

Lojong Teachings

By Daniel Scharpenburg

Lojong is a set of techniques for training the mind. These techniques are designed to open our hearts and awaken our minds. There are fifty nine slogans and they offer us a lot of help in transcending our egotism and putting down the baggage we are carrying.

The fifty nine slogans have been used by Tibetan Buddhists for centuries in order to help Buddhist practitioners focus on what's important in our efforts to train and tame our minds. Sometimes on the Buddhist path we can tend to forget why we're doing this and what's important.

The important thing about these teachings is that they help us to meet ordinary situations in life with a Bodhisattva state of mind. Lojong really involves making our views more expansive, cultivating a compassion that includes everyone.

These teachings have been handed down for 8 centuries. Lojong is considered a Mahayana teaching. Vajrayana Buddhism has been so influential on the Buddhism of Tibet that Mahayana teachings sometimes get overlooked. As a practitioner of Mahayana Buddhism, I love delving into teachings like these.

Lojong practice helps me to transform all of the aspects of my life into the path of Enlightenment. It reminds me that there is no separation between the sacred life and ordinary life, between the spiritual and the worldly. It helps me to be less pulled around by my egotism. When we practice lojong even really difficult circumstances can become more workable.

Lojong practice is one of my teachers.

The Lojong slogans are said to come from the great Indian Buddhist teacher Atisha, who received extensive training in bodhicitta and mind training. A Tibetan student of Atisha's founded the Kadam lineage of Tibetan Buddhism. Now Lojong practice is found in all of the major branches of Tibetan Buddhism.

Lojong is a list of 59 slogans that summarize the view and application of Mahayana Buddhism. They provide a way to train our minds through both meditation practice and daily life. The foundation, as with most Buddhist teachings, is on developing mindfulness and awareness.

With this practice we become more aware of how self-centered our worldview is. We practice to reverse that and have a broader vision, a vision of gentleness and fearless compassion. This way we begin to think of ourselves as part of the world, rather than making enemies of everything all

the time. We want to prevent our actions and motivations from being quite so motivated by projections and expectations.

Our practice in ordinary life is based on learning these slogans and being able to remember them when we need them. If we study them diligently, we will find them coming into our minds when we need them.

Lojong teachings can inspire us to live with more gentleness and compassion. They inspire us to transcend the self.

Lojong practice can serve as our basic training on the path of the Bodhisattva.

The Lojong slogans are divided into seven categories. I'm going to write about each one as a series here.

I hope they mean as much to you as they do to me.

POINT ONE: Train in the Preliminaries

1) Resolve to Begin

This involves everything that has led us to the path of the Bodhisattva. It's hard to view our past as part of the path, especially when our past may have been particularly difficult. But the truth is everything that's happened to us before now has led us to this training. In training in the preliminaries we take a good hard look at ourselves and the things that have led us to who we are and what we are doing. When we look at our lives honestly we can see all sorts of things we may not have noticed. We have to see that the path we have been on isn't serving us or others as well as it could and we have to strive to be on a better path.

Cultivating a regular meditation practice is another way we train in the preliminaries. It's very important to have time on the cushion and we have to always keep that in mind. Meditation is foundational and its importance can't be overestimated. Meditate regularly.

It's said that we should keep four things in mind, which are called The Four Reminders. We need to reflect on these reminders over and over. They are taken as our inspiration on the path.

These are:

The preciousness and rarity of human life, being born in a time and place where we are lucky enough to study the dharma. There have been plenty of times and places throughout history (and there still are some today) where the dharma was not available at all. Today we not only have access to the dharma but also to a great wealth of teachings.

The reality of death, that life is temporary and can end at any moment. Every day we are getting older and drawing closer to our end. This means we should put a great focus on what's important to us.

The power of karma, the way whatever we do puts us further in the chain of cause and effect. Everything we do has far reaching consequences.

The inevitability of suffering for ourselves and all other beings. Everyone suffers, just like we do. We need to keep that in mind when we're dealing with others. we're all struggling.

