

Seven-Point Mind Training

Chekawa Yeshé Dorjé (1101-75)

(edited by Kyabje Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo Rinpoche)

Homage to compassion.

Presenting the greatness of the author in order to demonstrate the authenticity of the source of the teaching

The essence of the nectar of these pith instructions
was transmitted by the Master from Suvarnavipa (Serlingpa).

Presentation of the greatness of this teaching to generate respect for the instructions.

The meaning of this text should be understood.
It is like a diamond, the sun, and a medicinal tree.
Through this proliferation of the five degenerations
Transform every event into the path of enlightenment.

In terms of the sequence in which these actual instructions guide the disciples, seven points are set forth.

- (1. Presentation of the preliminaries, the basis
2. Training in the awakening mind, the main practice
3. Taking adverse conditions onto the path of enlightenment
4. Presentation of a lifetime's practice in summary
5. Presentation of the measure of having trained the mind
6. Presentation of the commitments of mind training
7. Presentation of the precepts of mind training)

1. Presentation of the preliminaries, the basis

First, train in the preliminaries.

2. Training in the awakening mind, the main practice

- A. *Training in the conventional awakening mind*
- B. *Training in the ultimate awakening mind*

The second point consists of the practice method of the ultimate awakening mind

and the practice method of the conventional awakening mind. In most of the older texts on the seven points of mind training, the practice of the ultimate awakening mind is taught first. According to our own tradition, which follows the gentle protector Tsongkhapa and is found in works such as *Mind Training like the Rays of the Sun*, *Ornament of Lobsang's View*, *Essence of the Nectar*, and *Keutsang's Root Words*, the order is reversed for special reasons.

A. Training in the conventional awakening mind

Banish all blames to the single source.
Toward all beings contemplate their great kindness.
Train in the two—giving and taking—alternately.
As to the sequence, begin by taking from yourself.
Place the two astride your breath.

There are three objects, three poisons, and three roots of virtue.
The instruction in the post [meditation session], in short,
is to be mindful of this [practice] in all actions
By training ourselves through words.

B. Training in the ultimate awakening mind

When stability is attained, teach the secret:
Regard all phenomena as dreamlike.
Examine the nature of the unborn awareness.
The remedy, too, is freed in its own place.
Place your mind on the basis-of-all, the actual path.
In the intervals be a conjurer of illusions.

3. Taking adverse conditions onto the path of enlightenment

When the world and its inhabitants are filled with negativity,
Transform adverse conditions into the path of enlightenment.
Immediately apply whatever you encounter to your meditation.
The fourfold practice is the most excellent method.

4. Presentation of a lifetime's practice in summary

In brief the essence of instruction is this:
Apply yourself to the five powers.
As Mahayana's transference method is
The five powers alone, their practice is vital.

5. Presentation of the measure of having trained the mind

The intent of all teachings converges on a single point.

Of the two witnesses uphold the principal one.

Cultivate constantly the joyful mind alone.

A sign of a trained [mind] is having the five greatneses.

If these can be [upheld] even when distracted, you are trained.

6. Presentation of the commitments of mind training

(1-3) Train constantly in the three general points.

(4) Transform your attitudes but remain natural.

(5) Do not speak of the defects [of others].

(6) Do not reflect on others' shortcomings.

(7) Whichever affliction is the strongest, purify it first.

(8) Discard all expectations of reward.

(9) Discard poisonous food.

(10) Do not maintain inappropriate loyalty.

(11) Do not torment with malicious banter.

(12) Do not lie in ambush.

(13) Do not strike at the heart.

(14) Do not place the load of a dzo onto an ox.

(15) Do not abuse this [practice] as a rite.

(16) Do not sprint to win a race.

(17) Do not turn the gods into demons.

(18) Do not seek [others'] misery as a means to happiness.

7. Presentation of the precepts of mind training

(1) Accomplish all yogas through a single means.

(2) Overcome all errors through a single means.

(3) There are two tasks—one at the start and one at the end.

(4) Forbear whichever of the two arises.

(5) Guard the two even at the cost of your life.

(6) Train in the three difficult challenges.

(7) Adopt the three principal conditions.

(8) Contemplate the three that are free of degeneration.

(9) Be endowed with the three inseparable factors.

(10) Train constantly toward the chosen objects.

(11) Cherish all inclusive and deep practices

(12) Meditate constantly on those who have to been set apart.

(13) Do not depend on other conditions.

(14) Engage in the principal practices right now.

(15) Do not apply misplaced understanding.

- (16) Do not be sporadic.
- (17) Train with decisiveness.
- (18) Be released through the two: investigation and close analysis.
- (19) Do not boast of your good deeds.
- (20) Do not be ill-tempered.
- (21) Do not be fickle.
- (22) Do not be boisterous.

In conclusion, there is a verse of confidence in relation to the mind of enlightenment:

Because of my numerous aspirations,
I have defied the tragic tale of suffering
And have taken instructions to subdue self-grasping.
Now, even if death comes, I have no regrets.

Colophon:

In the literature of the old and new Kadampa traditions there are many versions of the root text and commentaries on the *Seven-Point Mind Training*. The order of the passages and the number of words in them vary greatly. Some of them cannot be confidently included in the various outlines when explaining the text, and there are other lines that are not commonly known to be part of the root text.

For these reasons, I, Phabongkha Rinpoche, have long considered creating an authoritative root text by collating the versions found in the texts: *Mind Training Like the Rays of the Sun*, *Ornament of Lobsang's Thought*, and *The Essential Nectar*.

When I was teaching the *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* at Geden Jampa Ling, Champa in the year of the Wood Pig (1935), Lamrimpa Phuntsok Palden, a tireless practitioner, presented me with a khatag (or traditional auspicious scarf) and an offering and asked me to produce such a compilation. So, after carefully researching many root texts and their commentaries, I compiled this root text and supplemented it with outlines.

My goodness and virtue increase!