

Mind Training

I bow to Lokeshvara

First, do the groundwork

Look at all experience as a dream

Groundwork / 1

Practice, Ultimate truth / 2

**Examine the nature of unborn
awareness**

Let even the remedy release naturally

Practice, Ultimate truth / 3

Practice, Ultimate truth / 4

**The essence of the path: rest in the
basis of all experience**

In daily life, be a child of illusion

Practice, Ultimate truth / 5

Practice, Ultimate truth / 6

**Train in taking and sending alternately.
Put them on the breath**

**Three objects, three poisons, and three
seeds of virtue**

Practice, Apparent truth / 7

Practice, Apparent truth / 8

Lokeshvara is the embodiment of compassion in Mahayana Buddhism.

Regard whatever you experience, sense, value, or believe as a dream.

When thoughts about emptiness or non-self arise, look at the thought itself. It releases and you return to your original nature.

Carry the sense of all experience being a magical illusion into your daily life.

Whenever attraction, aversion, or indifference arises in you, do taking and sending to transform the three poisons into seeds of virtue.

Developed by Atiśa.

Collected, organized, and clarified by Stephen Starkey, who is the sole source of any confusion or mistakes herein.

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Develop stable attention

Mindfulness in daily activities

Appreciation for your life, and

Desire to step out of habitual experience, and to help others do it.

Look at what experiences the dream. Don't analyze or speculate. Just look and rest in the looking.

You are clear knowing that is beyond intellect, empty clarity in which experience arises unceasingly. When you recognize this, rest right there and do nothing.

As you breathe in, imagine all the suffering and negativity of others as thick black smoke coming in through your right nostril and into your heart. As you breathe out, imagine your own happiness and wellbeing as silvery light coming from your heart and going out through your own left nostril to all beings everywhere.

Use reminders in everything you do

Practice, Apparent truth / 9

Begin the sequence of taking with you

Practice, Apparent truth / 10

**When misfortune fills the world, make
adversity the path of awakening**

Application, General / 11

Drive all blame into one

Application, General / 12

Be grateful to everyone

Application, General / 13

**The ultimate protection is emptiness;
know what arises as confusion to be the
four aspects of being**

Application, General / 14

**The best way is to use the four
practices**

Application, Special methods / 15

**Work with whatever you encounter,
immediately**

Application, Special methods / 16

**A summary of the essential
instructions: train in the five forces**

Summaries, What to do while living / 17

**The five forces are the mahayana
instructions for dying. Posture is
important**

Summaries, What to do while dying / 18

Note how you react to others' suffering or your own happiness and wellbeing. Do taking and sending with your own reactions first. When they release into awareness, then do taking and sending with others.

As you go about your day, constantly use such verbal reminders as:

Gain is illusion; loss is enlightenment

I take all loss and defeat from others; I give all victory and gain to them

Reactive patterns bring about precisely what you're trying to avoid. When things go wrong in your life, blaming circumstances doesn't help. Look at the role your own patterns play in bringing about the pattern.

Whatever adversity comes your way, use it as a basis for taking and sending. Take in all the similar misfortunes of others and send out your own sense of presence and equanimity.

All experience is open, vivid, and full of possibility.
All three qualities are present in every moment.
Experience your life this way.

Every encounter with another person gives you an opportunity to practice mind training and presence, whether the encounter is pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral.

All experience is in the present. You either open to it right now or you fall into reactive patterns and reinforce them.

Generating goodness

Clearing away negativity

Filling obsessions with awareness, and

Nourishing wakefulness in your life

Virtuous seeds to counteract denial

Dedication to counteract anger

Regret to counteract bargaining

Momentum to take you through despair, and

Training to facilitate acceptance

Developing momentum through consistent practice

Training in all areas of your life

Sowing virtuous seeds through selfless acts

Feeling regret about reactive/destructive states of mind, and

Dedication of personal benefit to everyone's welfare.

All instructions have one aim

Proficiency / 19

**Two witnesses: rely on the important
one**

Proficiency / 20

**A joyous state of mind is a constant
support**

Proficiency / 21

**Proficiency means you do it even when
distracted**

Proficiency / 22

**Always train in the three basic
principles**

Commitments, General / 23

**Change your attitude, but behave
naturally**

Commitments; Body, speech, mind / 24

Don't talk about others' shortcomings

Commitments; Body, speech, mind / 25

Don't dwell on others' problems

Commitments; Body, speech, mind / 26

Work on your strongest reactions first

Commitments, General reactivity / 27

Give up any hope for results

Commitments, General reactivity / 28

Feedback from others is unreliable. You know when you are clear and present. Rely on the witness of mind itself.

Presence is the one aim of all practice instructions. Forget about measuring your achievement and rely on the single question: Can I experience what is arising right now?

Your training arises naturally to correct imbalances when you encounter unexpected events, just as an expert equestrian corrects imbalances without thinking about doing so.

A deep and quiet joy is always present when your internal peace is such that you aren't disturbed or thrown into confusion by events in the world or by your own thoughts and feelings.

Don't make a public display of your efforts in mind training. Behave naturally with others.

Intention, action, and balance.

Don't pick up what isn't yours.

Such talk doesn't help them or you.

Hope for results takes you out of the present. Do what needs to be done now because it needs to be done now, not for the result it might bring.

The strongest reactions generate the biggest imbalances in your being. You can't even see the subtle ones until the strong ones have been dismantled.

