



4

**THE SEVEN POINT PRACTICE FOR
DEVELOPING A GOOD HEART** (*Lojong*)

PRACTICE





THE ASIAN CLASSICS

INSTITUTE

Thank you for your interest in the Asian Classics Institute's Daily Practice Topics. The text and audio may be downloaded (see www.world-view.org in the on-line teachings section), or ordered by mail (see the Courses by mail section of the web site).

This Daily *Lojong* Practice consists of the audio recorded from two original retreats, along with corresponding written materials. This topic was covered twice, each time with a different emphasis, and both versions have been provided. The version from Goa, India has seven sessions, and the version from Ireland has eight sessions.

The audio can be ordered by mail, listened to on-line as streaming Real Audio, or downloaded onto your computer in MP3 or RA formats for playback later. The written materials for this topic are contained in six on-line files which can be downloaded, printed and assembled into a three-ring binder.

A complete binder contains the following sections in this order: a binder cover and spine, readings, homework, quizzes, and answer keys. For ease of binder assembly, be sure to print the files on three hole paper.

After listening to the audio from a session the corresponding reading, homework, quiz and meditation should be completed before continuing on to the next session. The homework can be completed using notes, open book style. The quizzes should be completed from memory only, without the aid of notes or other materials. (A good approach is to look at an answer key *after* you have finished that homework, and to use that answer key to study for that quiz.)

Answer keys are supplied so that you may check your homework and quiz answers. All of the quiz and final exam questions come from the homework, so the homework answer keys are also used to grade the quizzes.

Daily practice topics are not graded by the Asian Classics Institute. Please do not mail in any of the papers to be graded.

We would like to emphasize that, although recordings and written materials can be extremely helpful, it is essential for serious Buddhist practitioners to meet and study directly with a qualified Teacher who can give the necessary guidance and personal instructions of the lineage.

In these teachings the wisdom of Enlightened Beings has been passed down in an unbroken lineage to you. May you take these teachings and put them into practice in your life to benefit all. May every goodness grow and spread in all directions right now!

༄༅། །མཇུག། །

mandel

།ས་གཞི་སྔོས་ཀྱིས་བྱུགས་ཤིང་མི་ཏོག་བཟམ།

sashi pukyi jukshing metok tram,

།རི་རབ་སྤིང་བཞི་ཉི་ལྷས་བརྒྱན་པ་འདི།

rirab lingshi nyinde gyenpa di,

།སངས་རྒྱས་ཞིང་དུ་དམིགས་ཏེ་དབུལ་བར་བགྱི།

sangye shingdu mikte ulwar gyi,

།འབྲོ་ཀུན་རྣམ་དག་ཞིང་ལ་སྦྱོད་པར་ཤོག །།

drokun namdak shingla chupar shok.

།ཨི་དྲི་གུ་རུ་རྩ་མཇུག་ལ་ཀེ་རྩུ་ཏ་ཡ་མི། །

Idam guru ratna mandalakam niryatayami.

Offering the Mandala

Here is the great Earth,
Filled with the smell of incense,
Covered with a blanket of flowers,

The Great Mountain,
The Four Continents,
Wearing a jewel
Of the Sun, and Moon.

In my mind I make them
The Paradise of a Buddha,
And offer it all to You.

By this deed
May every living being
Experience
The Pure World.

Idam guru ratna mandalakam niryatayami.

༄༅། །སྐབས་འགྲོ་སེམས་བསྐྱེད། །
kyabdro semkye

།སངས་རྒྱས་ཚེས་དང་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་མཚོག་རྣམས་ལ།
sangye chudang tsokyi choknam la,

།བྱང་རྒྱལ་བར་དུ་བདག་ནི་སྐབས་སུ་མཆིས།
jangchub bardu dakni kyabsu chi,

།བདག་གིས་སྤྱིན་སོགས་བགྱིས་པའི་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱིས།
dakki jinsok gyipay sunam kyi,

།འགྲོ་ལ་ཕན་ཕྱིར་སངས་རྒྱས་འགྲུབ་པར་ཤོག །།
drola penchir sangye druppar shok.

Refuge and The Wish

I go for refuge
To the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha
Until I achieve enlightenment.

By the power
Of the goodness that I do
In giving and the rest,

May I reach Buddhahood
For the sake
Of every living being.

༄༅། །བཟླ་བ། །

ngowa

།དགེ་བ་འདི་ཡིས་སྐྱེ་བོ་ཀུན།

gewa diyi kyewo kun,

།བསོད་ནམས་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཚོགས་ཚྲིགས་ཤིང་།

sunam yeshe tsok-dzok shing,

།བསོད་ནམས་ཡེ་ཤེས་ལས་བྱུང་བའི།

sunam yeshe lejung way,

།དམ་པ་སྐྱུ་གཉིས་འཕྲོ་པར་ཤོག །།

dampa kunyi topar shok.

Dedication of the Goodness of a Deed

By the goodness
Of what I have just done
May all beings

Complete the collection
Of merit and wisdom,

And thus gain the two
Ultimate bodies
That merit and wisdom make.

ལྷོ། །མཚོད་པ། །
chupa

།སྟོན་པ་སླ་མེད་སངས་རྒྱས་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།
tonpa lame sanggye rinpoche,

།སྐྱོབ་པ་སླ་མེད་དམ་ཚེས་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།
kyoppa lame damchu rinpoche,

།འབྲེན་པ་སླ་མེད་དགོ་འདུན་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།
drenpa lame gendun rinpoche,

།སྐྱབས་གནས་དཀོན་མཚོག་གསུམ་ལ་མཚོད་པ་འབུལ།
kyabne konchok sumla chupa bul.

