

## **DHARMA OCEAN PRACTICE PATH RESOURCES AND REQUIREMENTS**

This is a companion document to *The Training and the Path* document. While *The Training and the Path* explains the *view* behind how to approach the many study and practice opportunities that Dharma Ocean offers, this document outlines the training resources (residential programs, online programs, audio series, and readings) for each yana as well as the requirements of study and practice in each yana for those who wish to engage the training as a path of practice.

### **Practical Guidance**

- Whenever possible, attend in-person programs, either in Crestone or regional.
  - If you do not live in North America and travel is not always possible, but you are aiming to fulfill the requirements for applying to Vajra Assembly, help to organize programs in your area. It will be necessary to demonstrate how you understand and have practiced each yana, and to work closely with your Meditation Instructor throughout.
- Please enroll in only one online course at a time and devote your entire attention to it.
- How to use an audio series set for self-guided study/practice: spend approximately two weeks on each CD, listening to the talk at least twice and doing the meditation every day for that period. For the practice, start by listening to the guided meditation; when you have developed enough familiarity, simply do the practice each day on your own. Periodically, you might listen to the guided meditation again, for you will notice more than before. Work closely with a Meditation Instructor.
- Refuge and Bodhisattva vows must be taken in the Dharma Ocean Lineage.

# The Ground Yana

## Programs

### Dharma Ocean In-Person Programs

- Meditating with the Body® (MWTB)
- Regional (weekend or longer) retreats may be available in your area

### Dharma Ocean Online Courses

Awakening the Body (ATB)

### On your own

Your Breathing Body (YBB) audio program (CD or [download](#) via Sounds True)

## Practice Requirements

Develop a consistent daily practice of Ground Yana practices, spending at least some time in sitting meditation. In each ground yana course offering, simple meditation instruction is given. This is the practice one should be following when doing sitting meditation.

## Readings

- *The Awakening Body* (Ray)
- *Touching Enlightenment* (Ray)
- *The Posture of Meditation* (Will Johnson)
- *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism* (Trungpa)
- The articles on the **Articles & Interviews** page: [dharmaocean.org/articles-interviews](http://dharmaocean.org/articles-interviews)

## For Vajra Assembly

### Required

- Meditating with the Body and/or Your Breathing Body
- Readings
- The inner attainment of the Ground yana as outlined in *The Training and the Path*.

### Strongly Recommended

Awakening the Body Online Course  
Regional retreats as available

# The Meditation Yana

## Commitment—The Refuge Vow

Maintain a consistent daily practice of ground yana protocols for at least a year before you take the Refuge vow. Take the refuge vow at or near your entry into the Meditation Yana.

## Programs

### Dharma Ocean In-Person Programs

- Winter Meditation Intensive (WMI)
- Regional retreats

### Dharma Ocean Online Courses

- The Somatic Practice of Pure Awareness (SPPA)
- Sutrayana, the Foundations Yana (SYFY)

### On your own

- The Practice of Pure Awareness (PPA) (CD or [download](#) via Sounds True)
- A solitary retreat of at least one week. (a dedicated retreat space, or “at home” retreat if need be)

## Practice Requirements

Establish a daily meditation practice of at least 45 minutes of Pure Awareness Practice.

## Study Requirements

### Reading List

- *The Practice of Pure Awareness: Somatic Meditation for Awakening the Sacred* (Ray)
- *The Path is the Goal* (Trungpa)

## **Mentoring and Community**

1. Take advantage of interviews with senior Dharma Ocean teachers, at programs or when they are offered to the sangha.
2. If you would like to continue this path of practice after attending Winter Meditation Intensive, establish and maintain a relationship with a Dharma Ocean Meditation Instructor.
3. Become a supporting member of Dharma Ocean if you haven't already, which will give you access to the teaching and practice library, a curated selection of guided practices, talks, and articles for each yana.

## **For Vajra Assembly**

### **Required:**

- Refuge Vow
- Sutrayana, the Foundations Yana
- Four weeks of Winter Meditation Intensive (*or other pre-approved regional retreat*)
- Readings
- Solitary retreat of 9 days of actual practice (excluding arrival and departure days), within the year prior to taking the bodhisattva vow.
- The inner attainment of the Meditation yana as outlined in *The Training and the Path*.

### **Strongly Recommended:**

Somatic Practice of Pure Awareness (SPPA) Online Course

# Somatic Descent Yana

## Programs

### On your own

Somatic Descent: Experiencing the Ultimate Intelligence of the Body (CD or [download](#) via Sounds True)

## Readings

- *Somatic Descent* (Ray, forthcoming)
- *The Power of Focusing*, by Ann Weiser Cornell

## Practice

Add the Somatic Descent practice into your practice schedule, with at least two sessions a week, for at least six months and preferably a full year. This can be done alongside practices from other yantras and online courses.

## For Vajra Assembly

### Required

- At least 20 hours of Somatic Descent practice
- The inner attainment of the Somatic Descent yana as outlined in *The Training and the Path*.

# Mahayana

## Commitment—The Bodhisattva Vow

Take the Bodhisattva vow at or near the beginning of your Mahayana practice. You must have maintained a consistent daily practice for at least a year from the time of taking of the Refuge Vow before taking the Bodhisattva vow.

