



*Fifty Stanzas  
on the Spiritual Teacher*

上师  
五十法颂



## Fifty Stanzas on the Spiritual Teacher 上师五十法颂

Homage to the Bhagavan Vajrasattva.

敬礼如来金刚心  
jing li ru lai jin gang xin

Bowing in the proper way to the lotus feet of my spiritual teacher who is the cause for me to attain the state of a glorious Vajrasattva, I shall condense and explain in brief what has been said in many stainless tantric texts about whole-hearted commitment to a spiritual teacher.

Listen with respect.

能得吉祥金刚心地因，  
neng de ji xiang jin gang xin di yin  
次第顶礼上师莲座下；  
ci di ding li shang shi lian zuo xia  
拜师无数根本清经内，  
pai shi wu shu gen ben qing jin nei  
重点少集说此应礼听。  
zhong dian shao ji shuo ci ying li ting

All the Buddhas residing in every land in the ten directions have prostrated three times (each day) to the tantric masters from whom they have received the highest empowerments. Is there need to mention that you should too?)

所有十方世界中，佛及菩萨三时时；  
suo you shi fang shi jie zhong fo ji pu sa san shi shi  
礼拜金刚阿阇黎，灌顶大上金刚师。  
li pai jin gang ah she li kuan ding da shang jin gang shi



Three times each day with supreme faith you must show the respect you have for your spiritual teacher who teaches you (the tantric path), by pressing your palms together, offering a mandala as well as flowers and prostrating (touching) your head to his feet.

最胜意乐三时时，合掌持花曼达拉；  
zui sheng yi le san shi shi he zhang chi hua man da la  
供养世尊咕噜师，顶礼恭敬接足礼。  
gong yang shi zun gu lu shi ding li gong jing jie zu li

Those who hold ordination vows, if (your spiritual teacher) is a layman or your junior, prostrate (in public) while facing such things as his scriptural texts in order to avoid worldly scorn. But in your mind (prostrate to your teacher).

在家或者初学释，法经佛像前供养；  
zai jia huo zhe chu xue shi fa jing fo xiang qian gong yang  
学密弟子真心礼，有时则息诸疑谤。  
xue mi di zi zhen xin li you shi ze xi zhu yi bang

As for serving (your teacher) and showing him respect, such as obeying what he says, standing up (when he comes) and showing him to his seat—these should be done even by those with ordination vows (whose teachers are layman or their juniors). But (in public) avoid prostrating and unorthodox actions (such as washing his feet).

供坐站礼有意事，供养等事作一切；  
gong zuo zhan li you yi shi gong yang deng shi zuo yi qie  
金刚弟子力事全，能放大礼无上师。  
jin gang di zi li shi quan neng fang da li wu shang shi

In order for the words of honor of neither the spiritual teacher nor the disciple to degenerate, there must be a mutual examination beforehand (to determine if each can) brave a teacher—disciple relationship.

金刚师及其弟子，同样会得越法罪；  
jin gang shi ji qi di zi tong yang hui de yue fa zui  
所以一勇阿阇黎，弟子当互审其器。  
suo yi yi yong ah she li di zi dang hu shen qi qi



A disciple with sense should not accept as his spiritual teacher someone who lacks compassion or who is angersome, vicious or arrogant, possessive, undisciplined or boasts of his knowledge.

真慈放弃黑心怒，无戒傲心贪心心，  
zhen ci fang qi hei xin nu wu jie ao xin tan xin xin  
多散心乱此族等，有智弟子以慧拣。  
duo san xin luan ci zu deng you zhi di zi yi hui jian

(A spiritual teacher should be) stable (in his actions), cultivated (in his speech), wise, patient and honest. He should neither conceal his shortcomings nor pretend to possess qualities he lacks. He should be an expert in the meanings (of the tantra) and in its ritual procedures (of medicine and turning back obstacles). Also he should have loving compassion and a complete knowledge of the scriptures.