A Buddhist Grace

I offer this
To the Teacher
Higher than any other,
The precious Buddha.

I offer this
To the protection
Higher than any other,
The precious Dharma.

I offer this
To the guides
Higher than any other,
The precious Sangha.

I offer this
To the places of refuge,
To the Three Jewels,
Rare and supreme.



The Asian Classics Institute
Practice IV: The Seven Point Practice for Developing
a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Course Syllabus

The readings for this course are taken from the text entitled "*The Seven-Step Practice for Developing a Good Heart, Advices for Training Oneself in the Greater Way*, which were first written down by the great Tibetan master Geshe Chekawa who lived from 1101 to 1175.

Reading One

Part One: Instructions on the foundation Dharma, the preliminary practices

Reading Two

Part Two: The actual practice for developing the Wish for Enlightenment

Reading Three

Part Three: Learning to use problems as a path to Enlightenment

Reading Four

Part Four: A summary of an entire lifetime's practice

Reading Five

Part Five: The point at which one can say that he or she has successfully developed the good heart

Part Six: Pledges to keep for developing the good heart

Reading Six

Part Seven: Certain advices on developing the good heart

The Asian Classics Institute
Practice IV: The Seven Point Practice for Developing
a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Reading One

། ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་གདམས་ངག་
སློབ་སྦྱོང་དོན་བདུན་མའི་རྩ་བ་བཞུགས་སོ།

Herein Lies the Root Text of
"The Seven-Step Practice for Developing a Good Heart,"
Advices for Training Oneself in the Greater Way

The following version of the Seven-Step Practice for Developing a Good Heart was excerpted from a "short woodblock" (dpe-thung) format edition, including the text of Lord Atisha's Lamp for the Path, in the possession of Sermey Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin. The text is quite old and had a number of apparent problems; the following version has been compiled using several other editions for comparison.

།ཨོ་ལུ་སྟེ།

Om svasti!

Om! May there be goodness!

ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་གདམས་ངག་སློབ་སྦྱོང་གི་སྐོར་ལ། །འབྲིང་རྩལ་མི་འདྲ་བ་དུ་མ་ཡོད་ཀྱང་། དག་
བའི་བཤེས་གཉེན་འཆད་ཁ་བའི་ལུགས་ཀྱིས་དོན་བདུན་དུ་མཛད་དེ། སྟོན་འགོ་ཉིན་གྱི་ཚེས་བསྟན་
པ། དངོས་གཞི་བྱང་རྒྱུ་གྱི་སེམས་སྦྱོང་བ། རྒྱུན་ངན་བྱང་རྒྱུ་གྱི་ལམ་དུ་བྱེད་བ། །ཚོ་གཅིག་
གི་ཉམས་ལེན་དེལ་ནས་བསྟན་པ། །སློབ་སྦྱོང་ས་པའི་ཚད། །སློབ་སྦྱོང་གི་དམ་ཚིག་ །སློབ་སྦྱོང་གི་

Practice IV: *Lojong*
Reading One

བསྐྱབ་བྱ་དང་བདུན་གྱི།

Now there are a great many ways of teaching those advices for training oneself in the greater way—the *lojong*, or instructions for developing the good heart. In the tradition of the spiritual friend, the geshe, Chekawa, these instructions are organized into a seven-part practice. These seven are:

- 1) Instructions on the foundation Dharma, the preliminary practices;
- 2) The actual practice for developing the Wish for Enlightenment;
- 3) Learning to use problems as a path to Enlightenment;
- 4) A summary of an entire lifetime's practice;
- 5) The point at which one can say that he or she has successfully developed the good heart;
- 6) Pledges to keep for developing the good heart; and
- 7) Certain advices on developing the good heart.

Part One:
Instructions on the Foundation Dharma,
The Preliminary Practices

དང་པོ་ནི། དང་པོ་སྡོན་འགྲོ་དག་ལ་བསྐྱབ། ཅེས་གསུངས་ཏེ། དེ་ལ་གསུམ། དལ་
འགྲུབ་རྗེད་དཀའ། འཆི་བ་མི་ཏྲག་པ། འཁོར་བའི་ཉེས་དམིགས་བསྐྱོམ་པའོ།

The first of these is expressed in the following line of the root text:

Train yourself first in the preliminaries.

These preliminaries come in three parts: meditating on your spiritual opportunities and fortunes, and considering how difficult it is to obtain them; meditating upon your own death, the fact that you are impermanent; and meditating upon the problems of this vicious circle of suffering.

The Asian Classics Institute
Practice IV: The Seven Point Practice for Developing
a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Reading Two

Part Two:
The Actual Practice for Developing
The Wish for Enlightenment (Bodhichitta)

གཉིས་པ་དངོས་གཞི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་གྱི་སེམས་སྦྱོང་བ་ལ་གཉིས། རོན་དམ་དང་། ཀུན་རྫོབ་པོ། །དང་
པོ་ལ་གསུམ། སྦྱོར་བ། དངོས་གཞི། རྗེས་སོ། དང་པོ་ནི། སྐབས་སེམས། གསོལ་གདབ།
ཡན་ལག་བདུན་པ་འབྲུལ། ལུས་བསྐྱེད་། དབུགས་ཉེར་གཅིག་ཏུ་མ་འབྲུགས་པར་བགྱངས།

The second part, on the actual practice for developing the Wish for Enlightenment, has two steps of its own: developing the ultimate Wish, and developing the apparent Wish. There are three sections within the first of these steps: the preparation, the actual practice, and the conclusion. For the preparation, you should do the following: bring to mind thoughts of taking refuge; make supplications; offer the various steps of the seven-part practice; take your meditation position with your body carefully straightened up; and then count your breaths up to 21, without losing track at all.

