

~ *Longchenpa's Explanation of the*
Three Statements That Strike the Vital Point ~

*"Be introduced to your own nature.
Decide upon one thing.
Gain confidence in liberation."*

— Garap Dorjé

Longchenpa's Commentary

In the main practice of the Great Perfection, you should first receive the introduction and then stabilize this in your being. This involves two stages: introduction to the ground of breakthrough and introduction to the path of the direct leap. For the first, begin by arranging a feast torma and supplicating the lineage. Next, look nakedly at your own awareness and connect with the realization of timeless awareness, the great transcendence of conceptual consciousness, in which ordinary phenomena are no more. Following this, those with the very highest potential may be introduced to original purity, the realization of timeless awareness, the breakthrough that brings buddhahood without meditation.

Though there are many ways to illustrate this breakthrough, here I will use the final testament of the *nirmanakaya* buddha [Garap Dorjé]. These three statements that strike the vital point introduce one's own awareness to be the pristine *dharmakaya*.

Be introduced to your own nature

Self-awareness has been empty and rootless from the very beginning. Like space, it is completely transparent throughout; it has no outside, inside, or in-between. Vivid, clear, and pristine, it is unestablished by its very essence, yet at the same time, its radiance is unimpeded. This

is original purity at its most fundamental, the bare empty awareness of the dharmakaya.

The *Tantra of the Secret Sound* states:

*“Without memories of the past or thoughts of the future,
Your mind, in this very present moment,
Is vibrantly awake, crystal clear, and vivid;
Recognize this to be the fourfold dharmakaya.”*

As stated here, simply observe your awareness in this very present moment, just as it is. It cannot be spoiled by the comings and goings of thoughts and memories, nor corrupted by ordinary thoughts of good and bad. There is something here that it is at once both vivid, yet devoid of thoughts. It is devoid of thoughts, yet vivid. In essence, this naked transparency is the dharmakaya. It is innate timeless awareness, free of elaborations, and original purity, untainted by the mind's stains. This is also the state of primordial freedom, unbound by the fixation of meditative experiences. It is buddhahood, the ever-present dharmakaya. Here one is introduced to the nature of this ever-present bare awareness in and of itself.

Decide upon one thing

Now, simply rest without distraction in what was just pointed out. This is the realization of timeless awareness of the dharmakaya buddhas Samantabhadra and Samantabhadri, the recognition of the great spontaneous presence of nonmeditation. With this decisive certainty, let yourself expand into the wide-open space of self-illuminating awareness. Aside from simply resting in this spacious vast expanse, open and unrestricted, there isn't the slightest trace of anything to meditate on here, nothing to think about or recollect, and nothing to pay attention to. Simply relaxing and leaving your mind to itself is itself the realization of timeless awareness. It is the dharmakaya, resting on its own.

Birthless by nature, awareness is like space.

It is the dharmakaya.

It is original purity.

There is nothing for the conceptual mind to do.
In this very state, with nothing to focus or meditate on,
Simply let be and rest spontaneously.
Do not modify or spoil it.
Rest in vivid nonmeditation,
A state of bare, transparent awareness.
Rest without effort in this brilliantly vivid presence,
In a state of relaxed, ungraspable timeless knowing.
Allow yourself to be free from fixation and crystal clear,
In a state without the slightest reference point.
Rest in spacious empty clarity, wide-open, and unconfined.
Be spacious, free, and unbound,
Without fixation and with your senses wide open.
Be relaxed, at ease, and expansive.
Just let be in a state of natural spontaneous presence.

Rest like space, in vast empty clarity.
Rest like the sun, self-clarity without fixation.
Rest like the ocean, clear and still.
Rest like a mountain, motionless, and unchanging.
Rest in a state of empty clarity, brilliant and crystal clear.
Rest in a state of natural stillness, relaxed, free, and at ease.
Rest in a state of unreality, blank, illusory, open clarity.
Rest in a state of reality itself, expansive and all pervasive.
Rest in a state of natural presence, empty and still.
Rest in a state without root, don't think, concentrate, be
distracted, or meditate.