稳定具戒忍悲智，心直尊重无谄曲；  
wen ding ju jie ren bei zhi xin zhi zun zhong wu chan qu  
明了仪范密根经，博闲经理诸论议。  
ming liao yi fan mi gen jing bo xian jing li zhu lun yi

He should have full expertise in both (sets of) ten fields, skill in the drawing of mandalas, full knowledge of how to explain the tantra, supreme pure faith and his senses fully under control.

契证圆满十真如，善达事业曼达拉；  
qi zheng yuan man shi zhen ru shan da shi ye man da la  
能明密咒相论议，满清诸根悉净安。  
neng ming mi zhou xiang lun yi man qing zhu gen xi jing an

Having become the disciple of such a protecting (teacher), should you then despise him from your heart, you will reap continual suffering as if you had disparaged all the Buddhas.

若彼求法学法者，登坛后谤阿阇黎；  
ruo bi qiu fa xue fa zhe deng tan hou bang ah she li  
则谤一切如来佛，彼子常得诸苦恼。  
ze bang yi qie ru lai fo bi zi chang de zhu ku nao



If you are so foolish as to despise your teacher, you will contract contagious diseases and those caused by harmful spirits. You will die (a horrible death) caused by demons, plagues or poison.

若谤金刚阿阇黎，现得恶报无安时；  
ruo bang jin gang ah she li xian de e bao wu an shi  
中毒得病著魔乱，愚痴此人会断命。  
zhong du de bing zhu mo luan yu chi zi ren hui duan ming

You will be killed by (wicked) kings or fire, by poisonous snakes, water, witches or bandits, by harmful spirits or savages, and then be reborn in the hell.

王法火灾恶毒蛇，冤贼水难空行怒；  
wang fa huo zai e du she yuan zei shui nan kong xing nu  
妖魔鬼与邪怪等，毁人定进金刚狱。  
yao mo gui yu xie guai deng hui ren ding jin jin gang yu

Never disturb your teacher's mind. Should you be foolish and happen to do this, you will surely boil in a hell.

金刚上师阿阇黎，永久不作障碍事；  
jin gang shang shi ah she li yong jiu bu zuo zhang ai shi  
愚痴常作诸障碍，命终一进恶地狱。  
yu chi chang zuo zhu zhang ai ming zhong yi jin e di yu

Whatever fearful hells have been taught, such as Avichi, the Hell of Uninterrupted Pain, it is clearly explained that those who disparage their teachers will have to remain there (a very long time).

毁谤金刚阿阇黎，无间地狱等怖畏，  
hui bang jin gang ah she li wu jian di yu deng bu wei  
所说所有畏地狱，废子定入进住狱。  
suo shuo suo you wei di yu fei zi ding ru jin zhu yu

Therefore exert yourself whole-heartedly, never to belittle you tantric master who makes no display of his great wisdom and virtues.

大智金刚阿阇黎，发扬无降广大德；  
da zhi jin gang ah she li fa yang wu jiang guang da de



是故一切当全力，永时辄莫生轻毁。  
shi gu yi qie dang quan li yong shi zhe mo sheng qing hui

If (from a lack of awareness) you have shown disrespect to your spiritual teacher, reverently present an offering to him and seek his forgiveness. Then in the future such harm as plagues will not befall you.

发生恭敬尊重心，供养咕噜金刚师；  
fa sheng gong jing zun zhong xin gong yang gu lu jin gang shi  
则除苦恼病乱害，消后无复苦恼难。  
ze chu ku nao bing luan hai xiao hou wu fu ku nao nan

It has been taught that for the teacher to whom you have pledged your word of honor (to visualize as one with your meditational deity), you should willingly sacrifice your wife, children and even your life, although these are not (easy) to give away. Is there need to mention your fleeting wealth?