གཉིས་པ་ནི། ཚེས་རྣམས་མི་ལམ་ལྟ་བུར་བསམ། །མ་སྐྱེས་རིག་པའི་གཤེས་
ལ་དཔྱད། །གཉིན་པོ་ཉིད་ཀྱང་རང་སར་གྲོལ། །ངོ་བོ་ཀུན་གཞིའི་ངང་དུ་
བཞག །

Practice IV: *Lojong*
Reading Two

The second step, the actual practice, is found in the following lines of the root text:

**Learn to see all things as a dream;
Examine the nature of the mind, unborn.
The antidote itself is gone to is;
Let it go in the essence, source of all things.**

གསུམ་པ་ནི། བྱམ་མཚམས་སྐྱེ་མའི་སྐྱེས་བུར་བྱ།

The third step, the conclusion, is expressed in the next line of the root text:

Inbetween sessions, be a figment of the imagination.

གཉིས་པ་ཀུན་ཚེས་བྱང་རྒྱུ་སེམས་བསྐྱེམ་པ་ལ་གཉིས། མཉམ་བཞག་དང་། རྗེས་ཐོབ་བོ།
།དང་པོ་ནི། གཏོང་ལེན་གཉིས་པོ་སྤེལ་མར་སྤྱང་། །དེ་གཉིས་རྒྱུང་ལ་བསྐྱེན་
པར་བྱ།

The second more general step, meditating on the apparent Wish for Enlightenment, has two sections: deep meditation, and the period after this. Here is the first:

**Practice giving and taking, alternately;
Let the two ride on the wind.**

གཉིས་པ་ནི། །ཡུལ་གསུམ་དུག་གསུམ་དགོ་ཚ་གསུམ། །སྤྱོད་ལམ་ཀུན་ཏུ་
ཚོག་གིས་སྤྱང་། །ལེན་པའི་གོ་རིམ་རང་ནས་བརྩམ།

And here is the second:

**Three objects, three poisons, three stores of virtue.
Practice throughout the day, in words.
The order of taking's to start with yourself.**

The Asian Classics Institute
Practice IV: The Seven Point Practice for Developing
a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Reading Three

Part Three:
Learning to Use Problems
as a Path to Enlightenment

གསུམ་པ་རྒྱུན་ངན་བྱང་རྒྱུ་ལམ་དུ་བསྐྱར་བ་ནི། །སྣོད་བཅུད་སྤྲིག་པས་གང་བའི་ཚོ།
རྒྱུན་ངན་བྱང་རྒྱུ་ལམ་དུ་བསྐྱར། །ཞེས་གསུངས་ཏེ།

The third main part, learning to use problems as a path to Enlightenment, is found in the following lines of the root text:

**When the world and those in it are full of bad deeds,
Learn to use problems as a path to Enlightenment.**

འདི་ལ་གཉིས། བསམ་པ་དང་། སྣོད་བཅུད། དང་པོ་ལ་གཉིས། ཀུན་རྫོབ་དང་། དོན་དམ་མོ།
།དང་པོ་ནི། ལེ་ལན་ཐམས་ཅད་གཅིག་ལ་བདེ། །ཀུན་ལ་བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེ་བར་
བསྐྱོམ།

Here there are two different steps: how to think, and how to act. The first has two sections of its own: the apparent and the ultimate. Here is the first:

**The blame all belongs to only one person.
Practice seeing them all full of kindness.**

Practice IV: *Lojong*
Reading Three

གཉིས་པ་ནི། འབྲུལ་སྤང་སྐྱབ་བཞིར་བསྐྱོམ་པ་ཡི། ལྷོང་ཉིད་སྤང་བ་སྐྱེན་མེད།

Here is the second:

**See the deception as being four bodies;
Emptiness is the matchless protector.**

།གཉིས་པ་སྐྱོར་བས་སྤང་བ་ནི། །སྐྱོར་བ་བཞི་ལྡན་ཐབས་ཀྱི་ཚོགས་བསགས། སྤྲིག་པ་
སྤང་། གདོན་ལ་མཚོད། ཚོས་སྐྱོང་མཚོད་པ། མཚན། མཚོག། །འབྲུལ་ལ་གང་ཐུག་
བསྐྱོམ་དུ་སྤང་།

Next is the step on how to practice in your actions:

**The four acts are the supreme method.
On the spot, turn all that happens to practice.**

Note by the Tibetan commentator: These four are accumulating masses of good karma; cleaning oneself of bad karma; making offerings to harmful spirits; and making offerings to protectors of the Dharma.

The Asian Classics Institute
Practice IV: The Seven Point Practice for Developing
a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Reading Four

Part Four:
A Summary of an Entire Lifetime's Practice

བཞི་པ་ཚེ་གཅིག་ཉམས་ལེན་དེ་ལ་ནས་བསྐྱེད་པ་ནི། མན་ངག་སྣེང་པོ་མདོར་བསྡུས་པ།
སྣོབས་ལྷ་འཕམ་པའི། གོམས་པའི། དཀར་པོ་ས་བོན་གྱི། ལུན་འབྱེན་པའི། སྣོན་ལམ་གྱི།
མཚན། དག་དང་སྐྱར་བར་བྱ། ཐེག་ཆེན་འཕྲོ་བའི་གདམས་ངག་ནི། སྣོབས་
ལྷ་ཉིད་ཡིན་སྣོད་ལམ་གཅེས།

The brief essentials of the instruction
Are combined within five powers.
In the great way these same five are the advices
For sending your mind; cherish the act.

