

**KUAN YIN**  
**Accessing the Power of  
the Divine Feminine**

**Daniela Schenker**

**Hardcover**

**6 x 7 1/2"**

**208 Pages**

**33 watercolor images**

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**U.S. \$22.95**

## **KUAN YIN**

### **Connecting with Kuan Yin**

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#### **Mantras**

Perhaps the simplest way to invoke Kuan Yin is by reciting her mantra. A mantra is a series of meaningful symbols that we repeat in a mindful way. This has a calming effect on the mind; it interrupts our restless thought forms and shifts our focus, empowering us and bringing inner peace. It is not unusual for Kuan Yin to appear to us in visions or dreams that mirror our own situations after we have recited her mantra. If you need quick help in a trying time, you can invoke Kuan Yin with her mantras alone, without any other ritual or ceremony. If you are not familiar with

— **Om Mani Padme Hum** —

This is the classic Sanskrit Kuan Yin mantra. The rough translation is “Hail to the jewel in the lotus.” Imagine that there is a beautiful lotus flowering in your heart, with Kuan Yin at its center, as you recite it. See Kuan Yin as the jewel emanating a radiant light. When chanting this mantra, you may choose instead to visualize the male form of Kuan Yin, Avalokiteshvara. According to legend, Buddha Amitabha was reciting *Om Mani Padme Hum* while in a state of ecstasy as Avalokiteshvara was born from a ray of light emanating from his eye.

#### **A Simple Buddhist Kuan Yin Meditation**

In this simple but powerful meditation, you gradually increase the tempo of the mantra. Recite or chant *Namo Kuan Shi Yin Pusa* or *Om Mani Padme Hum*, slowly at first and then faster and faster. This creates a rhythmic vibration that intensifies as you chant. Sounding a bell or striking another small percussion instrument will enhance the experience. In the temples, the tone is struck with each syllable, which can be quite challenging as the chant speeds up; you may choose a slower rhythm, perhaps after each recitation of the full mantra, if you wish.

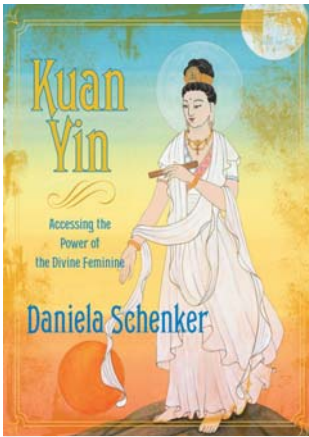
You may practice this meditation while sitting, or slowly walking in a circle—perhaps in your home at your altar or another power spot, or outdoors. After you strike the final percussion tone, return to your meditation seat if you have been walking, and immerse yourself in the silence; it will be very powerful. Make use of this deep stillness, and meditate for a minimum of twenty minutes.

#### **A Kuan Yin Walking Meditation**

During this meditation, you will chant *Namo Kuan Shi Yin Pusa* or *Om Mani Padme Hum* while walking in a special way described in ancient legend. You will move as though you are approaching a temple along the staircases and pathways that lead devoted pilgrims toward a Kuan Yin shrine. Sound a bell, take two steps forward, and then prostrate yourself—an expression of penitence, as well as honor and respect for the bodhisattva. Depending on your fitness level, you may either touch the ground with your hands or bow down until your forehead touches it. Your single-minded intention to connect with Kuan Yin is more important than perfecting the body movement. Many pilgrims engage in this practice on the island of Putuo Shan.

#### **Charging the Sacred Waters of Kuan Yin**

Here is a simple practice that easily connects you to Kuan Yin’s energy. Before you meditate or recite a mantra at your altar, place pure, clean water in a glass or porcelain container (no plastic) in front of a statue or a picture of Kuan Yin.



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Ideally, your statue should be made from wood or stone. Wood represents growth and creativity. Jade is a gemstone that is specifically attributed to Kuan Yin, and it has strong protective power. Quartz crystal and amethyst also make wonderful spiritual statues. White or light-colored marble represents purity and solidity, while white porcelain is a symbol of innocence. Ceramic and porcelain figures can be fragile, so make sure that they have a wide base or pedestal for extra stability. Do not put a statue that is obviously damaged on your altar—one that has big cracks or chipped areas, for example. It will be neither beautiful nor powerful.

Place your statues at eye level or higher. Remember, they represent celestial beings who gaze compassionately down upon us.

### **Blessing Your Altar Statues and Figurines**

A statue is even more powerful once it has been blessed and “activated” by a priest, a master, or another person of high spiritual rank. You may ask a temple priest to bless your Kuan Yin statue or figurine. He will do this by dipping a willow branch in holy water and sprinkling the water upon it. Some priests or spiritual masters will chant a prayer and softly blow this energy toward the statue in a blessing. After the blessing ceremony, wrap the statue carefully in a cloth, take it home, and put it on your altar. Think ahead about where you will place it: it is best if you do not move it once it’s in position.

Another way to activate your statue is to briefly touch it at the crown, the third eye, both eyes, the heart, and the base. In this way, the eyes of the figurine are opened spiritually. Some sensitive people are able to perceive a glow from these activated eyes. You can also touch these same areas with a dot of vermilion paint, but this should only be done on materials that the rich, red color cannot penetrate—glazed porcelain, for example.

In my travels, I have found several kinds of Kuan Yin altars. You may wish to adopt one of these approaches when you create your own space for Kuan Yin.

### **The Basic Elements of a Chinese Altar**

In Chinese or Taoist tradition, the altar usually has three levels, and statues are placed upon it in a certain hierarchy. At the top level, Kuan Yin, Amitabha, and other bodhisattvas find their place. The middle level is dedicated to the ancestors—it contains special plates upon which their names are engraved. The lower level is reserved for the Earth God. Fresh fruits, candles, small lotus-shaped lamps, and incense burners may also be placed on the altar. To avoid fire hazards, small electric lamps are frequently used in lieu of candles, and electric candles and incense burners are available as well.

### **The Basic Elements of a Buddhist Altar**

With this kind of altar, the statue to be worshipped stands upon a table or a cupboard shelf. A *thangka* (a picture on a scroll) showing a buddha or bodhisattva hangs on the wall, either above it or beside it. Seven small cups filled with seven offerings are placed in front of the statue. Cups contain clear water, scented water, flowers, and incense. One cup serves as an oil lamp, and one contains food—for example, sweets. The last cup holds a white snail, a symbol of divine music.

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