自戒金刚阿阇黎，难施妻儿及自身；  
zi jie jin gang ah she li nan shi qi er ji zi shen  
自命亦舍为拜师，何况富贵与财物。  
zi ming yi she wei bai shi he kuang fu gui yu cai wu

(Such practice of offering) can confer even Buddhahood on a zealous (disciple) in his very lifetime, which otherwise might be difficult to attain even in countless millions of aeons.

为此无量亿劫时，极为稀有难得之，  
wei ci wu liang yi jie shi ji wei xi you nan de zhi  
无上成就证布达，勇猛修习此身得。  
wu shang chen jiu zheng bu da yong meng xiu xi ci shen de

Always keep your word of honor. Always make offerings to the Enlightened Ones. Always make offerings to also to your spiritual teacher, for he is the same as all the Buddhas.

永久善护其深誓，永久供养诸如来；  
yong jiu shan fu qi shen shi yong jiu gong yang zhu ru lai  
永久供养阿阇黎，咕噜等同一切佛。  
yong jiu gong yang ah she li gu lu deng tong yi qie fo



Those who wish (to attain) the inexhaustible (state of Buddha's Wisdom Body) should give to their teacher whatever they themselves find pleasing, from the most trifling objects to those of best quality.

有心要得无尽成，所有最上诸珍玩；  
 you xin yao de wu jin cheng suo you zui shang zhu zhen wan  
 上师心中欢喜物，长时诚心而奉献。  
 shang shi xin zhong huan xi wu zhang shi cheng xin er feng xian

Giving (to your teacher) is the same as making continual offerings to all the Buddhas. From such generosity much positive potential is gathered. From such collection comes the supreme actual attainment (of Buddhahood).

施供金刚阿阇黎，永施所有布达等；  
 shi gong jin gang ah she li yong shi suo you bu da deng  
 所以此事福德德，福德能得金刚成。  
 suo yi ci shi fu de de fu de neng de jin gang cheng

Therefore, a disciple with the good qualities of compassion, generosity, moral self-control and patience should never regard as different his spiritual teacher and the Buddha Vajradhara.

所以想学求法者，有了具戒忍功德；  
 suo yi xiang xue qiu fa zhe you le ju jie ren gong de  
 慈心圆满优越子，咕噜无二金刚持。  
 ci xin yuan man you yue zi gu lu wu er jin gang chi

If you should never tread on even (your teacher's) shadow, because the fearsome consequences are the same as destroying a stupa, is there need to mention never stepping on or over his shoes or seat, (sitting in his place or riding) his mount?

若足踏过上师影，获罪恐怖如破塔；  
 ruo zu ta guo shang shi ying huo zui kong bu ru po ta  
 於床坐鞋等资具，蓦过获罪何况说？  
 yu chuang zuo xie deng zi ju mo guo huo zui he kuang shuo



(A disciple) having great sense should obey the words of his teacher joyfully and with enthusiasm. If you lack the knowledge or ability (to do what he says), explain in (polite) words why you cannot (comply)

大慧弟子欢喜心，上师指导当听受；  
da hui di zi huan xi xin shang shi zhi dao dang ting shou  
真是超力不能为，则善言恭请禀白。  
zhen shi chao li bu neng wei ze shan yan gong qing bing bai

It is from your spiritual teacher that actual attainments, higher rebirth and happiness come. Therefore make a whole-hearted effort never to transgress your teacher's advice.

依止咕噜阿阇黎，成就生天现乐成；  
yi zhi gu lu ah she li cheng jiu sheng tian xian le cheng  
所以一切力所为，当受师命不违背。  
suo yi yi qie li suo wei dang shou shi ming bu wei bei

(Guard) your teacher's belongings as you would your own life. Treat even your teacher's beloved (family) with the same (respect you show) for him. (Have affectionate regard for) those closely around him as if they were your own dearest kin. Single-mindedly think (in this way) at all times.