Note by the Tibetan commentator: The five powers are those of resolutions for the future; of accustoming yourself; of pure white seeds; of destruction; and of prayer.

The Asian Classics Institute
Practice IV: The Seven Point Practice for Developing
a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Reading Five

Part Five:
The Point at Which One Can Say
That He or She has Successfully Developed the Good Heart

ལྷ་པ་འབྲུངས་པའི་ཚད་བསྟན་པ་ནི། །ཚོས་ཀུན་དགོངས་པ་གཅིག་ཏུ་འདུས། །རང་བཞིན་
གྱི་དཔང་པོ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་གཙོ་བོ་བཟུང་། །ཡིད་བདེ་འབའ་ཞིག་རྒྱན་དུ་བསྟེན། །ཡིངས་
ཀྱངས་སྐབ་ན་འབྲོངས་པ་ཡིན།

All Dharma comes down to a single point.
There are two judges; keep the main one.
Be joy alone, in an unbroken stream.
It's there when you can keep it unthinking.

Note by the Tibetan commentator: The two judges here are yourself and others.
[Reading *rang gzhan* for *rang bzhin*.]

Part Six:
Pledges to Keep for Developing the Good Heart

དུག་པ་སློབྱོང་གི་དམ་ཚིག་བསྟན་པ་ནི། །སྤྱི་དོན་གསུམ་ཁས་སྲུང་དང་མ་འགལ་བ། མེ་ཚོར་
མ་སོང་བ། རྩོགས་རིར་མ་ལྷུང་བ་སྟེ། མཆོན། ལ་ཏྟག་ཏུ་བསྐྱབ། འདུན་པ་བསྐྱར་ལ་

རང་སོར་བཞག། །ཡན་ལག་ཉམས་པ་བཟོད་མི་བྱ། །གཞན་ཕྱོགས་གང་ཡང་
མི་བསམ་མོ། །ཉོན་མོངས་གང་ཆེ་སོང་ལ་སྤང། །འབྲས་བུ་རི་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་
སྤང། །དུག་ཅན་གི་ཟས་སྤང། །གཞུང་བཟང་པོ་མ་བསྟེན། །ཤག་ངན་མ་
ཚོད། །འཕྲང་མ་བསྐྱབ། །གནད་ལ་མི་དབབ། །མཛོ་ཁལ་སྤང་ལ་མི་འགྲོ།
།མགྲོགས་ཀྱི་ཕྱི་མི་གཏོད། །གཏོ་ལོག་མི་བྱ། །ལྷ་བདུད་དུ་མི་དབབ། །སྤྱིད་ཀྱི་
ཡན་ལག་དུ་སྤྱུག་མ་ཚོལ།

- Keep to the three laws.
- Change your mind and stay the same.
- Speak not of what was broken.
- Never worry about what they're doing.
- Rid yourself of the biggest affliction first.
- Never hope for any reward.
- Stop eating poison food.
- Don't let the stream flow smooth.
- Forget repaying criticism.
- Give up laying ambushes.
- No going for the jugular.
- Load your own truck, no passing the buck.
- Don't get fixed on speed.
- Don't feed the wrong face.
- Don't turn the sweet angel to a devil.
- Don't look for crap to make yourself happy.

Note by the Tibetan commentator: The three laws are never acting in a way that contradicts what you have committed yourself to; never placing yourself in a dangerous situation; and never falling into the habit of discriminating between others.

The Asian Classics Institute
Practice IV: The Seven Point Practice for Developing
a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Reading Six

Part Seven:
Certain Advices on Developing the Good Heart

བདུན་པ་སློ་སློང་གི་བསྐྱབ་བྱ་བ་སྟུན་པ་ནི། རྣལ་འབྱོར་ཐམས་ཅད་གཅིག་གིས་བྱ།
ལོ་ག་གཞོན་ཐམས་ཅད་གཅིག་གིས་བྱ།

Do all the practices with but one.
Let all the mistakes be made by one.

ཁྲོག་མཐའ་གཉིས་ལ་བྱ་བ་གཉིས། །གཉིས་པོ་འབྱོར་ལྷན་གཉིས་སོ། །གང་བྱུང་
བཟོད་པར་བྱ། །གཉིས་པོ་ཚོས་སྤྱི་དང་། །སློ་སློང་གི་དམ་ཚིག་ །སྲོག་དང་བསྐྱོས་ལ་
བསྐྱུང་།

Do two at the two of beginning and end.
Bear with whichever comes of the two.
Keep the two at the cost of your life.

Note by the Tibetan commentator: The "two" in the second line are being well off and being poor. The "two" in the third line are your general spiritual pledges and the pledges of the instructions on developing the good heart.

།དཀའ་བ་གསུམ་ཉེ་མོངས་པ་སྐྱེས་པ་ན། དམ་པ། བརྗོག་པ། རྒྱུན་ཚོད་པ་གསུམ། ལ་
བསྐྱབ་པར་བྱ། །རྒྱ་ཡི་གཙོ་བོ་རྣམ་གསུམ་སྣ་མ་མཇུག། ཚོས་ཉམས་སུ་ལོན། ཚོས་
ཀྱི་མཐུན་རྒྱུན་འཇོམ་པ་སྟེ། ལྷན་། །ཉམས་པ་མིད་པ་རྣམ་གསུམ་མོས་གུས། རྗོལ་
བསྐྱབ་བྱ། བསྐྱོམ། ལུས་ངག་ཡིད་གསུམ་དགེ་བ་དང་། འབྲུལ་མིད་གསུམ་དང་ལྷན་
པར་བྱ།

**Train yourself in the three kinds of hardship.
Take to yourself the three main causes.
Live in three ways that never get weaker.
Keep the three that should never be lost.**

Note by the Tibetan commentator: The "three hardships" are learning to detect the start of a mental affliction; to stop it; and to stop the habit. The "three main causes" are finding a Lama, practicing the Dharma, and having all the support you need to practice the Dharma come together. The "three ways" are feeling devotion [for your Lama], joy [for practicing the *lojong* or instructions for developing a good heart], and keeping your various vows and commitments [through strong awareness and recollection]. The "three that should never be lost" are virtuous actions in your actions, your words, and your thoughts.

