

## VAJRA FAMILY

Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche *Heart of The Buddha* –pg 142-143

“Sacred outlook means perceiving the world and oneself as intrinsically good and unconditionally free. Having developed sacred outlook it is possible to take a further step into the Vajra world. When we experience the self-existing sacredness to reality, the Vajrayana iconography begins to make sense; it makes sense to picture the world as a sacred realm, as a mandala of enlightened mind. From the viewpoint of sacred outlook, the phenomenal world is seen in terms of the five styles of energy: Buddha, Vajra, Padma, Ratna and Karma. Oneself and the people one meets, the seasons, the elements – all aspects of the phenomenal world – are made up of one or more of these styles, or Buddha families. In tantric iconography, the Buddha families make up a mandala with Buddha in the center, and Vajra, Ratna, Padma and Karma at the four cardinal points.

One or more of the Buddha families can be used to describe a person’s intrinsic perspective or stance in the world. Each Buddha family principle can have either a neurotic or enlightened expression. The particular neurosis associated with a Buddha family is transmuted in its wisdom, or enlightened, form by the taming process of shamatha-vipashyana meditation, by training on compassion in the Mahayana, and, particularly, by the development of sacred outlook in the Vajrayana. In their enlightened expression, the Buddha families are manifestations of Vajra freedom.

Vajra, which is in the east of the mandala, is represented by the color blue. The symbol of Vajra is a Vajra scepter, or dorje, whose five prongs pierce the neurosis of ego-mind. The Vajra scepter is like a thunderbolt – electric and powerful. Vajra energy is precise and direct. It is the ability to view situations from all possible perspectives and to accurately perceive the details of an experience and the larger frameworks in which things take place. The neurotic expression of Vajra energy are aggression and intellectual fixation. When the intellectual accuracy of Vajra is transmuted into its enlightened form, it becomes mirror like wisdom. Vajra is associated with the element of water. Its neurotic expression, anger, is like clouded, turbulent water; its wisdom aspect is like the clear reflection of a still pond.”

**Akshobya:** “Unshakable One” What’s unshakable? Akshobya’s quality of mirror- like wisdom

**Dhanyi Buddha** :of the East. Emanation/reflection of our own innate qualities of clarity/precision

**Proector Emantation:** Vajrapani

**Symbol/tool:** Vajra in the left hand with a diamond in its center: represents indestructible Thunderbolt of Vajra represents: irresistible force. One of the most powerful tools in the universe. Right hand touching the earth represents quality of grounded

**Element:** Water

**Sense:** Sight

**Activity:** Pacifying

**Aspect of Reality:** Consciousness

**Wisdom: Mirror-like wisdom:** “When anger is purified and removed, we gradually begin to realize mirror-like wisdom. With mirror-like wisdom, there is no distinction between self and other phenomena so that everything is experienced in unity and harmony. It is called mirror-like wisdom because phenomena appear to the mind in the same way the things appear in a clean mirror, completely accurate and with no distortion. Understanding and realizing mirror-like wisdom takes place in the absence of the negative emotion anger. Realization of mirror like wisdom is realization of the dhayni Buddha Akshobya, who is blue in color. He holds a Vajra in his left hand and his activity is pacifying the emotions; in particular, suffering, illness, frustration and sorrow.” Kenchen Trangu Rinpoche *The Five Buddha Families and the Eight Consciousnesses* pg 3

**Qualities:** one-pointed precision – intellectual- analytical – answers give them security

**Challenges:** Overly mental which can make things very complicated. When things become complicated, there is a panic that they do not understand things, this panic about not getting answers causes anger. When the anger becomes very intensified it is as if they are in a hell realm (being stuck in habit and pattern) Blame is a manifestation they use, and it is represented by a hot hell. Leaving and ignoring the situation (freezing things/people out) is represented by a cold hell. This anger can lead to oppression, irritation and outbursts of anger.

“Still water can freeze quickly into ice. If we indulge in those second looks at our experience because we want to nail them down, we might feel as though our mind’s precision is turning against us and slicing us into smaller and smaller bits. Our razor-sharp intellect envisions all the nooks and crannies of every situation. There are many angles from which to see everything. We work to make everything as crystal clear as a series of icicles on the gutters of our house – all reflecting the bright winter sun, and ready to fall in a flash upon the unwary. If there’s any fuzziness, we clarify things as soon as possible. Should there be any sloppiness, we’ll expose it clearly for all to see.

The discomfort of fixating in this way comes from touching the sharp points that highlight the natural clarity of our mind. Touching such sharpness is uncomfortable and, if not minded properly, often extreme cutting.

We seize on this sharpness as a defense. We might question our diagnosis or our treatment and push to learn more about it than anyone else knows. If others fail to appreciate our intellect or if we cannot appreciate theirs, wit can turn to coldness or anger. We might dismiss the people treating us as dull or devious. Obsession with intellectual precision and the acrid aroma of paranoia can distort clarity enough to inflict much pain upon us. The good news is that we can use this pain to wake ourselves up.” James Sacamano, MD *Getting Back to Wholeness* pg 170-171

~ Each energy is neutral, and we shouldn’t feel that we are only a representation of just one of the energies nor should we feel that we represent only the wisdom aspects or the challenged aspects of the wisdom family.

~With Vajra energy: the possibility to change challenging and negative behaviors exists because of the nature of clarity, the gift of being analytical and seeing the larger picture. There is pristine accuracy in what is seen and because of that, the possibility of equanimity is possible and therefore the neurotic manifestation of anger can be cut.

### **Relation to Medicine Buddha**

- When we practice, we have greater clarity about our inner self, our environment and others
- Akshobya is an example, a reference tool, symbol of being completely void of anger. Visualizing and connecting with Akshobya helps us see our own potential. That potential is to be without anger and instead to have patience and stability in the way we conduct our lives.
- We use our mind as a method of healing. What our mind believe is important. If we have a mind that believes it is justified in irritation, frustration, paranoia and anger that will be the outcome of how we live. We all can relate to that. We have all felt those states of minds before. When we cultivate irritation, irritation and anger we go against our inherent nature and it makes us restless. Making a connection with Akshobya helps us recognize that our situation is workable, we don't need to struggle quite so much. We can be inspired by a being that is completely void of anger.
- Akshobya holds a vajra (dorje) this is symbol of unchangeability. The fact that it is a diamond thunderbolt represents clarity and stability.
- You might wonder, "Isn't visualizing medicine Buddha enough? Why do I need to complicate things?" From an ultimate perspective, absolutely, Medicine Buddha is enough to visualize. From a relative perspective, each Buddha represents different appearances which reflect the different activities that we engage in. In the case of Akshobya, we are reminded of the activity of pacifying. What we are pacifying? Our own anger. By transforming the anger, we have a different perspective. That perspective is mirror-like wisdom. Through mirror-like wisdom, we have a three-dimensional experience. Without the mirror, our life can be very two dimensional and flat. We are constantly visualizing our world. Using tools and symbols like the 5 Dhyani Buddhas as supports in our Medicine Buddha practice is a good reminder to our fickle mind that we are endowed with wonderful qualities. Those qualities need cultivation and the practice of Medicine Buddha is a method for helping us to become more and more in touch with our innate goodness.

~ Dekyong Lhamo for Vajra presentation with Jim Sacamano

5 /19/2020