

Foundation of All Good Qualities: The Song of the Graded Path
(To make it singable, it's set to a simple, rhythmic 4/4 meter.)

(Verse 1: The Teacher)

The source of every good I know
Is my kind Lama, my Lord;
Bless me to see the way to go,
To stay within your word.
To follow with my heart and might,
With reverence deep and true,
The root of all the path is bright
When I am led by you.

(Verse 2: This Precious Life)

This life of leisure, found just once,
Is hard to find again.
Grant me the wish, and not just once,
To use it free from pain.
To take its essence night and day,
And see its value clear,
Before the moments slip away
And death is drawing near.

(Verse 3: Impermanence)

Like bubbles on a crashing wave,
My life is fleeting breath.
Bless me to be wise and brave
To face the coming death.
For like a shadow in the sun,
My deeds will follow me;
The white or black, the things I've done,
Are my own destiny.

(Chorus)

Grant me the strength to turn away
From every slight of wrong,
To walk the path of light today
And make my practice strong.

(Verse 4: Renunciation)

The fleeting joys of worldly life
Are doors to every pain;
They lead to hunger, thirst, and strife,
With nothing left to gain.
Bless me to see they can't be trusted,
Though they seem so sweet;
Until my worldly chains are rusted,
Freedom's not complete.

(Verse 5: Compassion)

I've fallen in the suffering sea,
The waves are cold and wild;
But every soul is kin to me,
As mother to a child.
Bless me to take the sacred vow
To set all beings free;
The task of healing starts right now
With love and purity.

(Verse 6: The Vows)

The wish alone is not enough
To reach the Buddha's shore;
The training path is long and rough,
I must do so much more.
Grant me resolve to keep the vows,
To master every stage;
The moral life my heart allows
To turn the final page.

(Verse 7: Meditation & Wisdom)

Grant me the path where quietude
And insight join as one;
To still the mind's distracted mood
Until the work is done.
To see the meaning, deep and vast,
In the most perfect way,
Until the shadows of the past
Are lost in wisdom's day.

(Verse 8: The Secret Way)

When I am made a vessel pure,
Lead me to the Door;
The Vajra Way is swift and sure,
The holiest of lore.
Bless me to keep my pledges clean,
Though it should cost my life;
To walk the secret path unseen,
Beyond all dual strife.

(Outro: Dedication)

In every life, in every place,
May Teachers be my guide;
To bask within the Dharma's grace,
With sangha at my side.
May obstacles be cleared away,
Till every path is trod;

And I become, this very day,
The glorious Vajradhara.

Tips for Singing

- **Tempo:** Keep it slow and steady.
- **Rhythm:** If you have a drum or bell, strike it on the **1st** and **3rd** beat of every measure to keep the pace meditative.
- **Contemplation:** Pause for a deep breath between the Chorus and the later verses to let the meaning sink in.