

THE SEVEN POINT MIND TRAINING

By Geshe Chekawa

*Extracted from the text: Mind Training Like the Rays of the Sun
with outlines added from Pabongka Rinpoche's edition*

Homage to great compassion.
The essence of this nectar of secret instruction
Is transmitted from the master from Sumatra.

REVEALING THE FEATURES OF THE DOCTRINE TO ENGENDER RESPECT FOR THE INSTRUCTION

You should understand the significance of this instruction
As like a diamond, the sun and a medicinal tree.
This time of the five degenerations will then be transformed
Into the path to the fully awakened state.

THE ACTUAL INSTRUCTION FOR GUIDING THE DISCIPLE IS GIVEN IN SEVEN POINTS

1. Explaining the preliminaries as a basis for the practice

First, train in the preliminaries. *[This involves (1) contemplating the significance and rarity of life as a free and fortunate human being, (2) contemplating impermanence and death, (3) thinking about the causes and results of actions, and (4) thinking about the vicious nature of cyclic existence.]*

2. The actual practice, training in the awakening mind ***a. How to train in the ultimate awakening mind*** ***b. How to train in the conventional awakening mind***

[According to most of the older records, the training in the ultimate awakening mind is dealt with first. However, according to our own tradition, following the gentle protector Tsong-kha-pa, as contained in such works as the Mind Training Like the Rays of the Sun, Ornament for Lobsang's Thought, Essence of Nectar, and Ke'utsang's Root Words, the order is reversed for special reasons.]

a. Training in the conventional awakening mind

Banish the one to blame for everything.
Meditate on the great kindness of all beings.
Practise a combination of giving and taking.
Giving and taking should be practised alternately
And you should begin by taking from yourself.
These two should be made to ride on the breath.

Concerning the three objects, three poisons, and three virtues,
The instruction to be followed, in brief,
Is to take these words to heart in all activities.

3. Transforming adverse circumstances into the path to enlightenment

When the environment and its inhabitants overflow with unwholesomeness,
Transform adverse circumstances into the path to enlightenment.
Apply meditation immediately at every opportunity.
The supreme method is accompanied by the four practices.

4. The integrated practice of a single lifetime

Train in the five powers.
The five powers themselves are the great vehicle's
Precept on the transference of consciousness.
Cultivate these paths of practice.

5. The measure of having trained the mind

Integrate all the teachings into one thought.
Primary importance should be given to the two witnesses.
Constantly cultivate only a peaceful mind.
The measure of a trained mind is that it has turned away.
There are five great marks of a trained mind.
The trained (mind) retains control even when distracted.

6. The commitments of mind training

1. Always train in the three general points
2. Engage vigorously in forceful cultivation and abandonment
3. Subjugate all the reasons (for selfishness)
4. Train consistently to deal with difficult situations
5. Don't rely on other conditions
6. Transform your attitude, but maintain your natural behaviour
7. Don't speak of (others') incomplete qualities
8. Don't concern yourself with others' business
9. Give up every hope of reward
10. Avoid poisonous food
11. Don't maintain inverted loyalty
12. Don't make malicious banter
13. Don't wait in ambush
14. Don't strike at the vital point
15. Don't place the load of a horse on a pony
16. Don't sprint to win the race
17. Don't turn gods into devils
18. Don't seek others' misery as a means to happiness.

7. The precepts of mind training

1. Every yoga should be performed as one
2. There are two activities at both beginning and end
3. Train first in the easier practices
4. Whichever occurs be patient with both
5. Guard both at the cost of your life
6. Train in the three difficulties
7. Transform everything into the great vehicle path
8. Value an encompassing and for reaching practice
9. Seek for the three principal causes
10. Purify the coarse ones first
11. Practice that which is more effective
12. Don't let three factors weaken
13. Never be parted from the three possessions
14. If you relapse, mediate on it as the antidote
15. Engage in the principal practices right now,
16. In future, always put on armor.
17. Don't apply a wrong understanding
18. Don't be sporadic
19. Practice unflinchingly
20. Release investigation and analysis
21. Don't be boastful
22. Don't be short-tempered
23. Don't make a short-lived attempt
24. Don't expect gratitude.

b. Training in the ultimate awakening mind

When stability has been attained, impart the secret teaching:
Consider all phenomena as like dreams.
Examine the nature of unborn awareness.
The remedy itself is released in its own place.
Place the essence of the path on the nature of the basis of all.

In between meditation sessions be a creator of illusions.

This is concluded with a quotation from Geshey Che-ka-wa, who had experience of the awakening mind:

My manifold aspirations have given rise
To humiliating criticism and suffering,
But, having received instructions for taming the misconception of self,
Even if I have to die, I have no regrets.

From Mind Training Like the Rays of the Sun (Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala, India, 1992).