering of meeting with the ugly	447
272	422.2I2.2I7	Thinking about the suffering of seeking the things we desire but not finding them	448
273	422.2I2.22	Thinking about the sufferings of the demigods	450
274	422.2I2.23	Thinking about the sufferings of the gods	451
275	422.22	Ascertaining the nature of the path leading to liberation	461

276	422.221	Thinking about the source of suffering— the entry to saṃsāra	461
277	422.221.I	How delusions are developed	461
278	422.221.II	The identification of delusions	462
279	422.221.III	The root delusions	462
280	422.221.III.1	Attachment	463
281	422.221.III.2	Anger	463
282	422.221.III.3	Pride	464
283	422.221.III.4	Ignorance	464
284	422.221.III.5	Doubt	465
285	422.221.III.6	[Deluded] views	465
286	422.221.III.61	The view that equates the self with the perishable	466
287	422.221.III.62	Extreme views	466
288	422.221.III.63	The view of holding the aggregates to be supreme	466
289	422.221.III.64	Holding an ethic or mode of behavior to be supreme	467
290	422.221.III.65	Wrong views	467
291	422.221.12	The stages in their development	468
292	422.221.13	The causes of delusions	469
293	422.221.131	The first cause: their foundation	469
294	422.221.132	The second cause: their focus or object	469
295	422.221.133	The third cause: society	470
296	422.221.134	The fourth cause: discussions	471
297	422.221.135	The fifth cause: familiarity	472
298	422.221.136	The sixth cause: unrealistic thinking	472
299	422.221.14	The drawbacks of delusions	472
300	422.221.2	How karma is accumulated	474
301	422.221.21	Mental karma	474
302	422.221.22	Intended karma	475
303	422.221.3	How you leave one rebirth at death and are reconceived in another	476

304	422.221.31	What happens at death	476
305	422.221.32	The way one achieves the bardo	478
306	422.221.33	The way one is conceived and reborn	479
307	422.221.331	Ignorance	480
308	422.221.332	Compositional factors	480
309	422.221.333	Consciousness	480
310	422.221.334	Name and form	481
311	422.221.335	The six senses	481
312	422.221.336	Contact	481
313	422.221.337	Feeling	481
314	422.221.338	Craving	483
315	422.221.339	Grasping	483
316	422.221.3310	Becoming	483
317	422.221.3311	Rebirth	483
318	422.221.3312	Aging and death	484
319	422.222	[Actually] ascertaining the nature of the path leading to liberation	487
320	422.222.1	The sort of physical rebirth that will stop saṃsāra	487
321	422.222.2	The sort of path that will stop saṃsāra	487

## PART SIX: THE GREAT SCOPE

322	422.3	Training the mind in the great-scope stages of the path	499
323	422.31	Teaching that the development of bodhichitta is the sole gateway to the Mahāyāna, and teaching its benefits as well	500
324	422.311	Teaching that the only way to enter the Mahāyāna is to develop bodhichitta	502
325	422.312	You gain the name “child of the victors”	505
326	422.313	You outshine the śhrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas	506
327	422.314	You become a supreme object of offering	506

328	422.315	You amass an enormous accumulation of merit with ease	507
329	422.316	You rapidly purify sins and obscurations	510
330	422.317	You accomplish whatever you wish	511
331	422.318	You are not bothered by harm or hindrances	511
332	422.319	You quickly complete all the stages of the path	512
333	422.3110	You become a fertile source of every happiness for others	513
334	422.32	The way to develop bodhichitta	516
335	422.321	The actual stages in training for bodhichitta	516
335A	422.321.1	Training the mind by means of the sevenfold cause-and-effect instructions	517
336	422.321.11	Immeasurable equanimity	519
[336A]	422.321.12	[The actual sevenfold training]	522
337	422.321.121	The first cause: understanding all sentient beings to be your mother	522
338	422.321.122	The second cause: remembering their kindness	525
339	422.321.123	The third cause: repaying their kindness	527
340	422.321.124	The fourth cause: meditating on the love that comes from the force of attraction	529
341	422.321.125	The fifth cause: the great compassion	530
342	422.321.126	The sixth cause: altruism	533
343	422.321.127	Developing bodhichitta	533
335B	422.321.2	Training the mind through the interchange of self and others	536
344	422.321.21	Teaching the preliminaries on which this Dharma depends	537
345	422.321.22	Training yourself for the two types of bodhichitta	538
346	422.321.221	Ultimate bodhichitta	538
347	422.321.222	Training the mind in relative bodhichitta	538
348	422.321.222.1	Meditating on how self and others are equal	538
349	422.321.222.2	Contemplating the many faults resulting from self-cherishing	539

