

Lojong - The Seven Points of Mind Training

Mahayana proverbs of the path of awakening and in the cultivation of compassion

Point One: The preliminaries, which are the basis for dharma practice

Slogan 1. First, train in the preliminaries

Discussion 1. The preliminaries are refuge vow, precepts, dharma reminders, shamatha, and vipashyana, bodhicitta vow.

Point Two: The main practice, which is training in bodhicitta

Absolute Bodhicitta

Slogan 2. Regard all dharmas as dreams

Discussion 2. Although experiences may seem solid, they are passing memories.

Slogan 3. Examine the nature of unborn and unceasing awareness

Discussion 3. The nature of awareness does not come from somewhere, therefore it is unborn or beginningless. The nature of awareness does not go anywhere, therefore it is unceasing or endless. The nature of awareness is cognizance and emptiness. Cognizance is awake and aware. Emptiness is empty of concept and judgment.

Slogan 4. Self-liberate even the antidote

Discussion 4. Simply rest in awareness, don't try to make the present moment better.

Slogan 5. Rest in the nature of alaya, the basis of all

Discussion 5. Alaya refers to the ground of conscious awareness, awareness of the present moment.

Slogan 6. In post-meditation, be a child of illusion

Discussion 6. When not in formal meditation, continue to meditate and hold the view of the nature of unborn awareness.

Relative Bodhicitta

Slogan 7. Train unceasingly in bodhicitta, sending and taking should alternate with the breath.

Discussion 7. In meditation, practice any of the relative bodhicitta practices of tonglen, four immeasurables, deity practices, dedication of merit, etc. In post meditation, bring bodhicitta to all circumstances.

Slogan 8. Meditate on the three objects, eliminate the three poisons, cultivate the three roots of virtue.

Discussion 8. The three objects are friends, enemies and neutrals. The three poisons are craving, aversion and ignorance. The three roots of virtue are using the three poisons as medicine, each being a root. Using them as medicine is taking them as the path towards liberation by using them as reminders, practicing bodhicitta, examining their nature, and resting in the nature of mind.

Slogan 9. In all activities, train with slogans.

Discussion 9. Bring the training of Lojong to all activities.

Slogan 10. Begin the practice with yourself.

Discussion 10. Bodhicitta is practiced starting with oneself. This may be too hard for beginners and in that case start with someone for whom it is easy to feel love and care.

Point Three: Bringing Suffering to the Path

Slogan 11. When encountering obstacles, transform all mishaps into the path of bodhi.

Discussion 11. Bring mindfulness, awareness, and dharma to all things, especially obstacles.

Slogan 12. Drive all blames into one.

Discussion 12. Look to your body, speech, and mind for the cause of your unhappiness, not the “outside world” or others. Change your focus from an outside focus of your mind to an interior focus. Don’t focus on others faults, only look at your own.

Slogan 13. Be grateful to everyone.

Discussion 13. See all phenomena and all others as providing the opportunity to wake up.

Slogan 14. Seeing confusion as The Four Kayas is unsurpassable shunyata protection.

Discussion 14. The Four Kayas are Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya, Svabhavikakaya. Thoughts have no birthplace, thoughts are unceasing, thoughts are not solid, and these three characteristics are interconnected. Shunyata can be described as “complete openness.”

Slogan 15. The four practices are the best of methods.

Discussion 15. The four practices are: aversion, revulsion, transformation, and self-liberation.

Slogan 16. Immediately join whatever you meet with meditation.

Discussion 16. Bring the view and practice of meditation to everything, especially the unexpected.

Point Four: Manifesting the Result of Practice in One’s Whole Life

Slogan 17. Practice The Five Strengths, the condensed heart instructions.

Discussion 17. The Five Strengths are: strong determination, familiarization, rely on the dharma, coach and follow the instructions, and aspiration.

Slogan 18. The Mahayana instruction for ejection of consciousness at death is The Five Strengths

Discussion 18. When you are dying, practice The Five Strengths.

Point Five: Evaluation of Mind Training

Slogan 19. All dharma agrees at one point.

Discussion 19. All Buddhist teachings are about moving beyond the ego and self-absorption, and therefore seeing things as they are.

Slogan 20. Of the two witnesses, hold the principal one.

Discussion 20. You know yourself better than anyone else knows you. Trust your intelligence.

Slogan 21. Always maintain only a joyful mind.

Discussion 21. A Joyful mind is a mind that thinks of others first.

Slogan 22. If you can practice even when distracted, you are well trained.

Discussion 22. If you can maintain mindfulness even when thoughts, emotions, and perceptions arise, you are well trained.

Point Six: Disciplines of Mind Training

Slogan 23. Always abide by The Three Basic Principles.

Discussion 23. Dedication to your practice, refraining from unhelpful conduct, developing patience.

Slogan 24. Change your attitude, but remain natural.

Discussion 24. You don’t have to become someone else, but you do need to work with reducing the afflictive states that define the ego. We are not changing our personality, just our attitude and view.

Slogan 25. Don’t talk about other’s defects.

Discussion 25. When you notice others' failings, don’t discuss it.