## Programs

### Dharma Ocean In-Person Program

The Body Loves (TBL)

### Dharma Ocean Online Courses

- Sutrayana Mahayana (SYMY)
- Boundless Heart and Loving the Self (BH)
- Connection, Communication and Love (CCL) forthcoming

### On your own

Awakening the Heart (CD or [download](#) via Sounds True)

The following practices from the Seven-Limbed Bodhicitta Training on the Dharma Ocean website in the Teaching and Practice Library:

1. Bodhicitta Entry Protocol
2. Bodhicitta Body Protocol
3. Dissolving Blockages
4. Unconditioned Love
5. Extending Unconditioned Love to all Realms of Being
6. Dharmakaya Space of the Heart
7. Bodhicitta Shamatha and Vipashyana
8. Opening Beyond Fear
9. Beholding (dyad)
10. Mind Training – the slogans

## Practice

During a consistent daily practice, work through the *Awakening the Heart* audio series and the selected practices from the Seven-Limbed Bodhicitta Training. The slogans are daily contemplations that can be done in conjunction with any of the

other bodhicitta practices that you are exploring. Bodhicitta practice is an essential part of your daily practice commitment going forward.

Do a solitary retreat of nine days, concentrating on Bodhicitta practices.

## **Study Requirements**

Complete the Sutrayana Mahayana Course.

## **Mentoring and Community Involvement**

Continue your relationship with your Meditation Instructor and if you are beginning to consider applying for Vajra Assembly, begin to talk with you MI about it. (The time at which you're applying should not be the first time that you and your MI have discussed it.) Find ways to offer your gifts, experience, and inspiration to the community of practitioners, in the context of either local or remote sangha events, programs, or other areas of sangha life. This is a very good time to coordinate a Dharma Ocean program or serve within the program mandala in other ways — everyone engaged in the bodhicitta training needs to offer to the larger Dharma Ocean community in some way or other. Also, begin to find ways to offer what you are learning and experiencing in the context of your daily life in work situations, family life, and other social contexts.

## **For Vajra Assembly**

### **Required**

- Sutrayana Mahayana (SYMY)
- Bodhisattva vow
- A second Solitary Retreat of at least 9 days (excluding arrival and departure days)
- Awakening the Heart audio series
- Selected Seven Limbed Bodhicitta practices

### **Strongly Recommended**

- The Boundless Heart and Loving the Self (BH)
- Connection, Communication and Love, (CCL) forthcoming

Once you have completed the above requirements for Vajra Assembly, contact your Meditation Instructor for an assessment interview.

# Vajrayana

## Commitment

The commitments unfold in a gradual manner, with each deeper level of instruction, practice, and experience calling us to a deeper engagement. There should be at least a one-year period after taking the Bodhisattva Vow (during which the Mahayana study and practice occurs) before applying to attend Vajra Assembly (VA) and entering the Vajrayana. VA participants are asked to commit to attending the Vajrayana Training Intensive (VTI) the following year. During that interim year, there are certain practices, courses, and readings that precede attendance at VTI.

## General prerequisites for Vajra Assembly

- You are very familiar with and have integrated into your state of being the teachings and practices of the first 3 yantras (ground, meditation, mahayana).
- You have a regular and stable practice. (Ideally at least one hour per day and more on weekends.)
- You have fulfilled the practice and study requirements.
- You feel that you understand (at some level) the basic demands of the Vajrayana path, outer and inner, and you are ready to commit to the Vajrayana as a lifelong path.
- Before applying to Vajra Assembly, study chapters 1-13 in *Secret of the Vajra World* (Ray); and *Journey Without Goal* (Trungpa).
- At least two nine-day solitary retreats, one completed before the bodhisattva vow, and the other afterwards. Each nine days must be consecutive.

## Attending Vajra Assembly

At this program you will begin your ngöndro (the “preliminary practices” that prepare us for full Vajrayana empowerment (abhisheka)).

## Post-Vajra Assembly, Pre-VTI Requirements

1. Regular practice of ngöndro three to four sessions a week and at least one session of Pure Awareness on the other days.
2. A third solitary retreat of at least ten days.
3. Study the VTI 2005 transcript.
4. A continuing, regular relationship with your Meditation Instructor is important.
5. *Recommended:* Complete the first half of the [Mahamudra for the Modern World](#) audio program.

## Attending Vajrayana Training Intensive

People can attend VTI one year after their attendance at Vajra Assembly.

## Full Vajrayana Path Practice Requirements

1. Complete the ngöndro.
2. Attend MI Training (attendance alone fulfills this requirement; full authorization to act as an MI may come later).
3. Attend a ngondro intensive each year.
4. A solitary retreat of at least one month as soon as possible after VA (this can be broken up if necessary). All Vajrayana students are encouraged to incorporate solitary retreats annually..
5. At some point in your Vajrayana journey, complete the *Training in Mahamudra*.
  - a. Daily practice including at least two 45 minute Mahamudra sessions. Include longer practice sessions of three to four sessions at least twice a week.
  - b. Solitary retreats are enormously helpful in developing your Mahamudra experience and understanding. Try to accomplish the classical thirty-five day retreat one or more times.
  - c. With the counsel of your Meditation Instructor, work your way through the levels of Mahamudra practice.

6. *Recommended:* Complete the second half of the [\*Mahamudra in the Modern World\*](#) audio program.