350	422.321.222.3	Contemplating the many good qualities resulting from cherishing others	541
351	422.321.222.4	The actual contemplation on the interchange of self and others	546
352	422.321.222.5	With these serving as the basis, the way to meditate on giving and taking	547
353	422.321.23	Converting unfortunate circumstances into a path to enlightenment	550
354	422.321.231	Converting circumstances through thought	551
355	422.321.231.1	Converting them through analysis	551
356	422.321.231.2	Converting circumstances through the view	554
357	422.321.232	Converting such conditions through action	559
358	422.321.24	Teaching a practice to be applied to your whole life	560
359	422.321.25	The criteria of having trained the mind	564
360	422.321.26	The eighteen commitments of the mind training practice	566
361	422.321.27	The twenty-two pieces of advice	569
362	422.322	Developing bodhichitta through the ritual of taking vows [This heading is set aside till the end of the book.]	573, 651
363	422.323	The activities to train in after developing bodhichitta	574
364	422.33	After developing bodhichitta, the way to train in the deeds of the children of the victorious ones	574
365	422.331	How to train in the six perfections in order to ripen your own mindstream	574
366	422.331.I	The general way to train in the deeds of the children of the victors	574
367	422.331.II	Generosity	575
368	422.331.III	Being generous with material things	575
369	422.331.II2	Being generous with the Dharma	575
370	422.331.II3	The generosity of giving others fearlessness	576
371	422.331.I2	The practice of the perfection of ethics	579

372	422.331.121	The ethic of refraining from misdeeds	579
373	422.331.122	The ethic of gathering virtuous Dharma	580
374	422.331.123	The ethic of working for the sake of sentient beings	580
375	422.331.13	How to train in patience	581
376	422.331.131	The patience of remaining calm in the face of your attackers	581
377	422.331.132	The patience of accepting suffering	585
378	422.331.133	The patience to gain assurance in the Dharma	586
379	422.331.14	Perseverance	587
380	422.331.141	The laziness of sloth	588
381	422.331.142	The laziness of craving evil pursuits	588
382	422.331.143	The laziness of defeatism	588
383	422.331.144	Armor-like perseverance	590
384	422.331.145	The perseverance to collect virtuous things	591
385	422.331.146	The perseverance of working for the sake of sentient beings	591
386	422.331.2	In particular, the way to train in the last two perfections	593
387	422.331.21	How to train in the very essence of concentration—mental quiescence	593
388	422.331.211	Cultivating the prerequisites for mental quiescence	595
389	422.331.211.1	Dwelling in a conducive place	595
390	422.331.211.2	Having few wants	597
391	422.331.211.3	Being content	597
392	422.331.211.4	Having pure ethics	597
393	422.331.211.5	Abandoning the demands of society	597
394	422.331.211.6	Completely abandoning conceptual thoughts such as desire	598
395	422.331.212	The actual way to achieve mental quiescence	599
396	422.331.212.1	The first pitfall: laziness	600
397	422.331.212.2	The second pitfall: forgetting the instruction	601

