

# Gaden Samten Ling

## TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY

The scarf at the bottom of the image is a symbol of purity and peace. The ends of the scarf pointing inwards to meet each other signify harmony amongst

our dharma centre members. The left three loops of the scarf symbolize the three higher learnings of ethics, meditative concentration and wisdom. The right three loops of the scarf symbolize the three moralities - morality of abstaining from misbehavior, morality of integrating virtues and morality for the welfare of sentient beings. When the three trainings are combined with the three moralities, the long-term result is the achievement of the two bodies of a Buddha - the form body (rupakaya) and the wisdom body (dharmakaya). The Tibetan script on the scarf states our dharma centre name, Gaden Samten Ling, as it is written in the Tibetan language.

Above the scarf, the three lotus petals are a representation of the Three Precious Gems - Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. The lotus is a metaphor for the transformation of human consciousness through spiritual practice. A lotus plant grows from mud deep in the water but its beautiful flower carries no hint of this defiled origin. Likewise, we who are Buddhist practitioners are born in samsara but have the pure intention to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of others. The three letters on the petals represent our dharma centre name - Gaden Samten Ling. Above the lotus are a sun and

moon cushion which form the seat for the central part of the logo.

The outer ring of the logo is red and identifies Gaden Samten Ling as a dharma centre specifically dedicated to Tibetan Buddhism. Only in Tibetan Buddhism are the robes of an ordained person red or burgundy in color. The inner circle of the logo is yellow in colour symbolizing Buddhism in general. It is a reflection of the colour of Buddha's body, which is said to be as pure and stainless as 24-karat gold. The sun and moon within the inner circle represent the two aspects of enlightened beings which are emptiness and compassion, also known as wisdom and method.

The ham ksha syllable at the heart of the logo is the seed syllable of Kalachakra. It represents the two realms - form and formless. Ham ksha is also a symbol of the two stages on the path to enlightenment - the generation stage (kye rim) and completion stage (dzog rim). From our practice of the two stages, we can achieve the fruit of the two bodies of a buddha - the form and wisdom bodies.

A seed syllable is the basis for the arising of a buddha's form body. Our human form on a gross level comes from the joining of the white and red drops of our father and mother. Then through following a spiritual path, we can eventually attain the result of the wisdom and form bodies of a buddha.

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However, a buddha's body does not arise from any physical basis. A buddha's body arises from the union of compassion and emptiness; but these are invisible qualities. Therefore, in order to benefit sentient beings, a buddha manifests a form body displaying the 32 major and 80 minor marks. These marks are visible manifestations of the enlightened aspects of compassion and emptiness that are the basis of a buddha's form body.

Specifically in Kalachakra, the syllables hum and hi, which represent the wind and mind, combine to form the seed syllable ham, which transforms into Kalachakra. The bindu or sacred drop at the top of the syllable symbolizes the union of emptiness and compassion - the union of wisdom and method - which is the basis for the arising of fully realized beings. The sun (nyima), moon (dawa) and drop (drachen) together are symbols of the red drop, the white drop and space elements. They represent the three channels of our physical body - left, right and centre. These three channels give rise to the three paths - generation, completion and arising of form from emptiness.

Especially for Gaden Samten Ling, the Kalachakra seed syllable has deep significance. In the year 2004, 20 members from Gaden Samten Ling were very fortunate to attend the Kalachakra

teachings and initiation offered by His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama. This is perhaps the last time these teachings and initiation will be given in the West. Out of

the 7,000 people in attendance, Gaden Samten Ling was the only dharma centre to have the blessing to attend as a united dharma

group. We did so due to the great kindness and guidance of our resident teacher, Kushok Lobsang Dhamchöe. Not only did Gaden Samten Ling receive this highest yoga tantra initiation but all those who went to Toronto continue with their practice of the Kalachakra six-session guru yoga. It is in memory of this auspicious occasion that our resident teacher has designed this logo and provided this explanation.

Gaden Samten Ling is very fortunate to have as our resident teacher a monk from Namgyal Monastery, the personal nonsectarian monastery of the Dalai Lama and the only monastery to hold the full understanding of the Kalachakra Ritual required to offer an initiation of this highest yoga tantra. Many lamas wish to offer the Kalachakra initiation these days but their attendants lack the full knowledge of the ritual dance, sand mandala construction, sacred chants and appropriate offering substances required to properly bestow the initiation. We are very blessed that our resident teacher was trained so well by Namgyal Monastery and from this knowledge can guide us so clearly and with such profound meaning in our daily practice.

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