This slogan sets the tone for the whole thing. It establishes the difference between the realm of suffering, which is pain, neurosis, and egotism, and the other shore, which is openness, gentleness, and freedom. This is where we set our intention to recognize the importance of the spiritual path.

This is where things really start.

The way of the Bodhisattva is the way of compassion and wisdom, of realizing your own boundless potential. It comes from realizing that Enlightenment is our true nature, that we have a basic goodness and wakefulness that is fundamental to our being.

Bodhicitta is what the diligence of the Bodhisattva is based on. Bodhicitta means the mind of awakening. It's what helps us overcome the delusions that keep us from seeing our true nature. These delusions are things that we can overcome. They are impermanent like everything else. They may obscure our minds, but we can overcome them. Bodhicitta is our tool for doing this.

Bodhicitta combines emptiness, compassion, and wisdom. To engage wisdom we have to work out overcoming our attachment to ourselves. To engage compassion we have to work on overcoming our possessiveness and aggression. To engage emptiness we have to learn to relate to our basic goodness in a way that is direct and complete.

Bodhicitta is central to Mahayana Buddhist teachings. It is the basis of being awake and freeing our minds.

We don't really cultivate the awakened state as something separate from ourselves or as something new. We are trying to realize that we already have this basic goodness as part of our being. It has always been there. Dwelling in Bodhicitta brings us greater vision and potential. It brings us to boundless compassion for ourselves and others.

When we engage Bodhicitta we stop being so afraid of and controlled by our suffering. We gain new levels of patience and diligence. We also develop a kind of bravery. We are like spiritual warriors, willing to see the suffering of the world and face it in order to save ourselves and others.

There are said to be two kinds of Bodhicitta, the transcendent and the ordinary.

Bodhicitta is based on cultivating the perfection of generosity. Generosity is a kind of openness, where we aren't holding back anything. We are fully present and completely open. We are cultivating a state of mind where we aren't swayed so completely by the egoic mind which says "I-Me-Mine" and is always making enemies of everything. We often think of generosity as the giving of material things and this kind of generosity is more than that. With this, we develop kindness.

Bodhicitta is also based on cultivating the perfection of virtue. It's through virtue that we develop compassion. This comes from the basic awareness that we can have a tender and gentle heart at any time. If we can just let go and stop clinging to ourselves all the time, then we can experience virtue.

Bodhicitta is largely based on free love, that is love that doesn't expect anything in return. When we let go of our attachment to separating things into "this" and "that", then our love becomes boundless.

Whereas point one only had one mind training slogan, point two has nine of them. I'm starting with number two, since number one was in the first point.

2. See Everything As A Dream

This kind of vision is part of the Bodhisattva path. Regard all things as unreal. We are nothing but bubbles in a stream.

We can experience this quality of voidness in our sitting practice. When we are sitting and following the breath thoughts and ideas always rise in our minds. We get distracted. We get lost and forget all about the breath. But we can reflect on the fact that we are creating these thoughts and memories. We are like slaves to the daydream. We spend our entire lives trying to grasp at things that aren't there.

When you train in this slogan, when you repeat it to yourself, you can start to see things differently. When we start to get upset or anxious or angry about something, we can bring this slogan to mind. "Why am I upset about this? It's a dream."

3. Examine The Nature Of Awareness

If we really try to examine ourselves we can come to realize that there's nothing to hold onto. Just ask yourself, "Who is reading this?" What is your awareness when you don't think of it in relation to other things? If we look deeply within ourselves we find nothing. When Buddhists say there's no self what they're really saying is that there's nothing to hold onto. There's nothing you can point to and say "This is me." Not if you're honest with yourself. If we deeply examine our awareness and try to find what it is beyond what we're aware of, then we start to realize there's nothing underneath, at least nothing we can put a label on.

4. Don't Attach To The Cure

The cure is just the understanding that our awareness has no root, that there's nothing behind it. The idea of the cure that some might get stuck on is a nihilistic view. We might come to see that our awareness has no root and suddenly decide that nothing in the world matters. We have occasional glimpses of the emptiness of things, but when we attach to it we experience what's called the poison of emptiness. The slogans prior to this one might make life have a sort of dreamy quality for us. This one is designed to keep us down to earth at the same time. The truth is that things are empty and dreamlike, but this can be another source of attachment. We have to be careful.

