

3 Aspects of Perfection of Energy	Practices
<p>Aspect #1.</p> <p>Character development: Arousing energy by focusing on the “thought of enlightenment.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise the Bodhi Mind. - Awakening thought of enlightenment for oneself (individual) AND for all humankind (collective). - Practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asking, “What is my purpose?” - Clarifying & Commitment to Vows (Three Tenets) - Accepting the Precepts. - Determination to understand nature of suffering, face and go through it.
<p>Aspect #2.</p> <p>Spiritual training: Arousing energy of resolve to undertake spiritual practices. Taking “one’s practice in hand” -- being responsible for your own practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deepening one’s resolve to fulfill vow of awakening for self-and-other (individual-and-collective). - Practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affirming Vows through recitation & ritual. - Committing to Not-Knowing (Zazen, daily sitting) - Committing to Bearing Witness (Experiencing and affirming interdependence daily; inviting in complexity.) - Committing to daily attitude of serving. - Committing to study. - Continued experience of expansion of reserves of energies.

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<p>Aspect #3. Altruism.</p> <p>Awakening: Experiencing free flowing energies arising from wellspring of spiritual intelligence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effortless energies: energy not self-consciously produced. - Energy flows from harmonious relationship of individual-and-collective; from dance of specificity/complexity.
Ordinary Energy	Perfected (Transformed) Energy
<p>Desire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Given a bad rap by Buddhism: desire is problematic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Second of Four Vows: “put an end to desire.” - Second of Four Views: “cause of suffering.” - What is the proper role of desire in practice? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is relationship between human desire and the energy that moves us? - How do we practice with the problematic aspect of desire and with the positive role desire plays in a life of excellence? - Does desire lead us to an expansive sense of self or does it lead to constriction and repression? 	<p>Desire of a Bodhisattva (motivates practice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Studying desire itself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seeing desire in large context beyond self interest. - Understanding patterns of behavior (habits, addiction) arising from desire. - Reorienting how desire can be used rather than repressing. - Generating desire for awakening and doing good works (rather than for self interest). - Transforming one’s relationship to desire. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dedicating merits of practice or accomplishments to larger sphere. - Expanding from self-centered to sphere of all-connections; engaging complexity.

Ordinary Energy	Perfected (Transformed) Energy
<p>Emotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early Buddhism & even Mahayana texts do not help with emotional intelligence. - Cultural distrust of emotions. - Contemporary movement towards emotional intelligence. 	<p>Emotion in a Bodhisattva</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is a well-balanced emotional life in accord with raising the bodhi mind? - What is emotional maturity? (not defaulting to harmful emotions and not repressing them either) - What practices help build the conditions for appropriate responses?
<p>Will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploring link between energy and attention: letting the mind wander aimlessly. - Defaulting on integrity. 	<p>Conscious Choosing in a Bodhisattva</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising the Bodhi mind (thought of awakening) must permeate all levels of one's mind and life - Making conscious choices in accord with one's vows.

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<p>Courage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Becoming aware of (pervasive) fear. - Three kinds of courage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in response to threat of injury or death. - in the face of despair and loss of purpose. - as an everyday act in overcoming timidity and fearfulness in life. 	<p>Courage in a Bodhisattva</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding that one is not trying to get rid of fear. - Learning to exercise the being-with-fear muscles. - Expanding one's capacity to be fearful in proportion to the situation at hand. - Facing despair when life appears hopeless by engaging practice. - Facing and taking risks: life is suffering, unpredictable. - Skillful use of devotional practices. - Pressing ahead by not giving in to spiritual passivity. - Cultivating sense of basic trust in life.

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<p>Signs that Energy is Shifting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shifting from interest only in self-gaining or at least moving beyond priority of personal successes. - Shifting from sense of a “fixed entity” to “no-entity of inter-dependence.” Empty of “own being.” - Beginning to live differently. 	<p>Shifting Energies Emerging in Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertaking eagerly the practices of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open (silent) receptivity (zazen) - Awareness of specificity (bearing witness) - Exercise choice of what/ how you pay attention and what it serves. - Strong capacity for thinking that cuts through to what is “true.” (using thought effectively) - Active questioning. (overcoming reticence) - Critical doubt. (encouraging unconventional paths) - Articulated action (loving action) - Appreciate rest and relaxation (shifting freely) - Emerging of selfless compassion: awakening for all beings becomes predominant view. - Emerging of Prajna Wisdom: living life from view of total dependence on all factors that brings our life into being. Dancing with all aspects of specificity/ complexity.

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Signs that Energy is Stuck (Not being used ethically) <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Not living constructively on behalf of others.- Not using life energies for something worthwhile.- Continual defaulting into self interests.	Using Energies Ethically <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Engaging discipline and practice (energy doesn't just happen).- Examining carefully how we generate wholesome energy.