398	422.331.212.3	The third pitfall: excitement and dullness	604
399	422.331.212.4	The fourth pitfall: nonadjustment	606
400	422.331.212.5	The fifth pitfall: [readjustment]	610
401	422.311.213	Taking this as the basis, how to achieve the nine mental states	612
402	422.331.213.1	Fixing the mind	612
403	422.331.213.2	Fixation with some continuity	612
404	422.331.213.3	Patchy fixation	613
405	422.331.213.4	Good fixation	613
406	422.331.213.5	Becoming disciplined	613
407	422.331.213.6	Becoming peaceful	614
408	422.331.213.7	Becoming very pacified	614
409	422.331.213.8	Becoming single-pointed	614
410	422.331.213.9	Fixed absorption	615
411	422.331.214	The way to achieve the mental states through the six powers	616
412	422.331.215	How there are four types of mental process	617
413	422.331.216	The way true mental quiescence develops from this point	617
414	422.331.22	How to train in the very essence of wisdom— special insight	620
415	422.331.221	Ascertaining the nonexistence of a personal self	620
416	422.331.221.1	How to develop the absorption resembling space	620
417	422.331.221.11	The first key point: what is to be refuted	626
418	422.331.221.12	The second key point: determining the full set of possibilities	632
419	422.331.221.13	The third key point: determining that they are not truly the same	633
420	422.331.221.14	The fourth key point: determining that they are not truly different	636
421	422.331.221.2	When not in absorption, how to pursue the attitude that things are like an illusion	638



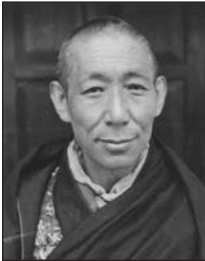
422	422.331.222	Ascertaining the nonexistence of a self of phenomena	642
423	422.331.222.I	Ascertaining that conditioned phenomena do not naturally exist	642
424	422.331.222.II	Ascertaining that physical things do not naturally exist	642
425	422.331.222.12.	Ascertaining that consciousness does not naturally exist	644
426	422.331.222.13	Ascertaining that nonassociated compositional factors do not exist by nature	646
427	422.331.222.2	Ascertaining that unconditioned phenomena do not naturally exist	646
428	422.331.223	Then, the way you develop special insight	647
429	422.331.3	How to train in the uncommon part of the path, the Vajrayāna	649
430	422.332	How to train in the four ways of gathering disciples in order to ripen the mindstreams of others	650
362	422.322	Developing bodhichitta through the ritual of taking vows	651
431	422.322.I	How to acquire the vows you have not yet taken	651
432	422.322.2	How to keep your vows from degenerating once you have acquired them	658
433	422.322.2I	Advice related to the aspiration form of bodhichitta	658
434	422.322.2II	Advice on creating the cause for keeping the bodhichitta you have developed from degenerating in this life	658
435	422.322.2II.1	Recalling the benefits of developing bodhichitta	658
436	422.322.2II.2	Retaking the vows three times each day and three times each night so that you do not lose the bodhichitta you have already developed and increase it as well	658
437	422.322.2II.3	Preventing your development of bad thoughts, such as feeling when another wrongs you, “I shall not work for his sake”	659

438	422.322.211.4	Building your accumulations in order to increase the bodhichitta you have already developed	659
439	422.322.212	Advice on creating the causes never to be separated from bodhichitta in your remaining rebirths	659
440	422.322.212.1	Four actions [producing] black [karmic results] to be abandoned	659
441	422.322.212.11	Trying to dupe your guru, abbot, ordination master, etc., with lies	659
442	422.322.212.12	Feeling distress when others do something virtuous	659
443	422.322.212.13	Saying unpleasant things to bodhisattvas out of hostility	659
444	422.322.212.14	Acting deceitfully, without any altruism	659
445	422.322.212.2	Four actions [producing] white [karmic results] to be cultivated	659
446	422.322.212.21	Vigilantly abandoning deliberate lies	659
447	422.322.212.22	Keeping honest intentions toward sentient beings and not deceiving them	659
448	422.322.212.23	Developing the attitude that bodhisattvas are teachers and giving them due praise	660
449	422.322.212.24	Causing the sentient beings who are maturing under your care to uphold bodhichitta	660
450	422.322.22	The advice related to the involvement form of bodhichitta	660

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



PABONGKA RINPOCHE, Jampa Tenzin Trinlae Gyatso (1878–1941), attained his geshe degree at Sera Monastic University, Lhasa. He became a highly influential teacher in Tibet, serving as the root guru of the present Dalai Lama's two tutors and of many other Gelug lamas who have brought the Dharma to the West since they fled Tibet in 1959. *Liberation* captures the essence of Pabongka Rinpoche's fifteen published volumes on all aspects of Buddhism.