5. Rest In The Openness Of Your Mind

The idea of this slogan is that we can rest. We can pull our minds back from everything we are perceiving and thinking about. We can rest in simplicity and non-discursive awareness. This is meditation practice. Not meditating on something, but trying to calm the mind.

Breathe in and breathe out and just follow the breath. We are looking inside ourselves for the peace that we need.

6. After Meditation, Be A Child Of Illusion

Being a child of illusion means that our experience isn't shaped by our preconceptions and emotional baggage all the time. When we are a child of illusion we just see things as they are, not as we project on them. I think the reason the word child is used has another connotation. It's about keeping our sense of wonder. Stop once in a while and just look out a window. Just see whatever you see because everything is amazing.

7. Practice Sending And Taking

Tonglen is called the practice of sending and taking. It's a sitting practice. You sit and visualize inhaling the suffering of others as a black smoke and exhaling a clear blue light. We are imagining that we are taking their suffering into ourselves and returning love and compassion. This helps us to both develop compassion for others and also to loosen our attachment to ourselves.

8. Practice With Three Objects And Three Poisons

This is an elaboration on number 7. We want to expand this tonglen practice. The three objects are three kinds of people. They are described as friends, enemies, and neutrals. The three poisons are attachment, aversion, and ignorance.

Attachment is wanting to own or control things all the time. Aversion is wanting to reject or attack things. Ignorance is when we can't be bothered or we aren't interested. So, the three objects inspire the three poisons in us. When one of these poisons arises in our awareness, we can do the tonglen practice. By sending and taking, we can let go of our strong feelings for these things.

9. In All Activities, Train With The Slogans

This reminds us to be as aware as we can, not just during meditation, but all the time. It's easy to do tonglen practice on the cushion. It's a little harder to do when we're out in the world.

10. Begin Practicing With Yourself

This is a reminder that the tonglen practice begins with sending. Sending is often the hardest part. We are wishing for our well being to flow into others.

This group of slogans is connected with the perfection of patience. This represents our forbearance, our ability to face the difficulties of life without letting them carry us away. The opposite of this is the poison of aversion. This is the capacity to experience difficult with strength and endurance.

This section contains six slogans.

11. Transform All Mishaps Into The Path

Whatever occurs in our lives can be transformed into the path to Enlightenment. Whether we have relationship problems, difficulties with our jobs, health problems...all of these can be just part of the path. Life is full of suffering. We can respond to it with wakefulness instead of despair. It probably sounds like trite self help, but, when people are treating us badly we can use that to help us practice patience. When we experience financial difficulty, we can use that to practice generosity, in the sense of letting go of things.

12. Drive All Blames Into One

Drive all blames into one means that our problems and the complications that are around us aren't somebody else's fault, especially in relation to our practice. All the blame can start with us. It's not necessarily that everything is our own fault in a conventional sense, but we're driving all blames into one so that we can enter the bodhisattva path. When we drive all blames into one we aren't laying any of our emotional baggage or blame on anyone else. Because passing blame isn't helpful. The reason we have to drive all blames into one is because we've spent our lives cherishing ourselves and reinforcing our egoic minds. Driving blames into one means we are taking full responsibility for our practice and our lives, regardless of who we could blame for our circumstances.

13. Be Grateful To Everyone

Everything is part of our spiritual journey. Without the world being how it is, there would be no opportunities for us to practice. All of our experiences in life are grounded in our relationships with others. So, the obstacles that others might present to us can be used for our awakening. This slogan follows number 12 for a reason. Once we have taken the responsibility for the

circumstances of our lives, it's easier to be grateful to others. Without others we wouldn't have the chance to practice compassion or patience. So, everyone around is part of the path. This slogan is about cultivating an understanding that we aren't separate from other beings. We are all one. So, gratitude is the only response that makes sense. Once we cultivate this kind of open hearted gratitude, we come to dwell in this sense of oneness.