咕噜财物犹如命，上师心爱如师敬；  
gu lu cai wu you ru ming shang shi xin ai ru shi jing  
於彼上师执侍人，如亲常时恭敬心。  
yu bi shang shi zhi shi ren ru qing chang shi gong jing xin

Never sit on the (same) bed or seat (as your teacher), nor walk ahead of him. (At teachings do not) wear your hair in a top-knot, (a hat, shoes or any weapons. Never) touch a seat (before he sits down or if he happens to sit on the ground. Do not) place your hands (proudly) on your hips or wring them (before him).

不应金刚上师前，包头顶高坐前去；  
bu ying jin gang shang shi qian bao tou ding gao zuo qian qu  
翘足踏坐手叉腰，安然按腰上师前。  
qiao zu ta zuo shou cha yao an ran an yao shang shi qian





Never sit or recline while your teacher is standing (nor lie while he is sitting). Always be ready to stand up and serve him skillfully in an excellent manner.

金 刚 咕 噜 站 起 时， 应 当 勿 坐 或 勿 卧；  
 jin gang gu lu zhan qi shi ying dang wu zuo huo wu wo  
 常 具 敬 供 诸 威 仪， 站 会 全 事 欢 喜 事。  
 chang ju jing gong zhu wei yi zhan hui quan shi huan xi shi

In the presence of your teacher never do such things as spit, (cough or sneeze without covering your head. Never) stretch out your legs when at your seat, nor walk back and forth (without reason before him. And never) argue.

无 弃 涕 唾 上 师 前， 坐 时 勿 舒 於 双 足；  
 wu qi ti tuo shang shi qian zuo shi wu shu yu shuang zu  
 师 处 举 步 随 口 诤， 应 当 不 作 上 师 前。  
 shi chu ju bu sui kou zheng ying dang bu zuo shang shi qian

Never massage or rub your limbs. Do not sing, dance or play musical instruments (for other than religious purposes). And never chatter idly or speak in excess (or too loudly) within the range of (your teacher's) hearing.

上 师 行 处 邻 近 傍， 语 笑 歌 舞 言 作 唱；  
 shang shi xing chu lin jin bang yu xiao ge wu yan zuo chang  
 亦 勿 金 刚 上 师 前， 手 足 揉 等 无 敬 行。  
 yi wu jin gang shang shi qian shou zu rou deng wu jing xing

(When your spiritual teacher enters the room) stand up from your seat and bow your head slightly. Sit (in his presence) respectfully. At night or at rivers or on dangerous paths, with (your teacher's) permission you may walk before him.

常 时 咕 噜 坐 或 起， 各 按 坐 起 徐 礼 敬；  
 chang shi gu lu zuo huo qi ge an zuo qi xu li jing  
 夜 水 危 险 路 行 中， 许 准 后 自 作 前 导。  
 ye shui wei xian lu xing chong xu zhun hou zi zuo qian dao



In the direct sight of his teacher, (a disciple) with sense should not (sit) with his body twisted around, nor leaning (casually) against pillars and such. Never crack your knuckles, (play with your fingers or clean your nails).

阿 阇 黎 前 或 见 处， 有 智 不 应 现 疲 身；  
 ah she li qian huo jian chu you zhi bu ying xian pi shen  
 不 倚 柱 及 墙 壁 等， 亦 不 屈 指 节 作 声。  
 bu yi zhu ji qiang bi deng yi bu qu zhi jie zuo sheng

When washing (your teacher's) feet or his body, drying, massaging or (shaving) him, precede such actions with (three) prostrations and at their conclusion do the same. Then attend (to yourself) as much as you like).

若 须 替 师 浴 身 足， 濯 足 身 等 奉 侍 时；  
 ruo xu ti shi yu shen zu shuo zu shen deng feng shi shi  
 先 白 顶 礼 师 令 知， 完 后 顶 礼 自 作 事。  
 xian bai ding li shi ling zhi wan hou ding li zhi zuo shi

Should you need to address (your spiritual teacher) by his name, add the title “Your Presence” after it. To generate respect for him in others, further honorifics may also be used.

