

## The Seven Points of Mind Training: A Mahayana Instruction

### **The Preliminaries**

First, train in the preliminaries.

### **The Main Practice**

*Once stability is reached, teach the secret.*

Train in the two—giving and taking—alternately.

These two are to be mounted on the breath.

Begin the process of taking with yourself.

*The instruction for periods between meditation is, in brief:*

Three objects, three poisons and three roots of virtue.

In all activities, train by applying slogans.

Consider all things and events as dreamlike.

Examine the nature of unborn awareness.

Let even the antidote be freed in its own place.

Rest in the ālaya, the essence *of the path*.

*The seven and their processes are conceptual, so forsake them.*

Between sessions, be a conjurer of illusions.

### **Transforming Adversity into the Path of Enlightenment**

When all the world is *overrun*<sup>[1]</sup> with evil,

Transform adversity into the path of enlightenment.

Drive all blames into one.

Meditate on the great kindness of all.

Meditating on delusory perceptions as the four kāyas

Is the unsurpassable śūnyatā protection.

The fourfold practice is the best of methods.

Whatever you encounter, apply the practice.

*When the two are complete, take on all.  
Transform the unfavourable into supports for meditation.  
First address whatever is most prominent.*

### **Applying the Practice throughout the Whole of Life**

The essence of the instruction, briefly stated,  
Is to apply yourself to the five strengths.  
The mahāyāna advice for transference  
Involves the same five strengths. Conduct is important.<sup>[2]</sup>

### **The Measure of Mind Training**

*The measure of the training is in turning away.  
A sign of proficiency is to have five greatnesses.  
All teachings share a single objective.<sup>[3]</sup>  
Of the two witnesses, rely upon the principal one.  
Always maintain only a joyful attitude.  
If this can be done even when distracted, you are proficient.*

### **The Commitments of Mind Training**

Train constantly in three basic principles.  
Change your attitude, but remain natural.  
Don't speak of injured limbs.  
Don't ponder others' flaws.  
Train first with the strongest destructive emotions.  
Abandon any expectations of results.  
Give up poisonous food.  
Don't be so loyal to the cause.  
Don't lash out in retaliation.  
Don't lie in ambush.

Don't strike a vulnerable point.  
Don't transfer the ox's burden to the cow.  
Don't be competitive.  
Don't misperform the rites.  
Don't reduce gods to demons.  
Don't seek others' misery as crutches of your own happiness.

### **The Precepts of Mind Training**

Do everything with a single intention.  
Counter all adversity with a single remedy.  
Two tasks: one at the beginning and one at the end.  
Whichever of the two occurs, be patient.  
Keep the two, even at your life's expense.  
Train in the three difficulties.  
Acquire the three main provisions.  
Cultivate the three that must not decline.  
Keep the three from which you must not separate.  
Apply the training impartially to all.  
It is vital that it be deep and all-pervasive.  
Meditate constantly on those who've been set apart.<sup>[4]</sup>  
Don't be dependent on external conditions.  
This time, practise what's most important.  
Don't misunderstand.  
Don't be inconsistent.  
Train wholeheartedly.  
Gain freedom through discernment and analysis.  
Don't be boastful.<sup>[5]</sup>  
Don't be irritable.  
Don't be temperamental.  
Don't seek acknowledgement.

*The essence of the nectar-like instructions for transforming into the path of awakening the five prevalent signs of degeneration was passed down from the one from Golden Isle. When karmic seeds left over from former trainings were aroused in me, I felt great interest, and so, without regard for suffering or disparagement, I sought instructions on subduing ego-clinging. Now, even in death, I will have no regrets.*

According to [Thupten Jinpa](#), the translator and editor of *Mind Training—The Great Collection* (see 'Introduction', pages 11-12), the most well-known commentaries from Tibetan teachers on the *Seven Points of Mind Training* are:

[Sechilphuwa Özer Shyönnu](#)'s (twelfth century) commentary compiled from [Geshe Chekawa](#)'s own lectures

[Gyalsé Tokmé Zangpo](#)'s (fourteenth century) commentary

1. Shonu Gyalchok's (fourteenth century) *Compendium of All Well-Uttered Insights*

[Müchen Könchok Gyaltzen](#)'s (fifteenth century) *Supplement to Oral Transmission*

1. Radrengpa's (fifteenth century) *Stream of the Awakening Mind*

2. Hortön Namkha Pel's (fifteenth century) *Mind Training: Rays of the Sun*

The First Dalai Lama [Gendün Drup](#)'s (fifteenth century) *Lucid and Succinct Guide to Mind training*

1. Khedrup Sangye Yeshe's (sixteenth century) *How to Integrate into One's Mind the Well-Known Seven-Point Mind Training*

2. Kalden Gyatso's (seventeenth century) *Dispelling the Darkness of Mind*

3. Yongzin Yeshe Gyaltzen's (eighteenth century) *Essence of Ambrosia*

[Ngulchu Dharmabhadra](#)'s (eighteenth century) *Heart Jewel of the Bodhisattvas*

[Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo](#)'s (nineteenth century) *Seeds of Benefit and Well-Being*

[only commentaries #1 and 4 appear in *The Great Collection* anthology]