

# Four-armed Avalokitesvara Practice

~(excerpt from "Four-armed Avalokitesvara Practice", Living Buddha Lian-sheng Book  
208, *Laughing Loudly Three Times*)~

During the Spring Blessing Ceremony at Ling Shen Ching Tze Temple in Seattle on Saturday, Feb. 14, 2009, we performed the Four-armed Avalokitesvara Practice. In this short essay, I will describe the key cultivation formula of the practice.

In each cultivation session, we perform:

Great Homage

Mandala Offering

Fourfold Refuge

Armor Protection

Four Immeasurable Vows

Generation of Bodhicitta

Purification of karmic hindrances and visualization of emptiness

A 「𑖀」 *Ban* syllable appears in a vast, empty sky. A lotus emerges from the syllable. An

「𑖄」 *Ah* syllable on the lotus transforms into a moon disc. On the moon disc is a

「𑖔」 *Seh* syllable. Four-armed Avalokitesvara, who has one head and four arms, emerges from the syllable.



Form the Avalokitesvara Mudra.

Visualize white Four-armed Avalokitesvara sitting in full lotus position upon a lotus. This deity wears a jeweled crown, celestial garments, and a silk skirt. Orbs of rainbow light radiate from the bodhisattva in all directions.

The upper two hands clasp a mani jewel.

The lower right hand holds a strand of crystal mala beads while the lower left hand holds a white lotus. The Four-armed Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva is perfectly and completely adorned.

A beam of light shines on the practitioner from an 「𑖠」 *Om* syllable at the deity's crown, an

「𑖄」 *Ah* syllable at the deity's throat, and a 「𑖔」 *Hum* syllable at the deity's heart respectively. The lights purify practitioner's mind.

Practitioner recites Four-syllable Mantra 「𑖔𑖄𑖀𑖔」 *za-hum-ban-huo*, then merges with Four-armed Avalokitesvara. Practitioner and Four-armed Avalokitesvara become one.

The ༄ Hum syllable at practitioner's heart radiates light invoking the Buddhas of the Five Directions, all bodhisattvas, vajra deities, Dharma protectors, Dakas, Dakinis, and heavenly gods to descend and bless devotees and all sentient beings.

Mantra Recitation:

Recite "*Om, ma-ni, pad-me, hum*" 108 times or 1080 times.

The mantra emits light which bestows the following benefits:

1. Eradication of suffering and difficulties.
2. Blessings of brilliant light and auspiciousness.
3. Enhancement of good fortune and wisdom.
4. True realization and attainment of Buddhahood.

Enter Samadhi. Meditate.

Emerging from Samadhi and Praise Verse:

Homage to Four-armed Avalokitesvara

The crown ornament is magnificent Amitabha Buddha

Radiate infinite pure light

On all sentient beings without exception

Recite the 100-syllable Mantra.

Dedication of Merit

Great Homage

Dismissal

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In Tibet, everyone knows of Four-armed Avalokitesvara and the Four-armed Avalokitesvara mantra. Tibetans consider Four-armed Avalokitesvara to be the protector of Tibet. Even the highest living buddhas in Tibet are believed to be emanations of Four-armed Avalokitesvara. All Tibetans recite the Six-syllable Mantra "*Om, ma-ni, pad-me, hum*".

All "mani stacks" in Tibet are engraved with "*Om, ma-ni, pad-me, hum*" in Tibetan.

Chinese Buddhists recite "*Na-mo-a-mi-to-fo*".

Tibetan Buddhists recite "*Om, ma-ni, pad-me, hum*".

Both mantras are equally revered.

I personally believe that visualization is of utmost importance in Vajrayana Buddhism.

Visualization in Dharma protector practices can be exceedingly complex because of the visualization of the deities' many arms and Dharma implements. Four-armed Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, however, is easy to visualize.

One's visualization must be detailed and concentrated. Dharma power arises naturally from intense concentration.

Entering samadhi is entering the samadhi of Avalokitesvara. Avalokitesvara is the bodhisattva

with the greatest compassion. Through this practice, one attains spiritual union with the "compassionate mind."

An empowerment must be received from Living Buddha Lian-sheng or an authorized True Buddha School master before engaging in this particular sadhana.