

MSB STUDY & PRACTICE MANUAL

Revised September 10, 2009

PHASE IV: LOJONG

Students in this phase of practice have completed their solitary post-sessions retreat. At this point, students are encouraged to structure their formal practice around the lojong text, “*The Seven Points of Mind Training*.” An outline of the structure for this practice is included in this section.

Traditionally, a practitioner enters into the Dzogchen Longchen Nyingthik Ngöndro cycle of practice after completing the solitary post-session retreat. Next, after completing the accumulations included in the ngöndro, one enters into the Rigdzin Düpa Sadhana practice cycle. Finally, after extensively practicing this sadhana, one may have the opportunity to start the Dzogchen cycle of practice.

In July 2009, Rinpoche introduced an alternative to this sequence. Instead of doing the ngöndro and sadhana practices, one may continue to do the lojong as a main practice and a complete path; this could also be a way eventually to enter the Dzogchen cycle.

In order to make the right decision, all students are encouraged to start the lojong practice before starting ngöndro. After having done the lojong for some time, the student can then receive the ngöndro transmission at the *Words of My Perfect Teacher* program. With an understanding of what the ngöndro practice entails, the student should then decide whether to begin the ngöndro or to continue practicing lojong as the main practice.

It’s important to emphasize that this decision should be made before one starts the ngöndro practice. Once the ngöndro is started, it’s strongly encouraged to continue this practice all the way through. Otherwise, the habit of not finishing what we have started will have negative karmic effects both now and in the future. Of course, if one starts the ngöndro as a main practice, the lojong can easily be integrated into daily life.

Should one decide to do the lojong as one’s main heart practice, Rinpoche encourages that one study all available commentaries and material, and to sincerely do this as a main path. One can, of course, always start the ngöndro at a later date.

LOJONG MEDITATION OUTLINE

I. Opening Chants

- A. Recite the complete set of MSB Opening Daily Prayers.
- B. Contemplate the four immeasurables during this recitation.
- C. Recite the Heart Sutra

II. Lojong Meditation

- A. Contemplate the first slogan: *First, Train in the Preliminaries.*
- B. Contemplate each of the following absolute bodhicitta slogans:
 1. *Regard All Dharmas as Dreams*
 2. *Examine the Nature of Unborn Awareness*
 3. *Self-liberate Even the Antidote*
- C. Sessions practice
 1. Contemplate each instruction given in the Sessions teachings.
 2. Rest in the nature of mind.
 3. This is equivalent to meditating on the slogan:
Rest in the Nature of Alaya, the Essence
- D. Tonglen Practice
 1. *Sending and Taking Should Be Practiced Alternately.*
These Two Should Ride the Breath
- E. Read through the rest of the lojong slogans each session.

III. Dedication of Merit

- A. Conclude with the extensive dedication of merit from *The Way of the Bodhisattva* by Shantideva or with the following:

DEDICATION OF MERIT

By this merit, may all attain omniscience,
May it defeat the enemy, wrongdoing,
From the stormy waves of birth, old age, sickness and death,
From the ocean of samsara, may I free all beings.
(*recite once*)

Emulating the heroes Manjushri,
Samantabhadra and all those with knowledge,
I too make a perfect dedication
Of all actions that are positive.
(*recite three times*)

THE SEVEN POINTS OF MIND TRAINING

I. The Basis for the Practice of Bodhicitta

First, Train in the Preliminaries

II. Bodhicitta

Absolute Bodhicitta

Regard All Dharmas as Dreams
Examine the Nature of Unborn Awareness
Self-liberate Even the Antidote
Rest in the Nature of Alaya, the Essence
In Post-Meditation, Be a Child of Illusion

Relative Bodhicitta: Meditation

Sending and Taking Should Be Practiced Alternately. These Two Should Ride the Breath.

Relative Bodhicitta: Post-Meditation

Three Objects, Three Poisons, and Three Seeds of Virtue
In All Activities, Train With Slogans
Begin the Sequence of Sending and Taking With Yourself

III. Carrying Difficult Situations onto the Path of Enlightenment

When the World is Filled With Evil, Transform All Mishaps Into the Path of Bodhi

Relative

Drive All Blames Into One
Be Grateful to Everyone

Absolute

Seeing Confusion as the Four Kayas Is Unsurpassable Shunyata Protection

Special Practices

Four Practices Are the Best of Methods
Whatever You Meet Unexpectedly, Join With Meditation

IV. An Explanation of the Practices as a Way of Life

What to do during one's life

Practice the Five Strengths, the Condensed Heart Instructions.

What to do at death

The Mahayana Instruction for Ejection of Consciousness at Death Is the Five Strengths: How You Conduct Yourself Is Important

V. Standards of Proficiency in the Mind Training

All Dharma Agrees at One Point
Of the Two Witnesses, Hold the Principal One
Always Maintain Only a Joyful Mind
If You Can Practice Even When Distracted, You Are Well Trained

VI. Commitments of Mind Training

Always Abide by the Three Basic Principles
Change Your Attitude, but Remain Natural
Don't Talk About Injured Limbs
Don't Ponder Others
Work With the Greatest Defilements First
Abandon any Hope of Fruition
Abandon Poisonous Food
Don't be Loyal
Don't Malign Others
Don't Wait in Ambush
Don't Bring Things to a Painful Point
Don't Transfer the Ox's Load to the Cow
Don't Try to Be the Fastest
Don't Act with a Twist
Don't Make Gods into Demons
Don't Seek Others' Pain as the Limbs of Your Happiness

VII. Guidelines of the Mind Training

All Yoga Should Be Done With One Intention
Correct All Wrongs With One Intention
Two Activities: One at the Beginning, One at the End
Whichever of the Two Occurs, Be Patient
Observe These Two, Even at the Risk of Your Life
Train in the Three Difficulties
Take on the Three Principal Causes
Pay Heed That the Three Never Wane
Keep the Three Inseparable
Train Without Bias in All Areas. It Is Crucial to Do This Pervasively and Wholeheartedly
Always Meditate on Whatever Provokes Resentment
Don't Be Swayed by External Circumstances
This Time, Practice the Main Points
Don't Misinterpret
Don't Vacillate
Train Wholeheartedly
Liberate Yourself by Examining and Analyzing
Don't Think the World Owes You Something
Don't Be Oversensitive
Don't Be An Escapist
Don't Expect Applause

RESOURCES

Enlightened Courage: A Commentary on the Seven Points of Mind Training by H.H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche

The Great Path of Awakening: The Classic Guide to Lojong, a Tibetan Buddhist Practice for Cultivating the Heart of Compassion by Jamgon Kongtrul (Author), Ken McLeod (Translator)

Like a Diamond: Transformation in the Three Yanas by Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche.
Available online at <http://www.mangalashribhuti.org/html/book/palri.html>

Garbha - Recommended Teachings Set 2 by Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche (audio recording).
Available online at
http://www.mangalashribhuti.org/html/store/recordings_recommended2.html

2009 Nyingma Summer Seminar by Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche (audio recording).
Available online at
http://www.mangalashribhuti.org/html/store/recordings_recommended2.html

Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness by Chogyam Trungpa