14. See Confusion As Enlightenment And Dwell In Emptiness

In this slogan we are talking about developing a better understanding of the way we perceive things. We don't see things as they are. We see things as we are. We may not see our minds as Enlightened, but Enlightenment is our true nature and we can engage that. This slogan is founded in using our meditation practices to work with our minds. By practicing diligently we can come to realize that the essence of our being is Emptiness. On the cushion we practice mindfulness and awareness. While we're practicing confusing thoughts come up and we can come to realize that our thoughts have no real origin, that there is no 'me' underneath to cling to. Dwelling in Emptiness is a powerful way to cut through our delusions and emotional baggage. We can perceive our ordinary confusion from a different point of view. We can realize that all of these thoughts and emotions are going to rise and pass away. There's nothing to hold onto. If we can just pull ourselves away from our baggage and preconceptions for a moment, we can see things as they really are.

15. The Four Practices Are Great Methods

This slogan refers to specific things we can do in our daily life. They are in four categories: doing good, lay down your evil deeds, offering to demons, offering to spirits.

Doing good refers to relating to right action, the cultivation of virtue. When we cultivate virtue we are dwelling in basic goodness, the state of our true nature. We aren't talking about doing good to receive some kind of reward, but doing good to establish ourselves as virtuous beings on the path.

Laying down our evil deeds starts with looking back at our pasts and seeing how foolish we've been. Everyone has a past, a history full of things that they aren't proud of. The first step is to recognize what your issues are and get tired of them. The second step is to refrain from making the same mistakes in the future that we've made in the past. The third step is taking refuge. We are using the dharma to help us transform ourselves into the best versions of ourselves. The fourth step is developing a kind of openness. We don't hate ourselves for what we've done in the past, but we are proud to be able to refrain from the same actions in the future.

Offering to demons is not something I take literally. This is where we appreciate our weaknesses and flaws. We recognize our weaknesses for what they are and acknowledge them as part of our journey, not as reasons to hate ourselves.

Offering to spirits is also not something I take literally. The spirits represent our basic awareness, our ability to be here and now in this moment. We realize our awareness is something we can cultivate and we appreciate that.

16 Whatever You Meet Is The Path

We have the ability to bring the awareness we are cultivating to any situation in life. The concept behind it is that we aren't going to make enemies out of everything. Whatever comes up isn't a sudden problem to be overcome or a positive thing to encourage us. Everything just is what it is. Whatever happens, make it part of your spiritual practice.

This group of slogans is connected with the perfection of diligence. Diligence means that we aren't lazy in our practice, we are motivated and determined. When we talk about laziness we're talking about lack of joy on the path. We can think of diligence as developing an appreciation for what we're doing. The path shouldn't be a chore. Uncovering our true nature should be something we are delighted to do. It's been said that the path can't be walked without diligence. We have a natural resistance to our training but that resistance can be overcome by overcoming laziness with diligence. The fourth point deals with training in our whole life, no separation. Every moment is sacred and important. This diligence on the path is both the result of our practice thus far and the core of our efforts going forward.

17. Practice the Five Strengths

The Five Strengths are an aid to help us develop diligence. Here they are:

Strong Determination: this means not wasting our time. Practice is our way of transforming ourselves and not practicing is a waste of our time. The idea behind this is that even when we first wake up in the morning we are thinking about or cultivating bodhicitta. The point is that we're rousing our basic goodness and because of this we are feeling more determined in our practice. This is how we begin to take ourselves seriously as spiritual practitioners. We have the energy within us to walk the path. Strong determination is about finding our motivation on the path and not losing sight of it.

Familiarization: Because we've developed strong determination we now have a natural feeling about the practice. Even when we are mindless and unaware, reminders start coming up that make us think of going back to our practice. Bodhicitta has become part of our everyday life. Whatever we do becomes a reminder. Because we're bringing to mind the teachings over and over, we can think of them at any time.

Seed of Virtue: Our inherent wakefulness is the seed of virtue. We are dwelling in this wakefulness without taking a break. Because of this wakefulness our body, speech, and mind are all dedicated to cultivating bodhicitta. This is where we recognize our true nature.

