



## "The Altruistic Wish: Guanyin and the Dynamics of Healing in Buddhist Meditation"

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Through compassion, *bodhisattvas* have gained the motivation to become enlightened for the welfare of others. As such, they mediate on behalf of humanity to historical or primordial Buddhas. Bodhisattva Guanyin is revered throughout Buddhism for benevolence toward all humanity, and is regarded as the *bodhisattva* who most embodies compassion. The power to heal is included among her many qualities. Ritual meditative practices, such as those involving purification and reciting the *Great Compassion Mantra* of Guanyin can develop the power to heal many diseases and to protect from harm.

Particular meditative experiences can lead to contemplative encounters with what might be best referred to as extraordinary 'energy'. As such, these encounters suggest the access to a gateway leading to the transcendent source of wisdom. On the way to wisdom, the meditative act, performed in the context of compassionate healing intent, leads also to a specific form of extraordinary 'energy' identified here as Bodhisattva Guanyin.

With the above in mind, my presentation will address, to a degree, dynamics of healing in Buddhist meditation, wherein the meditator seeks the compassionate healing intervention of Guanyin. Specifically, I will consider hitherto unappreciated aspects of quietude *samatha* practices, insofar as they reveal to some degree their 'relationship' to Guanyin, as a manifestation of the vital principle or animating force within all living things, while realising their potential to facilitate the opportunity for spiritual healing. In doing so, and by way of example, I will explore briefly some concepts and associated healing methods in the context of Buddhist meditation, as well as the role of healing in Buddhism, with the aim of clarifying the dynamics of the altruistic wish or contemplative supplication to Bodhisattva Guanyin.