弟 子 名 称 上 师 前， 不 称 只 名 下 有 礼；  
 di zi ming cheng shang shi qian bu cheng zhi ming xia you li  
 为 得 恭 敬 余 人 前， 上 师 名 前 特 点 称。  
 wei de gong jing yu ren qian shang shi ming qian te dian cheng

When asking for your teacher's advice, (first announce why you have come). With palms pressed together at your heart, listen to what tells you without (letting your mind) wander about. Then (when he has spoken) you should reply, “I shall do exactly as you have said.”

先 请 何 作 上 师 令， 说 全 尊 照 上 师 令，  
 xian qing he zuo shang shi ling shuo qian zun zhao shang shi ling  
 双 手 合 掌 心 耳 一， 乐 心 忆 持 咕 噜 令。  
 suang shou he zhang xin er yi le xin yi chi gu lu ling



After doing (what your teacher has told you), report (what has happened) in polite, gentle words. Should you laugh or cough, (clear your throat or yawn in his presence), cover your mouth with your hand.

有笑嗽时上师前，应当则以手遮口；  
you xiao sou shi shang shi qian ying dang ze yi shou zhe kou  
若有完事白上师，当无得意软语明。  
ruo you wan shi bai shang shi dang wu de yi ruan yu ming

If you wish to receive a certain teaching, request three times with your palms pressed together while kneeling before him on your (right) knee. (Then at his discourse) sit humbly with respect, wearing appropriate that is neat (and clean, without ornaments, jewellery or cosmetics).

净心前来欲听法，上师前坐具威仪；  
jing xin qian lai yu ting fa shang shi qian zuo ju wei yi  
心身衣等规律正，合掌前跪应三请。  
xin shen yi deng gui lu zheng he zhang qian gui ying san qing

Whatever you do to serve (your teacher) or show him respect should never be done with an arrogant mind. Instead, you should ever be like a newly-wed bride, timid, bashful and very subdued.

供养上师与时时，舍离野心憍慢心；  
gong yang shang shi yu shi shi she li ye xin jiao man xin  
三门当如初适嫁，摄心低颜甚惭赧。  
san men dang ru chu shi jia she xin di yan shen can nan

In the presence of (the spiritual master) who teaches you (the path), stop acting in a conceited, coquettish manner. As for all other (improper) actions like these, examine them yourself and discard (what is wrong).

严身具等生爱乐，不得现於上师前；  
yan shen ju deng sheng ai le bu de xian yu shang shi qian  
余事一切自思惟，切勿自作当远离。  
yu shi yi qie zi si wei qie wu zi zuo dang yuan li



If you are (requested) to perform a consecration, (an initiation into) a mandala or a fire offering ceremony or to gather disciples and deliver a discourse, you may not do so if your spiritual teacher resides in that area, unless you receive his prior permission.

开光坛城火供等，说法集子度弟子；  
kai guang tan cheng huo gong deng shuo fa ji zi du di zi  
同城金刚上师居，一切无旨不应作。  
tong cheng jin gang shang shi ju yi qie wu zhi bu ying zuo

Whatever offerings you receive from performing such rites as (the consecration known as) Opening the Eyes, you should present all these to your spiritual teacher. Once he has taken a token portion, you may use the rest for whatever you like.

开光说法等所得，净施悉以奉其师；  
kai guang shuo fa deng suo de jing shi xi yi feng qi shi  
师纳受后留让财，随得可用自所需。  
shi na shou hou liu rang cai sui de ke yong zi suo xu

In the presence of his teacher a disciple should not act (as a spiritual teacher) to his own disciples and they should not act towards him as their spiritual teacher. Therefore (before your own teacher) stop (your disciples) from showing you respect such as rising (when you come) and making prostrations.