།ཡུལ་ལ་ཕྱོགས་མིད་དག་ཏུ་སྦྱོང། ལྷན་དང་གཏིང་འབྱོངས་ཀྱན་ལ་གཅེས།
།བཀོལ་བ་རྣམས་ལ་རྟག་ཏུ་བསྐྱོམ། །རྒྱུན་གཞན་དག་ལ་སྦྱོས་མི་བྱ།

**Act towards each one free of bias;
Spread your love, and make it deep.
Constantly think of the special ones;
Don't let it depend on circumstances.**

།ད་རིས་གཙོ་བོ་ཉམས་སུ་སླང། །གོ་ལོག་མི་བྱ། །རིས་འཇོག་མི་བྱ། དོལ་
ཚོད་ཏུ་སྦྱང། །བརྟག་དབྱེད་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་ཐར་བར་བྱ། ལུས་མ་སྐྱོམས། །ཀོ་

ལོང་མ་སྒྲིམས། ཡུད་ཅམ་པ་མི་བྱ། འོར་ཆེ་མ་འདོད། ཅེས་སོ། །དེ་ལྟ་བུའི་
བསྐྱབ་བྱ་ལ་ལེགས་པར་བལམ་པས།

**Act now, do the most important thing.
Don't get it backwards.
Don't be on and off.
Make up your mind and stick to it.
Figure out both and free yourself.
Stop thinking all the time about how wonderful you are.
Don't let little things get to you.
Don't change from moment to moment.
Don't expect any thanks.**

Note by the Tibetan commentator: When you have trained yourself well in these, then you will be able to do the following:

སྒྲིགས་མ་ལུ་པོ་བདོ་བ་འདི། བཟོད་པ། འདུན་པ། རོ་སྤྱང་། སྒྲིང་ཇེ། བཞིར་སེམས།
ཡིད་རང་། བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལམ་དུ་བསྐྱུར་བ་ཡིན། བདམས་ངག་གི་ཁུངས་སྒྲོས་པ་ནི།
ཁམ་ངག་བདུད་རྩིའི་སྒྲིང་པོ་འདི། བསེར་སྒྲིང་པ་ནས་བརྒྱུད་པ་ཡིན།

**Turn these five signs of the days of darkness
Around us into a path to enlightenment.
These words of advice are the essence of nectar;
They were passed down through Serlingpa.**

Note by the Tibetan commentator: The five signs are transformed into learning to endure without anger; feeling inspired to practice; a feeling of sweetness; thoughts of compassion; and great aspiration—and so the mind itself becomes the path. [The five signs of the days of darkness, which are said to be going on now, are: the darkness of the times, marked by strife; the darkness of lifespans, which have dropped to less than a hundred; the darkness of worldviews, very mistaken and difficult to change in people; the darkness of mental afflictions, strong and protracted; and the darkness of beings themselves, with minds and senses that are out of control.] The last two lines are meant to indicate that this instruction is one with an authoritative source.

རྣལ་འབྱོར་གྱི་དབང་ཕུག་ཆེན་པོ་འཆད་ཀ་པ་རང་ཉིད་སྤྱགས་ལེགས་པར་འབྱོངས་པ་ལ་བརྟེན་

གདམས་ངག་ལ་ཆེད་དུ་བཟོད་པ་ནི། ལྷོན་སྤྱངས་ལས་ཀྱི་འཕྲོ་སད་པས། །རང་གི་
མོས་པ་མང་བའི་རྒྱས། །སྤྱག་བསྐྱེལ་གཏམ་ངན་བྱུང་བསད་ནས། །བདག་
འཇོན་འདུལ་བའི་གདམས་ངག་ལྷུས། །ད་ནི་ཤི་ཡང་མི་འགྲོད་དོ། ཞེས་སོ།
།དེ་ལྟར་རྩ་ཚིག་འདི་ལ་རྒྱས་བསྐྱེས་དང་གོ་རིམ་མང་ནའང་། འདིར་རྒྱལ་སྤྱོད་མེད་རིན་
པོ་ཆེའི་འཁྲིད་ཡིག་ཇི་ལྟར་བཞེན་བཀོད་པའོ། ། མཚུ་ལོ།

**Karmic seeds from following this practice in my past lives
Were awakened, and the urge to teach this to others came to me
On many occasions. And so I have finished it, these words
Of instruction for beating the tendency of seeing things
As having some nature of their own, and I have ignored
All kinds of trouble and the derision of others to do so.
Now I can die,
Without a shred of regret.**

Note by the Tibetan commentator: In these words, that king of all deep practitioners, Chekawa, expresses the greatness of the instruction, for he has succeeded in applying it to his own heart.

Incidentally, there are many different versions of this root text: some are longer or shorter, and in others the lines come in a different order. I've set this one down here following the version found in the book of instruction by the bodhisattva Tokme.