Give up poisoned food

Commitments, General reactivity / 29

Don't rely on a sense of duty

Commitments, Anger / 30

Don't lash out

Commitments, Anger / 31

Don't lie in ambush

Commitments, Anger / 32

Don't go for the throat

Commitments, Anger / 33

Don't put an ox's load on a cow

Commitments, Envy / 34

Don't be competitive

Commitments, Envy / 35

Don't make practice a sham

Commitments, Envy / 36

Don't turn a god into a demon

Commitments, Pride / 37

Don't look to profit from sorrow

Commitments, Pride / 38

A sense of duty leads you to overlook nuances in situations, so you react instead of responding to what is needed.

The poison is the tendency to form around any activity or training. Let go of any sense of being special because you practice mind training.

You wait in ambush because you seek revenge. Do taking and sending with the anger that drives the revenge.

Giving expression to your anger by lashing out at people who offend or insult you only reinforces anger in you. Do taking and sending with the anger itself.

Life is what you experience. What you experience is your life. Don't try to shift the unpleasantness of your reactive patterns onto another person.

Anger takes expression as explosive actions. Know the anger completely before you act.

Your practice is a sham when you use it to gain higher status, greater abilities, or other benefits. Practice is about being present. It is not about your getting something for your efforts.

Open to the sense of deficiency, of not being enough, that pushes you to be needlessly competitive.

Mind training is about ending suffering. Anticipation of gain from others' suffering, or even complacency about it, breaches the intention of this practice.

Mind training becomes a source of reactive emotions when you take pride in what you accomplish with the practice.

Use one practice for everything

Guidelines, General / 39

Use one remedy for everything

Guidelines, General / 40

**Two things to do: one at the
beginning, one at the end**

Guidelines, Reminders / 41

**Whatever happens, good or bad, be
patient**

Guidelines, Reminders / 42

**Keep these two, even if your life is at
risk**

Guidelines, Reminders / 43

Learn to meet three challenges

Guidelines, Maintenance / 44

Foster three key elements

Guidelines, Maintenance / 45

**Take care to prevent three kinds of
damage**

Guidelines, Maintenance / 46

Engage all three faculties

Guidelines, Maintenance / 47

**Train on every object without
preference. Training must be broad
and deep**

Guidelines, Extension / 48

Use taking and sending to counteract any reactive tendency that arises.

Bring taking and sending to bear on everything you experience, in formal meditation and in daily life.

If things go well in your life, send your wellbeing to others. If things go badly, take on the misfortunes of others. In either case, don't get carried away by what arises.

Start your day by setting the intention to be present and to use taking and sending. End your day with a review of your states of mind during the day.

Recognize a reactive pattern
Develop a way to work on it, and
Work on it until it releases

Internal transformation is the organizing principle of your life. Let go of your commitment to it, and you lose your life. Mind training is the method you use to transform your life. Let it go, and you fall back into reactivity.

Lack of appreciation damages your relationship with your teacher

A teacher

Lack of enthusiasm damages your practice

An effective practice, and

Lack of mindfulness in your behavior damages conditions conducive to practice

Conditions conducive to practice

Mind training must embrace every aspect of your life. Whatever you ignore or overlook will consume you.

Physically, move and sit in attention, aware of your body and behavior

While speaking, be aware of what you are saying and how you are saying it

Mentally, cultivate attention and taking and sending all the time

Always work on what makes you boil

Guidelines, Extension / 49

Don't be dependent on extraneous conditions

Guidelines, Extension / 50

Practice what's important now

Guidelines, Addressing imbalance / 51

Don't get things wrong

Guidelines, Addressing imbalance / 52

Don't switch on and off

Guidelines, Addressing imbalance / 53

Train wholeheartedly

Guidelines, Maintaining balance / 54

Find freedom by probing and testing

Guidelines, Maintaining balance / 55

Don't boast

Guidelines, Maintaining balance / 56

Don't be hypersensitive

Guidelines, Maintaining balance / 57

Don't be impulsive

Guidelines, Maintaining balance / 58

Conditions don't affect taking and sending practice. If your experience is good, internally or externally, use the good experience in taking and sending. If things are difficult, do taking and sending with the difficulties.

You lose attention most quickly in the areas that you are most sensitive, so pay attention to important relationships and things that especially irritate you.

When an attitude, behavior, or relationship pulls you out of balance and presence, you are not bringing attention to what is arising. Use taking and sending to experience imbalance itself.

What's important right now is the level of attention you can bring to what you are experiencing. Nothing else really counts.

Going through the motions isn't enough. You choose to practice. Pour your heart into it.

Consistency is the key to effective practice. On again, off again practice never develops any momentum.

When you brag about how kind you are or how well you do mind training, you are bolstering your sense of self. Send your practice, along with its benefits, to others.

If you don't push the limits, you will stay as you are. Push on patterns, question assumptions, and don't take anything for granted.

Acting on whatever pops into your mind prevents you from developing any stability or consistency.

Neither stability nor momentum will develop if you constantly react to minor irritations, slights, or inconveniences.

Don't expect thanks

Concluding Verses

Guidelines, Maintaining balance / 59

As the five kinds of decay spread,
This practice changes them
into the way of awakening.
This instruction, the essence of elixir,
Is a transmission from Serlingpa.
The karma from previous training
Aroused intense interest in me.
I ignored suffering and criticism
And sought instruction to subdue holding a self.
Now, when I die, I'll have no regrets.

You practice mind training to be free from your own
conditioning. Why should anyone thank you? You
are the one who benefits.