师子金兄不为徒，自徒说法受礼拜；  
shi zi jin xiong bu wei tu zi tu shuo fa shou li bai  
接受承事礼敬等，应止金刚上师前。  
jie shou cheng shi li jing deng ying zhi jin gang shang shi qian

Whenever you make an offering to your teacher or whenever your teacher presents you with something, a disciple with sense will (present and) receive this using both hands and his head slightly bent.

若物供养上师时，或有上师所施时；  
ruo wu gong yang shang shi shi huo you shang shi suo shi shi



二手奉献后顶受，有智弟子大礼师。  
er shou feng xian hou ding shou you zhi di zi da li shi

Be diligent in all your actions, (alert and) mindful never to forget (your word to honor). If fellow-disciples transgress, correct each other in a friendly manner.

自专常忆持不忘，专修正行当全力；  
zi zhuan chang yi chi bu wang zhuan xiu zheng xing dang quan li  
金刚兄弟非律时，爱语相教指导他。  
jin gang xiong di fei lu shi ai yu xiang jiao zhi dao ta

If you because of sickness you are physically (unable) to bow to your teacher and must do what normally would be prohibited, even without (his explicit) permission, there will be no unfortunate consequences if you have a virtuous mind.

若自病缘无能力，顶礼站等上师戒；  
ruo zi bing yuan wu neng li ding li zhan deng shang shi jie  
上师所教勅无作，有德心子无其咎。  
shang shi suo jiao chi wu zuo you de xin zi wu qi jiu

What need is there to say much more. Do whatever pleases your teacher and avoid doing anything he would not like. Be diligent in both of these.

此处多说无意义，当令一切师欢喜；  
ci chu duo shuo wu yi yi dang jin yi qie shi huan xi  
离诸上师烦恼事，一切当勤而行之。  
li zhu shang shi fan nao shi yi qie dang qin er xing zhi

“Actual attainments follow from (doing what) your teacher (likes).” This has been said by (the Buddha) Vajradhara himself. Knowing this, try to please your spiritual teacher fully with all the actions (of your body, speech and mind).

金刚如来亲此说，成就跟随阿阇黎；  
jin gang ru lai qing ci shuo cheng jiu gen sui ah she li  
此明全物一切事，圆满欢喜咕噜师。  
ci ming quan wu yi qie shi yuan man huan xi gu lu shi



After a disciple has taken refuge in the Triple Gem and developed a pure (Enlightened Motive), he should be given this (text) to recite daily (how to abandon his own arrogant self-will and) follow in his teacher's footsteps (along the graded path to Enlightenment).

弟子清淨有信心，皈依稀有三宝后；  
di zi qing jing you xin xin gui yi xi you san bao hou  
能后随师咕噜法，传子日夜为常诵。  
neng hou sui shi gu lu fa chuan zi ri ye wei chang song

(By studying the prerequisite training in a whole-hearted commitment to a teacher and the graded path, common to both sutra and tantra), you will become a (suitable) vessel (to hold) the pure Dharma. You may then be given such teachings as tantra. After receiving the proper empowerments, read out loud the fourteen root vows and take them sincerely to heart.

及授金刚密咒等，令作弟子正法盆；  
ji shou jin gang mi zhou deng ling zuo di zi zheng fa pen  
堕落根本十四戒，应当观背诵持严。  
duo luo gen ben shi si jie ying dang guan bei song chi yan

As I have not made the mistake when writing this work (of adding my personal interpretations), may this be of infinite benefit to all disciples who would follow their teachers. By the limitless positive potential I have built up in this way, may all sentient beings quickly attain to the state of Buddha.

依教随顺上师行学子，  
yi jiao sui shun shang shi xing xue zi  
一切得成无缺上师法；  
yi qie de cheng wu que shang shi fa  
我作所集无边善德缘，  
wo zuo suo ji wu bian shan de yuan  
愿与众生万速胜利成。  
yuan yu zhong sheng wan su sheng li cheng