

How to Offer Tsok at Home

Tsok can be performed in many ways, from simple to elaborate. Here are some examples:

- ❖ The very simplest way would be to simply recite a tsok offering verse, such as "TSOK KHANG DECHEN..." or "YING KYI BENDHAR...", one or more times just before you eat a meal.
- ❖ If you have a little more time and you have the little food offering booklet that we recite at Tashi Choling before offering meals at retreats, you could do this slightly more elaborate version of offering tsog:

Start by saying the food offering prayer that begins, "TON PA LAMAI SANGYE RINPOCHE...".

Then do the short Chenrezig practice in the booklet that begins, "JOWO KYON GYI...".

Then recite the MANI mantra that goes with the Chenrezig practice.

Then insert either the "TSOK KHANG DECHEN..." or the "YING KYI BENDHAR..." tsok offering verse and recite that three times.

Then conclude with the dedication of merit prayer in the little booklet that starts, "GEWA DE YI...".

- ❖ If you have more time, then is also wonderful to perform any of the longer tsok practices we do at Tashi Choling, such as Shower of Blessings, Guru Rinpoche, Yeshe Tsogyal, Amitabha, Troma, etc. For doing these practices at home, it's not required to make the tormas (unless you know how and have the time). Instead, you

can simply arrange small dishes of tsok food on the shrine to represent the tormas. If you have a serkym, you could fill that with tea and could put tsog substances in the base. It's also not necessary to do any chopon ritual activity: You can simply arrange the tsog offerings before your practice and bless them with water. Then you can sit and perform the practice, including the tsog offering verse. Afterwards, you can partake of the tsog offerings and then offer out the small dishes of tsog substances and serkym you put on your altar at the beginning.

No matter which practice you do, the most important thing is to relax and have faith and pure view about what you are doing and confidence that your refuge vows, bodhisattva vows, and secret mantra samaya are being restored and strengthened. Don't let worries like "Am I doing this right?" get in the way of your practice! Just try your best and aspire to slowly learn how to do things better and better.

Also, keep in mind that any tsok offering should involve the four "gatherings:"

1. A gathering of practitioners: It is fine to perform tsok at home by oneself or to gather in a group.
2. A gathering of offerings: Assemble any kind of food offering (food which is ready to eat), and be sure to include a small amount of meat and alcohol as samaya substances.
3. A gathering of deities: One of the most important aspects of a tsok offering is that one recalls pure view, seeing oneself as the deity, the environment as a pure land, and visualizing countless deities who receive countless actual and mentally created offerings. This view restores our samaya, which is principally

Updated: June 11, 2020

our promise at the time of empowerment that we would keep pure view and faith.

4. A gathering of merit and wisdom: By making this offering with a view of refuge, compassion (bodhicitta), and faith and pure view, we are able to generate vast merit and wisdom, the very causes for enlightenment.

So bottom line: Just relax, hold pure view with faith and devotion, and enjoy your practice!