Reproach: this is reproaching our egoic mind. It's where we are repulsed by the ego clinging that has done harm to us and those around us. It's when we realize how much harm our selfishness often causes us and deciding that we don't want to be harmed anymore.

Aspiration: This is where we dedicate our practice. We want to end each meditation session by declaring the wish to : 1) save all beings 2) not forget bodhicitta 3) apply bodhicitta in spite of any obstacles that come up. This is the same kind of aspiration one has in taking the bodhisattva vows.

18. Practice For Death As Well As For Life

Understanding the truths of suffering and impermanence is important in Buddhist practice. The fact of the matter is that all of us are going to die. Because we are born, we are going to die. This slogan is about accepting our fate instead of railing against it all the time. We want to cultivate those five strengths from the previous slogan, even while we're dying. Knowing and accepting that we are going to pass away one day also helps us be more motivated on the path.

This group of slogans is connected with the perfection of meditation. We are beginning to develop great awareness and mindfulness.

19. All Of The Teachings Are Really One

All of the teachings are rooted in taming the mind and managing the ego. That is the point of this slogan. We tame our wandering minds with mental discipline and we cultivate awareness to cut through our egoic minds. Then we start cultivating bodhicitta. But really these are tied together. We think of developing wisdom and compassion as separate, but they aren't separate. Compassion develops from an understanding of Emptiness, because once we realize we have nothing to hold on to we aren't trying to be against the world all the time. The one teaching is really opening up to the world instead of closing ourselves off.

20. Hold The Primary Witness

It's said that in all situations there are two witnesses: other people's point of view of you and your point of view of yourself. The primary witness is your insight. This slogan represents being true to yourself. Only you really know yourself and you know yourself at every moment. The only one who can judge how you are doing with your lojong practice, or with Buddhist practice in general, is yourself.

21. Maintain A Joyful Mind

This slogan means we want to maintain a sense of joyfulness and humor, in spite of all the little difficulties in life. We have the power to take unfortunate events as encouragement to our practice. We can maintain a sense of joy because we are on the path, because we are doing something to transform ourselves.

22. If You Can Practice Even While Distracted, Then You Are Well Trained

We have all kinds of distractions in life. The idea behind this slogan is that when situations come up that distract us, we should be able to bring awareness to them instead of getting frustrated. We can come to realize that we can practice in any situation, in spite of distractions and our wandering thoughts.

This group of slogans is connected with the perfection of wisdom, prajnaparamita. They are connected with sharpening our awareness to help us work with ourselves. Wisdom cuts through ignorance. We are cultivating a sense of awareness and mindfulness that will develop us on the bodhisattva path. It's our sense of wisdom that allows us to carry these slogans through our lives. As we go forward with the slogans, you'll notice they are increasingly more straightforward. The first 22 provided a solid foundation for us.

23. Always Abide By The Three Basic Principles

These are the three basic principles:

Keep the two vows: this refers to refuge and bodhisattva vows, keeping them completely.

Refrain from outrageous action: this means we aren't using our practice as a means to gain attention. We aren't trying to be martyrs here. We are just trying to be.

Develop patience: don't be in a hurry to become something. People have a tendency to learn teachings like these and to want to become great saints or sages. We are just trying to be.

24. Change Your Attitude

The point of this slogan is to change our point of view. We want to change our attitude so that we focus on others before ourselves. This refers to our attempts to control others and to always cherish ourselves first. We want to tame our minds so we aren't pushing people around all the time.

25. Don't Talk About Injured Limbs

Injured limbs refers to someone else's physical or psychological defects. It's simply the realization that we don't have a reason to point out the faults of others. We're all human and we all have flaws.

26. Don't Ponder Others

This is connected to number 25. Pondering others means picking on their shortcomings after they wrong us. We can obsess about it when someone does something wrong, or we can get on with our lives.

27. Work With The Greatest Defilements First

The defilements are the obstacles to our growth that are within us. Whatever our greatest defilement is would be the one we want to work on the most. Our greatest defilement could be anger, attachment, pride, jealousy, etc. Working with the greatest defilements means working with the most important problems that we have. The idea is that we are doing whatever work is hardest first, rather than avoiding our most difficult issues thinking we will deal with them later.

