

TIBETAN BUDDHISM CENTER FOR WORLD PEACE
San Antonio, Texas

The mantra of Shakyamuni Buddha

TA YA THA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNIYE SVAHA

Tayatha (sometimes transliterated *tayadtha*) is a Sanskrit word that means “it is like this” or “thus it is”. **Om** is composed of the three pure sounds A U and M, which signify one’s body, speech and mind that are transformed into a Buddha’s body, speech and mind. **Muni** is a Sanskrit term for a sage or saint who knows the truth of existence not on the basis of scientific or religious texts but through their own realization. In Buddhism the term *Muni* is used as a title of Gautama Buddha, who being born among the tribe of the Shakyas, is called Shakyamuni Buddha. **Maha** is a Sanskrit word meaning “great”, thus **maha muniye** means “great sage”. **Svaha** (pronounced *swoha* by Tibetans) means “may a blessing rest on it”.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s interpretation of the mantra

TA YA THA – it is like this

OM – The All-Knowledge of the three bodies of a buddha and of the infinite Buddha’s Holy Body, Speech and Mind. The knowledge of the two paths to enlightenment (Method and Wisdom), and of the two truths—absolute and relative (aka ultimate and conventional)—that contain all existence within them.

MUNI – Control over the suffering of the three lower realms and over the wrong conception of the self-existent I.

MUNI – Control over the suffering of all samsara and over self-cherishing thoughts.

MAHA MUNIYE – Great control over the suffering of subtle illusions and over the dualistic mind.

SVAHA – May my mind receive, absorb and keep the blessings of the mantra, and may they take root.

An intention and visualization that can be used with the mantra

From your heart, generate the request to the Buddha that you be inspired to follow the path to full enlightenment; make this request on behalf of all living beings who are trapped in samsara. Rays of light stream from the figure of the Buddha before you. This light enters your body and quickly removes all negativities, obscurations and hindrances, freeing you to progress quickly on the path. Imagine that this light flows not only to you, but to all living beings situated in space around you. Imagine that they all receive such inspiration and blessings as you recite the name mantra of Shakyamuni Buddha as many times as possible.

tayatha om muni muni maha muniye svaha

This is a quote from Lama Thubten Yeshe:

“Reciting a mantra...does not mean the mere vocal repetition of speech syllables. Many meditators know from experience that the act of reciting mantras transcends external sounds and words. It is more like listening to a subtle inner sound that has always inhabited our nervous system.”