

# The AH Practice: The Condensed Essence of the Awakened Heart

Transmission from Togden Amtrin through the lineage of

Maha Guru Padmasambhava

Written down by Jamyang Tenphel

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The seed syllable AH is the condensed essence of all of the teachings of the Buddha, all of the vehicles (yanas) and all of the 84 thousand methods.

Reciting the seed syllable AH on the outbreath is the heart of the three jewels and the three roots. It is the heart of Pure Awareness (Rigpa) itself.

Reciting AH is an ancient method of calling for the Guru and Dakinis to abide in your heart and merging with them.

Reciting AH is the condensed essence of the Prajnaparamita, the Bodhisattva vehicle and the Vajrayana (the guru, yidam and dakinis practices and all mantras).

By reciting AH we are never apart from the essence of the Dharma.

If you have no energy to concentrate, are in pain, or cannot relax the body or mind, gently recite AH on the outbreath until you begin to relax and rest. Once the mind calms itself through focusing one's awareness on the exhalation of the AH, we can then let go and begin to completely relax into our True Nature; giving up the method and resting completely, without object or objective.

You need not recite the AH loudly or forcefully, the faintest whisper on the outbreath is enough for the mind to settle and the heart to open. Even silent awareness of the natural AH sound of the outbreath is beneficial, which means we can still practice if extremely fatigued or weak.

Through this practice one becomes aware that the natural unadulterated sound of the outbreath is indeed the seed syllable AH itself. Rest in silent observation of this truth and come to recognise the natural state, pure awareness itself. AH! The blessings of the entire Dharma and all of the Awakened Ones in every breath!

There is no visualisation or accumulation. This practice is ultimately about resting in absolute nowness; timeless awareness.

Breathe naturally – uncontrived, relaxed and open-hearted. The breath is life. Thus, in each breath we offer our life to the three jewels; letting go of the self in each breath

and offering it, without any effort at all. AH! This offering brings the blessings of the Buddhas into our hearts.

The AH practice embodies the essence of all offerings. When we recite the AH on the outbreath we are offering ourselves and all phenomena to the three jewels and the three roots.

A form of this practice is included as one of the 21 Semdzins of the Dzogchen tradition, which are bridging practices between form and formless practice, taking one from the dualistic to the non-dual state. The semdzins were originally taught by Mahaguru Padmasambhava to the yogins of Samye Chimpu.

Gently reflect on the attributes of this practice and contemplate them occasionally until confidence grows in your heart. Confidence in the practice will slowly grow your confidence in your Buddha Nature and you will start to let go and relax more and more. Relaxing and letting go is the entire purpose of this practice, so don't spend too much time thinking about it. Just know that the practice is imbued with these liberating qualities and rest on the AH.

*Keep letting go and you will eventually come to realise that the best practice is to do nothing at all and rest limitlessly in the natural state.*

By combining the joy practice and the AH practice each day we are creating a powerful bulwark against the disturbing emotions that lead to all suffering. You are also creating the conditions for the extraordinary Four Immeasurables to grow within your heart. The awakening qualities of inconceivable joy, love, compassion and equanimity are the awakened state itself.

*So arouse joy, rest at ease on the AH and let everything else be as it is.*

## The Background to the AH Practice: The Perfection of Wisdom Sutra, Mother of All Tathāgatas, ‘In One Syllable’

*From the Words of the Buddha*

Homage to the Great Mother Prajñāpāramitā!

Thus have I heard:

At one time the Blessed One was dwelling in Rājgrha at Vulture Peak mountain,

Together with a great gathering of twelve hundred and fifty monks,

And a great gathering of myriad bodhisattva mahāsattvas.

At that time, the Blessed One said to venerable Ānanda:

*O Ananda, since The Perfection of Wisdom ‘In One Syllable’ will bring benefit and happiness to sentient beings, please remember it!*

*It is like this:*

*AH*

When the Blessed One had said this,

Venerable Ānanda together with all the monks and bodhisattva mahāsattvas realized the perfection of wisdom.

They rejoiced, and thus praised the speech of the Blessed One.

*Thus concludes The Perfection of Wisdom, Mother of All Tathāgatas, ‘In One Syllable’.*

Translated by Stefan Mang, 2019. The translation is based on the Dergé Kangyur edition (Tōh. 23: *sher phyin yi ge gcig ma*).

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