TRIJANG RINPOCHE (1901–81) was the foremost student of Pabongka Rinpoche. He was also the Junior Tutor of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and the root guru of many Gelug lamas now teaching in the West.

MICHAEL RICHARDS (1950– ) is an Australian scholar who lived in the Tibetan exile community of Dharamsala for many years and translated this work in consultation with many lamas there.

## ABOUT WISDOM

WISDOM PUBLICATIONS, a nonprofit publisher, is dedicated to making available authentic works relating to Buddhism for the benefit of all. We publish books by ancient and modern masters in all traditions of Buddhism, translations of important texts, and original scholarship. Additionally, we offer books that explore East-West themes unfolding as traditional Buddhism encounters our modern culture in all its aspects. Our titles are published with the appreciation of Buddhism as a living philosophy, and with the special commitment to preserve and transmit important works from Buddhism's many traditions.

To learn more about Wisdom, or to browse books online, visit our website at [www.wisdompubs.org](http://www.wisdompubs.org).

You may request a copy of our catalog online or by writing to this address:

Wisdom Publications  
199 Elm Street  
Somerville, Massachusetts 02144 USA  
Telephone: 617-776-7416  
Fax: 617-776-7841  
Email: [info@wisdompubs.org](mailto:info@wisdompubs.org)  
[www.wisdompubs.org](http://www.wisdompubs.org)

### THE WISDOM TRUST

As a nonprofit publisher, Wisdom is dedicated to the publication of Dharma books for the benefit of all sentient beings and dependent upon the kindness and generosity of sponsors in order to do so. If you would like to make a donation to Wisdom, you may do so through our website or our Somerville office. If you would like to help sponsor the publication of a book, please write or email us at the address above.

Thank you.

Wisdom Publications is a non-profit, charitable 501(c)(3) organization affiliated with the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT).

“A comprehensive, accessible, straightforward guide on how to meditate on each step of the path.”—*Tricycle*

**P**ABONGKA RINPOCHE was one of the twentieth century’s most charismatic and revered Tibetan lamas, and in *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand* we can see why. In this famous twenty-four-day teaching on the *lamrim*, or stages of the path, Pabongka Rinpoche weaves together lively stories and quotations with frank observations and practical advice to move readers step by step along the journey to buddhahood. When his student Trijang Rinpoche first edited and published these teachings in Tibetan, an instant classic was born. The flavor and immediacy of the original Tibetan are preserved in Michael Richards’ fluid and lively translation, which is substantially revised in this new edition.

“The richest and most enjoyable volume from the lamrim tradition published to date.”—*Golden Drum*

**PABONGKA RINPOCHE** (1878–1941) received his *geshe* degree at Sera Monastic University in Lhasa. He was the root lama of both tutors of the present Dalai Lama and profoundly influenced many of the Gelug lamas who have been instrumental in bringing the Dharma to the West.

**TRIJANG RINPOCHE** (1901–81) was Pabongka Rinpoche’s foremost student and one of the Dalai Lama’s two main tutors.

**MICHAEL RICHARDS** (1950– ) translated this work in conjunction with several Tibetan lamas while residing in Dharamsala, India. He now lives with his family in Sydney, Australia.



Wisdom Publications • Boston  
www.wisdompubs.org

Produced with  
Environmental  
Mindfulness



ISBN 0-86171-500-4

US \$24.95

ISBN-13 978-0861-71500-8



9 780861 715008

5 2 4 9 5