

# SUGGESTIONS AND TIMINGS—GURU YOGA

## **Suggestions and Timings for Accomplishing the Guru Yoga Requirement**

The main point of the ngondro, and guru yoga in particular, is one's total involvement, and connecting to the lineage through devotion and supplication. Accumulating numbers of recitations is not the main point, but a skillful means to provide some continuity and intensity. Nonetheless, in this section, we concentrate on numbers, to suggest how you can actually accomplish the baseline requirement.

For an overview of the Guru yoga practice sequence, see the "Summary of Guru Yoga Practice" in the *Karma Kamtsang Ngondro Practice Manual*, p. 230.

[Times for practice leading up to and following the Guru Yoga recitations]

According to our timings it typically takes about 1 hour and 10 minutes to get through the opening practices of prostrations, Vajrasattva mantra, and mandala offering, plus the opening supplications of the Guru Yoga liturgy, before you get to the main "Karmapa Khyeno" supplication, which is to be accomplished.

In addition there is about 30 minutes of conclusion for the final phase of the practice, (including 10 mins of formless devotion, 3 mins to conclude the liturgy as well as recite the dedication and aspiration, 15 mins of shamatha-vipashyana just before the dedication and aspiration).

Therefore, it takes about 1 hour and 40 minutes for the opening and concluding phases of the practice, aside from the time on the principal supplication-recitation, the Karmapa Khyeno.

As for the main supplication-recitation, in our experience, without going too fast or too slow, we did 1000 Karmapa Khyeno recitations in about 17 minutes.

It follows from this that if you are doing a single daily practice session:

In a 2 hours 15 minutes session you can accomplish about 2000 recitations (50 sessions gets to 100K)

In a 2 hours 31 minutes session you can accomplish about 3000 recitations (33 sessions gets to 100K)

In a 2 hours 48 minutes session you can accomplish about 4000 recitations (25 sessions gets to 100K)

In a 3 hours 5 minutes session you can accomplish about 5000 recitations (20 sessions gets to 100K)

An additional strategy is to do several sessions a day, perhaps on weekend retreats. In this case the following procedure is allowed. We give an example with three sessions of two and one half hours.

For the first session of the day, do the complete opening practice including prostrations and the others, the Guru Yoga recitations, and the conclusion. This amounts to about 3000 recitations.

For the second and third sessions of the day, begin with some shamatha-vipashyana (10 minutes), and go directly into the Guru yoga liturgy (about 11 minutes), do 30 minutes conclusion as usual. This leaves 100 minutes for recitation, amounting to just under 6000 numbers of Karmapa Khyeno in the session.

Completing the third session similarly, in one day you can accomplish 15,000 recitations. Seven days like this gets you to 100,000. This what you should target to be eligible for the abhisheka. This is about one-tenth of the traditional requirement, so of course you can do more.

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