28. Abandon Any Hope Of Fruition

We don't want to think of our lojong practice as goal oriented. Forget about the possibility of transforming yourself to the best person in the world because of your training. We aren't practicing so that we can become masters and get some kind of fame and adoration. We are practicing just to practice.

29. Abandon Poisonous Food

If we are practicing as another way to feed our ego, giving up your ego to build your ego, then it's like we are eating poisonous food. Thinking that you're doing this so you can become the best meditator ever is a mistake. If the practice is motivated by a wish for personal achievement, then we are thinking of things in the wrong way.

30. Don't Be So Predictable

The point of this slogan is to give up our history and the way we perceive ourselves. If I think of myself as someone with anger problems, then when something goes wrong I will probably react in anger. In this slogan we are trying to put that down. We are trying to not be so predictable all the time.

31. Don't Malign Others

Saying bad things about others is often rooted in showing how great we are. We sometimes tend to think our virtues can only show if we tear others down.

32. Don't Wait In Ambush

This means we don't want to wait for someone to fall down so we can attack them. We don't want to be opportunistic and attack others when they are most vulnerable. That would be a very negative action.

33. Don't Bring Things To A Painful Point

Don't blame all your problems and suffering on others. This slogan means that we should encourage others on the path, rather than humiliating them by placing blame.

34. Don't Transfer The Ox's Load To The Cow

This means don't unload on everyone all the time. Transferring the load means not wanting to deal with anything on our own. We want to think about our problems honestly. We want to deal with our issues because no one else really can.

35. Don't Try To Be The Fastest

We don't want to view our practice as a race. That can happen sometimes. If we view our practice in that way, then it becomes a sort of game or competition. Don't be in a hurry. Just be.

36. Don't Act With A Twist

This is about dropping the attitude that we are going to get personal gain from the practice. Acting with a twist means volunteering for the worst in each situation with the knowledge that it makes you look the best. We need to strive to practice without having an ulterior motive.

37. Don't Make Gods Into Demons

This refers to our tendency to dwell on the negative and go through life unhappy. Making gods into demons is turning the path into a burden, into something to complain about.

38. Don't Seek Others' Pain As Your Happiness

We shouldn't build our happiness on the failures of others. We don't want to hope for others to experience misfortune. It might come up that we benefit from the misfortune of someone else, but we don't want to wish for that. A striking example is wishing for someone to die so that we can receive an inheritance. Everyone will agree that this is not okay, I'm sure. But we can apply this to all sorts of wishes we might have.

The last set of slogans have to do with how we go further in our day to day life. This is connected to an understanding of how we can have better behavior in our relationships and in our lives in general.

39. All Activities Should Be Done With One Intention

The one intention is to cultivate bodhicitta, to have a sense of gentleness and kindness toward others. This is what the intention to walk the bodhisattva path is really all about. We can ask ourselves in any situation: "Is this helping or harming others?"

40. Correct All Wrongs With One Intention

We need to correct all the wrongs or bad circumstances that come up in our lives. If your practice is good when things are going well but falls off when things are hard, that isn't good. Correcting all wrongs means overcoming our ignorance.

41. Two Activities: One At The Beginning, One At The End

Our lives should be founded in two things. One is the vow to put others before ourselves and the other is the cultivation of bodhicitta. We want to be fully committed to the practice and to stop blaming others for everything that happens all the time. Stop trying to make enemies out of the world.

42. Whichever Of The Two Occurs, Be Patient

Sometimes good things happen to us. Sometimes bad things happen to us. Whatever happens, we want to avoid letting our practice be swayed. We want to maintain patience, whether we are in a situation of great happiness or great suffering. This is called equanimity. The idea is to develop discipline in ourselves so that whether situations are good or bad we are able to be patient.

43. Observe These Two, Even At The Risk Of Your Life

You should maintain the vows you've taken. In this case it's about the refuge and bodhisattva vows. But it can really apply to any vows or commitments you've taken. Take your commitments seriously.

