

Tashi Deleg!

Today, I wish to bring to your attention a teaching that is very often studied, but unfortunately not always practiced with consistency and depth. This is what in Tibetan is called ལོ་ཇོང་ (Lo-jong), which literally means *training the mind* or *refining the attitude*.

Why is this topic so essential? It becomes indispensable the very moment one makes a genuine decision to enter the path of meditation and progress beyond the surface level of practice. Whether it is **Zhinay (Śamatha, calm-abiding)**, **Lhaktong (Vipaśyanā, insight)**, **Mahāmudrā (Chagchen)**, or **Mahāsandhi (Dzogchen)**, all these profound practices require a foundation.

That foundation is nothing else but the proper training of the mind through Lojong.

Why so? Because, without this training, our habitual approach to mind is inevitably distorted. Unknowingly, we misuse our very own mental capacity by relying on a narrow and egocentric perspective.

From such a basis, no matter how much we meditate or analyze, our understanding of reality will remain partial, confused, and unreliable. In other words, we cannot expect accurate or liberating results if the instrument itself—the mind—is left unrefined.

To make this clearer, let us consider a parallel from ordinary education. In early childhood, we go through the most basic forms of learning: how to keep personal hygiene, how to read and write, and how to perform elementary calculations. These are simple but essential skills that enable us to function as independent individuals.

Later, as our education progresses, we enlarge our horizon. We study geography, history, literature, philosophy, and even the natural sciences. All of this helps us expand the scope of our understanding beyond our narrow self-concerns, while at the same time sharpening our ability to process, compare, and analyze information.

Only after acquiring this solid foundation can we enter higher education, where complex and specialized fields of knowledge require more advanced intellectual discipline. The preparation, step by step, is indispensable—without primary and secondary schooling, no one can leap directly into mastering higher mathematics, quantum physics, or medicine.

In exactly the same way, **Lojong is the preparatory training of the heart and mind**, without which advanced meditation will not yield its full fruits. It provides the ethical, emotional, and cognitive foundation by transforming self-centered habits into compassionate openness. Just as literacy and numeracy are prerequisites for higher studies, so too is mind training the prerequisite for realizing the natural state of mind in meditation.

Therefore, before speaking of profound meditation, one must first commit to training the mind in wisdom and compassion. Without Lojong, advanced practices remain like seeds scattered on hard and uncultivated ground: no matter how fertile the seed, nothing will grow.

We will focus on the famous version of Lo-jong composed by Geshe Langri Thangpa.

8 verses by Geshe Langri Thangpa

1. *Considering all living beings More precious than a wish-fulfilling gem, To accomplish the highest aim, I will always hold them dear.*
2. *When in the company of others, I will see myself as lowest of them all, And from the depths of my heart Cherish others as supreme.*
3. *In everything I do, I will watch my mind. As soon as afflictions arise, I will face them squarely and turn them around, For they endanger others and myself as well.*
4. *Whenever I see ill-natured people Or those oppressed by grim misdeeds and misery, Like discovering a precious treasure, I will cherish them as valuable and rare.*
5. *Whenever someone caught in envy Does me wrong by scolding or demeaning me, I will take defeat upon myself And give victory to others.*
6. *Even when someone I have helped And placed my great hopes in Harms me most unfairly, I'll see them as a true spiritual friend.*
7. *Briefly, in direct or indirect ways, I will help and bring happiness to all my mothers While secretly taking upon myself all their hurt and suffering.*
8. *I will keep all these practices untainted By thoughts of the eight worldly concerns. Recognizing all things to resemble illusions, May I be free of attachment and released from bondage.*