Mangalam!
May goodness prevail!

*The Seven-Step Practice
for Developing a Good Heart*

(1)

Train yourself first in the preliminaries.

(2)

Learn to see all things as a dream;
Examine the nature of the mind, unborn.
The antidote itself is gone to is;
Let it go in the essence, source of all things.
Inbetween sessions, be a figment of the imagination.
Practice giving and taking, alternately;
Let the two ride on the wind.
Three objects, three poisons, three stores of virtue.
Practice throughout the day, in words.
The order of taking's to start with yourself.

(3)

When the world and those in it are full of bad deeds,
Learn to use problems as a path to Enlightenment.
The blame all belongs to only one person.
Practice seeing them all full of kindness.
See the deception as being four bodies;
Emptiness is the matchless protector.
The four acts are the supreme method.
On the spot, turn all that happens to practice.

(4)

The brief essentials of the instruction
Are combined within five powers.
In the great way these same five are the advices
For sending your mind; cherish the act.

Practice IV: *Lojong*
Root Text

(5)

All Dharma comes down to a single point.
There are two judges; keep the main one.
Be joy alone, in an unbroken stream.
It's there when you can keep it unthinking.

(6)

Keep to the three laws.
Change your mind and stay the same.
Speak not of what was broken.
Never worry about what they're doing.
Rid yourself of the biggest affliction first.
Never hope for any reward.
Stop eating poison food.
Don't let the stream flow smooth.
Forget repaying criticism.
Give up laying ambushes.
No going for the jugular.
Load your own truck, no passing the buck.
Don't get fixed on speed.
Don't feed the wrong face.
Don't turn the sweet angel to a devil.
Don't look for crap to make yourself happy.

(7)

Do all the practices with but one.
Let all the mistakes be made by one.
Do two at the two of beginning and end.
Bear with whichever comes of the two.
Keep the two at the cost of your life.
Train yourself in the three kinds of hardship.
Take to yourself the three main causes.
Live in three ways that never get weaker.
Keep the three that should never be lost.
Act towards each one free of bias;
Spread your love, and make it deep.
Constantly think of the special ones;
Don't let it depend on circumstances.
Act now, do the most important thing.
Don't get it backwards.
Don't be on and off.
Make up your mind and stick to it.

Practice IV: *Lojong*
Root Text

Figure out both and free yourself.
Stop thinking all the time about how wonderful you are.
Don't let little things get to you.
Don't change from moment to moment.
Don't expect any thanks.
Turn these five signs of the days of darkness
Around us into a path to enlightenment.
These words of advice are the essence of nectar;
They were passed down through Serlingpa.

Karmic seeds from following this practice in my past lives
Were awakened, and the urge to teach this to others came to me
On many occasions. And so I have finished it, these words
Of instruction for beating the tendency of seeing things
As having some nature of their own, and I have ignored
All kinds of trouble and the derision of others to do so.
Now I can die,
Without a shred of regret.



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Homework, Class One

1) Who was the first person to openly teach the *lojong* known *Seven-Step Practice for Developing a Good Heart*? Remember to give his full name, and also his dates. (Tibetan track give his name and title of the text in Tibetan.)

2) Why was this practice not taught openly for so many centuries?

3) State the three resolutions that we should make after meditating on our death.

a)

b)

c)

4) List the six sufferings of a human life.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Homework, Class Two

1) Describe the seven preliminary steps which help to prepare your mind for meditation.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

2) Explain the meaning of the line from the root text which says, "Learn to see all things as a dream."

3) Explain the two steps of the practice of giving and taking. (Tibetan track give the name of this practice in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

4) What are the "the three objects, three poisons, and three stores of virtue"?



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Homework, Class Three

1) Explain the following two lines from the root text:

The blame all belongs to only one person.
Practice seeing them all full of kindness.

2) The text states that, "Emptiness is the matchless protector." How does emptiness protect you?

3) The root text says, "On the spot, turn all that happens to practice." Explain how you could do this in your daily life.



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Homework, Class Four

1) Geshe Chekawa says that "the brief essentials of the instruction are combined within five powers." Name these five powers, and explain them briefly. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan and explain in English.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

2) This text then goes on to teach how to use these same five powers at the point of death. Explain how to use each of these five powers as you die.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

3) What were the words that Geshe Chekawa blurted out as he lay near death?



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Homework, Class Five

1) Explain, one by one, these four lines of the root text:

All Dharma comes down to a single point.
There are two judges; keep the main one.
Be joy alone, in an unbroken stream.
It's there when you can keep it unthinking.

2) Explain the meaning of the line, "Change your mind and stay the same."

3) What does the text mean when it says to forget repaying criticism?



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Homework, Class Six

1) The line of the root text which says, "Don't get it backwards" refers to six types of behavior. Describe each of them briefly.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

2) What does the root text mean when it says, "Figure out both and free yourself"?

3) What does the root text mean when it says, "Stop thinking about how wonderful you are"?

4) What does the root text mean when it says, "Don't expect any thanks"?



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Quiz, Class One

1) Why was this practice not taught openly for so many centuries?

2) State the three resolutions that we should make after meditating on our death.

a)

b)

c)



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Quiz, Class Two

1) Describe the seven preliminary steps which help to prepare your mind for meditation.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

2) Explain the two steps of the practice of giving and taking. (Tibetan track give the name of this practice in Tibetan.)

a)

b)



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:

Date:

Grade:

Quiz, Class Three

1) Explain the following two lines from the root text:

The blame all belongs to only one person.
Practice seeing them all full of kindness.

2) The text states that, "Emptiness is the matchless protector." How does emptiness protect you?