44. Train In The Three Difficulties

The three difficulties relate to how we relate to our own weaknesses.

The first difficulty is realizing when we are being pulled around and controlled by our emotions.

The second difficulty is to manage our emotional baggage.

The third difficulty is to cut the continuity of our emotional baggage. That is, we don't want things to spiral out of control, where we get madder and madder about something.

First it's hard to recognize our neurotic emotional habits. Then it's hard to overcome them. Then it's hard to continue resisting their influence. When we practice lojong we are receiving transmission into the bodhisattva's point of view. The idea is to transmit the dharma to yourself so that the way of the bodhisattva is constantly in your mind.

45. Take On The Three Principal Causes

Cause refers to the things that cause us to walk the path. The first cause is having a good teacher or example to follow. The second cause is being able to apply your focus to the dharma. The third cause is having a life that's comfortable enough to practice and where the teachings are available.

To take the first cause is to realize how important it is to have an example to follow.

To take the second cause is to realize that you should have some control over your mind.

To take the third cause is to realize that we are fortunate to have this opportunity to practice. Not only is human life more comfortable than any time in history, at least for everyone reading this, but also the teachings are more available. An overwhelming amount of dharmic material is available to you at any time with a simple search on the internet.

46. Pay Heed That The Three Never Wane

Don't let devotion to your spiritual friends diminish over time. Having examples to follow and friends on the path is really important. Don't let your positive attitude toward lojong practice diminish. Training our minds to be more compassionate and wise is the most important things we can do. Don't let your conduct diminish. Behave in a way that is upright and helps others whenever you can.

47. Keep The Three Inseparable

Our practice of lojong should consist in practicing kindness with the body, speech, and mind.

48. Train Without Bias In All Areas.

Lojong practice includes all beings and all things. It's important to include everyone. No one is left out.

49. Always Meditate On Whatever Provokes Resentment

Meditate on that which causes difficulty. If you don't start with that, then when difficulties arise it will be more difficult to overcome them.

50. Don't Be Swayed By External Circumstances

Circumstances in your life will change over time. But your practice should not depend on circumstances. Lojong is a mind training practice that we can do anywhere at any time.

51. This Time, Practice The Main Points

This time refers to right now. We have wasted much of our lives in not practicing. The three points are:

The benefit of others is more important than yourself.
Practicing the Buddha's teachings is more important than study.
Developing Bodhicitta is more important than any other practice.

52. Don't Misinterpret

There are said to be six things we can misinterpret in our practice.

We can misinterpret patience by having great patience for everything but the dharma.

We can misinterpret yearning by yearning for material wealth instead of yearning to practice.

We can misinterpret excitement by getting excited about wealth and entertainment and not getting excited about practicing the dharma.

We can misinterpret compassion by only showing it to those who we think deserve it.

We can misinterpret priorities by working hard out of self interest but not working hard on our practice.

We can misinterpret joy by taking delight in the suffering of those we consider enemies and not taking joy in our practice.

53. Don't Vacillate

Practice all the time. Don't practice sometimes and take days off from practice at other times. Just concentrate on training the mind.

54. Train Wholeheartedly

Practice with all your heart. Train purely and with a single-minded focus.

55. Liberate Yourself By Examining And Analyzing

Look at your mind and pay attention to it. We learn so much just by perceiving our minds and where they take us.

56. Don't Wallow In Self Pity

Don't feel sorry for yourself because someone else has better circumstances with you. Just practice.

57. Don't Be Jealous

If someone else receives praise and you don't, don't let jealousy arise. It doesn't help.

58. Don't Be Frivolous

This one's a bit hard to unpack. It's tied to number 57. If someone succeeds and we are jealous, we shouldn't pretend like their accomplishment wasn't that special. We should congratulate them instead.

59. Don't Expect Applause

Don't expect to receive credit for even really important accomplishments. In fact, assume you won't.

That completes the 59 slogans. Thank you for taking this journey with me. These slogans are a method for transforming our lives into the path of the Bodhisattva. Thank you for taking this journey with me.