Slogan 26. Don’t think about the affairs of others.

Discussion 26. Mind your own business, do not constantly monitor other’s behavior.

- Slogan 27. Work with the greatest obstacles first.
Discussion 27. Take on the most glaring problems or afflicted emotions first, then tackle lesser issues.
- Slogan 28. Abandon any hope of fruition.
Discussion 28. The path is the goal. If you take enlightenment as the goal you will keep enlightenment at a distance.
- Slogan 29. Abandon poisonous food and drink.
Discussion 29. Don't make food or drink into kleshas through pickiness, gluttony, and addictions. Also, avoid foods and drinks that take away from virtue. Literally, avoid foods that are poisonous/will make you sick.
- Slogan 30. Don't be so predictable/petty.
Discussion 30. Don't hold grudges.
- Slogan 31. Don't malign others.
Discussion 31. Don't talk ill of others.
- Slogan 32. Don't wait in ambush.
Discussion 32. Don't wait for others' weaknesses/defects to show to attack them.
- Slogan 33. Don't bring things to a painful point.
Discussion 33. Don't humiliate others.
- Slogan 34. Don't transfer the ox's load to the cow.
Discussion 34. Take responsibility for yourself. Don't have expectations or give someone a task they are not able to do.
- Slogan 35. Don't compete with others
Discussion 35. Keep your focus on you, not competing or comparing.
- Slogan 36. Don't act with a twist.
Discussion 36. Do good deeds without scheming about benefiting yourself.
- Slogan 37. Don't turn gods into demons
Discussion 37. When good things do happen, don't allow your ego to become bloated with pride.
- Slogan 38. Don't seek others' pain as the limbs of your own happiness.
Discussion 38. Don't take pleasure in others' misfortune.

Point Seven: Guidelines of Mind Training

- Slogan 39. All activities should be done with one intention.
Discussion 39. One intention is to be of benefit to all beings.
- Slogan 40. Correct all wrongs with one intention.
Discussion 40. Bring the view of being of benefit to all beings to any obstacles you encounter so that you expand your compassion to others.
- Slogan 41. Two activities: one at the beginning, one at the end.
Discussion 41. Set an intention/aspire to help others/accomplish meditation in the morning and at night, review what you did that day and rejoice in any accomplishments.
- Slogan 42. Whichever of the two occurs, be patient.
Discussion 42. No matter what occurs, bring mindfulness, gentleness and patience to it.
- Slogan 43. Observe these two, even at the risk of your life.
Discussion 43. These two refers to Refuge vows and Bodhisattva vows.
- Slogan 44. Train in The Three Difficulties.
Discussion 44. Recognize klesha as klesha, don't act from the klesha but from virtue, make this the practice of your life.

- Slogan 45. Take on The Three Principal Causes.
Discussion 45. The three are: the teacher/buddha, the dharma/awakened mind, the sangha/circumstances.
- Slogan 46. Pay heed that The Three Never Wane.
Discussion 46. The three are: gratitude towards one's teacher, appreciation of the dharma and correct conduct.
- Slogan 47. Keep the three inseparable
Discussion 47. Body, speech, and mind. Actions, words, and thoughts should be inseparable from mind training.
- Slogan 48. Train without bias in all areas.
Discussion 48. Include everyone and everything in your practice.
- Slogan 49. Always meditate on whatever provokes resentment.
Discussion 49. Do loving-kindness for yourself and the other(s) when you feel resentment
- Slogan 50. Don't be swayed by external circumstances.
Discussion 50. No matter the external circumstance, practice loving-kindness.
- Slogan 51. This time, practice the main points
Discussion 51. Main points are: others before self, dharma, and awakening compassion.
- Slogan 52. Don't misinterpret.
Discussion 52. The 6 things you may misinterpret are patience, yearning, excitement, compassion, priorities and joy. You patient when you'll get your way, but not when it's difficult. You yearn for worldly things, instead of an open heart and mind. You get excited about wealth and entertainment, instead of your potential for enlightenment. You have compassion for those you like, but none for those you don't. Worldly gain is your priority rather than cultivating loving-kindness and compassion. You feel joy when your enemies suffer, and do not rejoice in others' good fortune.
- Slogan 53. Don't vacillate.
Discussion 53. Dedicate yourself to practice.
- Slogan 54. Train wholeheartedly.
Discussion 54. Train enthusiastically.
- Slogan 55. Liberate yourself by investigating and examining.
Discussion 55. Know your own mind with honesty and fearlessness. Know what to accept and what to reject.
- Slogan 56. Don't wallow in self-pity.
Discussion 56. Self-pity is just another ego strategy.
- Slogan 57. Don't be impulsive with anger and irritation.
Discussion 57. Work with small jealousies, it will make working with large ones easier.
- Slogan 58. Don't be an open book.
Discussion 58. We don't need to show everyone else what we think or feel.
- Slogan 59. Don't expect applause.
Discussion 59. Don't do good deeds for the outcome, do them regardless of the outcome.
- Slogan 60. Don't be frivolous.
Discussion 60. Don't waste time, you don't know how long you have.