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Quiz, Class Four

1) Geshe Chekawa says that "the brief essentials of the instruction are combined within five powers." Name these five powers, and explain them briefly. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan and explain in English.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

2) This text then goes on to teach how to use these same five powers at the point of death. Explain how to use each of these five powers as you die.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Quiz, Class Five

1) Explain, one by one, these four lines of the root text:

All Dharma comes down to a single point.
There are two judges; keep the main one.
Be joy alone, in an unbroken stream.
It's there when you can keep it unthinking.

2) Explain the meaning of the line, "Change your mind and stay the same."



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Quiz, Class Six

1) What does the root text mean when it says, "Figure out both and free yourself"?

2) What does the root text mean when it says, "Stop thinking about how wonderful you are"?

3) What does the root text mean when it says, "Don't expect any thanks"?



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Answer Key, Class One

1) Who was the first person to openly teach the *lojong* known as the *Seven-Step Practice for Developing a Good Heart*? Remember to give his full name, and also his dates. (Tibetan track give his name and title of the text in Tibetan.)

It was the Kadampa geshe Chekawa (1101-1175).

བཀའ་གདམས་པ་དགེ་བཤེས་མཚན་ལ་བ།

kadampa geshe chekawa

The title in Tibetan is:

སློབ་སྦྱོང་དོན་བདུན་མ།

lojong dun dunma

2) Why was this practice not taught openly for so many centuries?

Because people were not ready to accept the idea of exchanging their concern for fulfilling their own needs with a concern for fulfilling the needs of others, and might disrespect this idea if it was taught to them, thus collecting serious negative karma.

3) State the three resolutions that we should make after meditating on our death.

a) Knowing that we shall have to die, we must resolve to begin our practice.

b) Knowing that we could die any time, we must quit our worldly work immediately and start our practice today.

c) And finally, since nothing else can help us, we must devote ourselves to our practice only. A man who is hiking many miles doesn't fill up his pack with a lot of junk that he won't be needing.

4) List the six sufferings of a human life.

- a) **The problem that life has no certainty.**
- b) **The problem that we always want more than we have.**
- c) **The problem that we have to keep shucking off bodies, over and over again.**
- d) **The problem that we have to keep going into a new life, over and over again.**
- e) **The problem that we go up and down in our fortunes in life, over and over again.**
- f) **The problem that no one can come along with us; ultimately we are alone.**



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Answer Key, Class Two

1) Describe the seven preliminary steps which help to prepare your mind for meditation.

- a) **Making prostrations to the objects of refuge.**
- b) **Making offerings to the holy beings.**
- c) **Confession (purification of negative karma).**
- d) **Rejoicing in the good you are doing.**
- e) **Requesting the teachers to teach.**
- f) **Requesting the teachers to stay alive.**
- g) **Dedicating the goodness you do toward becoming enlightened.**

2) Explain the meaning of the line from the root text which says, "Learn to see all things as a dream."

This line means that we should see all things as empty, which reminds us that the world is a perception forced upon us by our good and bad deeds, and allows us to do the good deeds needed to make this world a paradise and ourselves deathless angels.

3) Explain the two steps of the practice of giving and taking. (Tibetan track give the name of this practice in Tibetan.)

- a) **In the first step you imagine that you are taking away all the sufferings and bad deeds of other people by breathing them into yourself and destroying them.**
- b) **The second step is to imagine that you are giving others all of your good deeds and happiness by sending them a stream of white light upon your out-breath.**

The name of this practice in Tibetan is *tonglen*:

གཏོང་ལེན།

tonglen

4) What are the "the three objects, three poisons, and three stores of virtue"?

The three objects are things which are attractive, repulsive, and in between.

The three poisons that normally come from focusing upon them are ignorant liking, ignorant disliking, and ignorance itself.

The three stores of virtue are to become free of the three poisons by resolving to take upon oneself all the pain and causes that others are experiencing and creating due to the three poisons themselves.



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Answer Key, Class Three

1) Explain the following two lines from the root text:

The blame all belongs to only one person.
Practice seeing them all full of kindness.

The "one person" of course is myself. In a general way, I have done things in the past that have created the problems that I have now. In a more specific way, my own selfishness has been the key to my problems, and this in turn has been caused by my tendency to misunderstand myself and my world: to think that problems come from their own side, or that they have their own self-nature.

I should see "them," meaning all the problems that come to me (whether as people or circumstances), as being "full of kindness" since they provide me with an inspiration to understand where the pain in my life is coming from and to overcome it with correct understanding.

2) The text states that, "Emptiness is the matchless protector." How does emptiness protect you?

The fact that things seem to come from their own side and have some nature of their own is a deception created by our minds. The principal one of the four bodies of a Buddha is the Dharmakaya, or the emptiness of the mind and body of an enlightened being. Remembering emptiness is the matchless protector, since we will remember that whatever we see in an otherwise blank object is coming from our own good or bad deeds, and we will automatically be inspired to avoid negative deeds.

3) The root text says, "On the spot, turn all that happens to practice." Explain how you could do this in your daily life.

"All that happens" refers to whatever problems, either with people or with the things, that happen to you. "Turn them into practice" means to use them as a reason to think about compassion and love: to think about taking away other people's problems from them, and giving them all that they hope for. This is effectively done by using the "giving and taking" practice from the previous point.



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Answer Key, Class Four

1) Geshe Chekawa says that "the brief essentials of the instruction are combined within five powers." Name these five powers, and explain them briefly. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan and explain in English.)