Crystal clarity without concept,
Unconstrained and unreal.
Utter relaxation without effort,
Completely clear with no residue left behind.
Free and easy without meditation,
Be wholly at ease in your own being.

What you are resolving here is the realization of timeless awareness.
This absorption of nonmeditation is beyond sessions and breaks. It is
a vast, spontaneous presence. It is empty awareness, the resting place

of original purity in which all ordinary phenomena have come to an end.

Gain confidence in liberation

When you rest in this manner, do not try to block whatever fleeting memories and thoughts arise as the unimpeded avenue of manifestation. Do not pursue them and do not use a remedy to do away with them. Left in their own pristine state, the mind's movements are pure. Whatever manifests is self-liberated. Arising and liberation, moreover, are simultaneous; manifestation and liberation do not happen at different times. The display dissolves into the ground, mother and son completely unite, and timeless awareness merges with the sphere of reality itself. When the basis of thought meets the realization of timeless awareness mind of primordial purity, everything is liberated into the sphere of reality itself, liberated like waves welling up from the ocean, then dissolving back into it. By recognizing the fundamental ground of liberation the very instant something manifests, you will gain confidence in liberation.

Since it has been there from the very start, awareness is liberated all at once. Since it manifests on its own, awareness is liberated on its own. Since it is without a reference point, it is liberated without fixation. Since it is free of partiality, awareness is liberated without bias. Since it is self-liberated, it is liberated as whatever manifests. Since it is as it is, it is liberated immediately. Since the display is its own, awareness is liberated in and of itself. The self-radiance of the empty essence manifests as wisdom, the display of awareness. This manifestation is liberated within the abode of the originally-pure dharmakaya. The four times gather into the mandala of reality, becoming of one taste—the realization of timeless awareness, in which timeless awareness and the sphere of reality neither meet nor part. Whatever manifests bursts forth as the play of timeless awareness, bringing a newfound confidence in timeless awareness beyond the conceptual mind, wisdom beyond the intellect, and dharmakaya beyond the all-ground.

In knowing the essence to be primordially liberated, you will be confident that there is nothing to liberate again. In knowing the nature

to be thoroughly liberated, you will be confident that there is nothing to liberate with antidotes. In knowing compassion to be self-liberated, you will be confident that liberation does not take place in time. In knowing reality to be directly liberated, you will be confident that appearances and mind are liberated in nonduality. In knowing characteristics to be self-liberated, you will be confident that liberation is not something to do; it requires no effort or strain. Hence, since the display is liberated by virtue of the ground, the stronghold is seized in the majestic fortress of the dharmakaya. On this point, the *Tantra of the Penetrating Sound* explains:

*“The statement ‘one’s own mind is liberated’
Does not imply that one thing transforms into another.
The mind is not something to be freed by something else.
It is perfect from the ground up,
Hence it does not change in any way.
If you analyze it, you won’t find anything;
It has no rational proof.
It is empty clarity, devoid of basis or root.”*

Since this nature, which itself abides as self-clarity,
Is liberated through a vital point, it has no partiality or bias.
Since it is liberated of time,
There is no basis on which it depends.
Since it is liberated without effort,
There is nothing to work at or achieve.
Here, the liberation brought about by this confidence
Is a primordial liberation;
There is no basis for it to be liberated again.
It is self-liberated and thus needs no remedy.
It is directly liberated, dissolving right where it is seen.
It is thoroughly liberated,
So there is no need for effort and strain.

In this way, your own awareness is pointed out to be the dharmakaya; its inherent radiance is resolved to be the realization of timeless awareness, and you then gain confidence in the original purity of liberation upon manifestation. Through these three, you are introduced directly to the primordial ground of original purity, with a

mind-set carefree in the face of whatever manifests and in no need of remedies. The *Last Testament* concludes:

*“All that appears and exists
Manifests as the sphere of the dharmakaya.
These manifestations are liberated in and of themselves.
The intent of all the buddhas comes down to just this.”*

This commentary is drawn from Longchenpa’s Profound Quintessence.¹ The original translation is included in Great Perfection: Separation and Breakthrough, translated by Cortland Dahl.

¹ Klong chen rab ’byams, *Khrid yig sangs rgyas mnyam sbyor*, pp. 210–216.