

Chapter 5 Ritual for Adopting Bodhichitta

Colour scheme used

- View / Wisdom / Emptiness
- Practice / Method / Path
- Motivation / Bodhicitta / Compassion
- Pitfalls / Errors
- Foundational / Structural

11. Pocket Reminder

- Ritual is a tool, not the path
- Without bodhicitta and wisdom, form is empty

10. Signs Ritual Has Become Counterproductive

- Increased pride or identity as a 'practitioner'
- Irritation when forms are interrupted
- Decline in compassion or insight

9. Ritual and Dedication

- Dedication directs merit toward enlightenment
- Protects merit from destruction by afflictions
- Links ritual activity to bodhisattva aim

8. Proper Integration of Ritual into Daily Practice

- Use ritual to set intention at the start of the day
- Use ritual to close practice with dedication
- Let ritual remind rather than substitute understanding

7. Common Errors Regarding Ritual

- Believing ritual alone leads to liberation
- Mistaking repetition for realization
- Attachment to external forms
- Neglecting bodhicitta while performing ritual

1. Purpose of Ritual in the Mahayana Path

- Ritual is a supportive condition, not the essence of the path
- Provides structure for generating virtue
- Stabilises motivation and intention

2. Correct View of Ritual

- Ritual has no intrinsic power
- Its effectiveness depends on motivation and understanding
- Without wisdom, ritual becomes empty formalism

3. Ritual as a Support for Bodhicitta

- Frames the mind in altruistic intention
- Reinforces commitment to the bodhisattva path
- Supports continuity of motivation over time

4. Main Functions of Ritual

- Accumulation of merit → Creates conducive conditions for realization
- Purification of negativities → Weakens obstacles to compassion and wisdom
- Stabilisation of vows and commitments → Strengthens ethical and aspirational resolve

5. Relationship Between Ritual and Practice

- Ritual prepares the mind for meditation
- Ritual reminds the practitioner of intention
- Ritual does not replace analysis or meditation

6. Wisdom as the Regulator of Ritual

- Understanding emptiness prevents reification of ritual acts
- Ritual is seen as dependently arisen convention
- Wisdom ensures flexibility rather than rigidity