The five powers:

སྟོབས་ལྔ།

topnga

a) resolutions for the future: when you wake up each day, do so with the decision that you will not waste this day, or this year, or this life, but rather you will devote your time to destroying the enemy of cherishing yourself

འཕན་པ།

penpa

b) accustoming yourself: in all your activities of the day—whether you are walking somewhere or standing or sitting or sleeping—think of ways to increase and accustom yourself to the Wish for enlightenment

གོམས་པ།

gompa

c) pure white seeds: engage in practices such as amassing great good karma and purifying yourself of negative karma, in order to increase the power of your Wish for enlightenment

དཀར་པོ་ས་བོན།

karmo sabun

- d) destruction: learn to bash the habit of cherishing yourself on the head quickly whenever it might arise**

སུན་འབྱེན་པ།

sunjinpa

- e) prayer: pray, as you lay down to sleep at night, that all your goodness of the day might be dedicated to increasing the two forms of the Wish for enlightenment within your own mind**

སྨོན་ལམ།

munlam

2) This text then goes on to teach how to use these same five powers at the point of death. Explain how to use each of these five powers as you die.

- a) resolutions for the future: deciding that, as you die, and further on in the intermediate state and elsewhere, you will never lose the attitude of the Wish for enlightenment**
- b) accustoming yourself: this is the most important of all; to be so accustomed to thinking as a bodhisattva that, as you die, you continue to have constant thoughts about wishing to reach enlightenment for the sake of others**
- c) pure white seeds: offering, as you die, everything you possess freely to both higher beings and to the benefit of suffering ones; dedicating everything you had without any feeling of possessiveness, and especially feeling no attachment to your body as you die**
- d) destruction: confessing, as you die, all the negative things you have ever done; deciding that from then on you will never do them again; and, if you are a practitioner of the secret teachings, renewing your vows by entering into the secret world yourself, or taking a new empowerment, in your final hours**
- e) prayer: to pray not that you yourself might go to a Buddha realm, but rather that in dying you could take on all the pain and bad deeds and spiritual obstacles of other living beings; and to pray as well that you might be able to reach the real Wish for enlightenment**

It is said that, if possible, one should lie down and pass on as Lord Buddha did, quietly, resting on one's right side, thinking of what will bring good to others: this is "cherishing the act."

3) What were the words that Geshe Chekawa blurted out as he lay near death?

Obviously carrying out his own advice and performing the practice of transferring his consciousness (*powa*) in the tradition of the greater way, he yelled out: "I was praying that I could pass on to the lowest hell, for the sake of helping every living being! It's not working! I can't go! All I can see before me now is the paradise of enlightenment!"



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Answer Key, Class Five

1) Explain, one by one, these four lines of the root text:

All Dharma comes down to a single point.
There are two judges; keep the main one.
Be joy alone, in an unbroken stream.
It's there when you can keep it unthinking.

The "single point" means that all Dharma comes down to working against the tendency to cherish oneself. The two judges are oneself and others; the main judge of how your practice is going is yourself. The main judge of whether something is Dharma is whether it helps fix the mental afflictions or not. The judge of whether your practice of Dharma is successful is whether or not your mental afflictions get less.

"Be joy alone" means that, if you do get some money, don't have a lot of worries about keeping it or making it more. If you don't get any money, don't make yourself unhappy looking for it. Whatever good or bad thing happens to you, turn it into a path of Dharma. If something really bad happens, look carefully into why it came, and don't be unhappy.

The last line means that your practice of *lojong* is successful when, like a skilled horse rider, you do it well even without thinking: it has become completely natural and, if someone suddenly yells at you or even hits you, you automatically recall yourself and never react negatively.

2) Explain the meaning of the line, "Change your mind and stay the same."

This line means that you should change your mind on the inside with the three principal paths of renunciation, love, and correct worldview, but stay the same on the outside. You should not show off your attainments, but rather keep them hidden.

3) What does the text mean when it says to forget repaying criticism?

This line refers to the four points of practice of virtue. These four points are not to respond in kind with criticism to criticism, with beating to beating, with anger to anger, or with scolding to scolding.



PRACTICE IV
The Seven Point Practice for
Developing a Good Heart (*Lojong*)

Answer Key, Class Six

1) The line of the root text which says, "Don't get it backwards" refers to six types of behavior. Describe each of them briefly.

- a) **You are willing to undertake any hardship for the sake of worldly things and none for sake of the Dharma.**
- b) **You enjoy the flavor of worldly things and the not flavor of the Dharma.**
- c) **You feel compassion for those who are working hard on Dharma and not for those who are doing bad deeds.**
- d) **You aspire towards succeeding in the world rather than in the Dharma.**
- e) **You teach those who look to you for help worldly things that will hurt them later, such as business, rather than teaching them about Dharma.**
- d) **You rejoice in others' problems rather than their virtues and happiness.**

2) What does the root text mean when it says, "Figure out both and free yourself"?

It means (1) first to study how you got mental afflictions in the past: which ones are a problem for you, what kinds of thoughts set them off, and what kinds of people or objects incite them. Then (2) study how you are going to avoid these in the future, even the smallest ones.

3) What does the root text mean when it says, "Stop thinking about how wonderful you are"?

It means don't think you are so great just because you are fulfilling your duty of serving others: remember that (1) living beings desperately need your help, and (2) you have already sworn to help them, so just do it!

4) What does the root text mean when it says, "Don't expect any thanks"?

Do your *lojong* practice without expecting any help, any good words from others, or any thought of reputation or fame.



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THE SEVEN POINT PRACTICE FOR DEVELOPING A GOOD HEART

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4



4

**THE SEVEN POINT PRACTICE FOR
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PRACTICE

