

THE HEALING PRACTICE OF WHITE TARA MEDITATION

This is a guided meditation session on White Tara, the female Buddha of healing and protection. To begin the meditation session, sit comfortably, either cross-legged on a cushion or in a chair, close your eyes and spend a few moments being aware of your breathing. Watch your breath as it naturally expands your abdomen or touches your nostrils. When your focus strays, gently bring the mind back to your breath, with a light touch.

Now, think about your reasons for wishing to connect to Tara. You can reach out for her healing help and guidance to seek help for yourself, for anyone in your life who needs assistance, and also on behalf of everyone in the world who is struggling. Generate a strong motivation for this practice to bring great benefit to yourself and others.

We now begin saying the refuge prayer:

*I take refuge in Buddha, Dharma, Sangha and Tara
May I reach enlightenment for the benefit of all. X3*

Now with eyes closed you will generate a visualized image of Tara, the prayer continues:

In the space before me appears a white lotus. Upon it is a moon cushion, and upon that, the love and compassion of all the enlightened appear as the seed syllable TAM. Light radiates from the TAM and transforms into the Noble Wish-fulfilling Tara. She sits on the lotus and moon with a luminous aura surrounding her. Youthful and radiant, her right hand gestures an invitation to liberation. Her left hand indicates the Three Jewels, giving courage and assurance to those dominated by fears.

Tara appears as a young woman of exquisite beauty, “sweet sixteen,” with a dewy complexion, full breasts, and long flowing black hair. This outer beauty is the manifestation of her inner perfection. She sits in the full lotus meditation posture, with the soles of her feet upturned. Her body is stable and balanced, indicating that she enjoys complete physical and emotional equilibrium.

Tara sits on a huge open white lotus that grows from the mud at the bottom of the lake, and blooms pure and white in the clear light at the surface. It symbolizes that Tara has transcended completely the mud of delusion and has achieved the wisdom of enlightenment. Inside the open lotus is a soft white cushion made of the full moon. The moon cushion represents Tara’s compassion. The halo of white light that surrounds her body shows her ability to pacify and soothe away all difficulties.

Tara is decked in beautiful silks and jewels resembling a queen, and wears a gem-studded tiara. She trails multicolored silk scarves, and her lower body is draped in a rose-colored skirt. The rich jewels stand for Tara's wealth of enlightened qualities and for her spiritual and material attainments that you can achieve by practicing her meditation. The rose-colored skirt symbolizes her affectionate love for you and for all beings.

Tara's right hand is held palm outward, fingers open and pointed downward. This gesture indicates her generosity. It beckons you to follow her from suffering to freedom. Her left hand held in front of her heart, with the tips of her thumb and ring finger touching, holds the stem of a flower that blooms near her left ear. This utpala flower, is said to grow very high in the mountains of Tibet. It reminds you that you should not be satisfied with ordinary happiness, but rather set your sights on the higher goal of permanent freedom from suffering.

The flower has three parts: a bud, a fully opened bloom, and a fruit. The bloom stands for the present, the fruit for the past, and the bud for the future. The flower shows that Tara is offering the protection of the Three Jewels – the Buddha, his wise advice, the Dharma, and those who follow it, the Sangha, – for all times. The touch of the thumb and ring finger as Tara holds the flower stem stands for her perfect combination of compassion and wisdom.

Tara has seven eyes, two in the normal places, a fully opened wisdom eye at the center of her forehead, and one in each palm and in the sole of each foot. The eyes remind you how clearly she sees you and the supreme awareness she brings to the task of guiding you from unhappiness to peace.

From the prayer:

At her crown, a white OM. At her throat, a red AH. At her heart, a white TAM, marked by a blue HUM.

Tara's body is also marked with Sanskrit syllables. OM stands for Tara's enlightened body, AH for enlightened speech, and HUM enlightened mind. The TAM is Tara's "seed syllable"- the initial of her special monogram, you might say. When you call on Tara, this seed syllable, which is Tara's essence, is what you see first.

The prayer continues:

Light radiates from the syllables, inviting the wisdom beings and empowering deities. The wisdom beings unite inseparably with Tara. The empowering deities anoint her, confer initiation, and with the overflowing nectar, a Buddha of Infinite Life appears on her crown.

I bow down in body speech and mind. I offer the best I have to give, both real and imagined, to fill the space between us. I regret and purify all transgression. I rejoice in all virtues. I request you to remain until total enlightenment. I request wise and compassionate guidance. I dedicate my merit for the sake of all beings.

Brilliant light emanates from the syllable TAM within her heart, reaching infinite universes, and collecting back the essence of inexhaustible vitality and the powerful blessings of wisdom mind. The energy streams forth from Tara's heart and body and completely absorbs this nectar of light, cleansing and revitalizing my body, speech, and mind.

Focus now on the visualized image of Mother Tara before you with all her attributes. Next you will recite the mantra. Reciting the mantra protects the mind by bringing you closer to that energy.

Tara's mantra has ten syllables: OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SOHA

OM represents the body, speech and mind of Tara and your own body, speech and mind as you recite the mantra.

TARE means "one who liberates from suffering."

TUTTARE means "one who liberates from the eight fears."

TURE means "one who liberates from all illnesses."

SOHA means "lay the foundation". You are asking Tara to join your body, speech and mind to hers to bring you closer to her.

Listen to the sound of the syllables and think about the meaning of the words.

OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SOHA

If you would like to continue mantra recitation, you can pause the recording and resume when you are ready.