

Lojong 2021 - Class 9 (3.27.21)

Today's Agenda:

Cultivate pure motivation of love
(may all beings benefit from our
Dharma practice)

Continue Point 2: Tonglen
(Giving & Taking) Meditation



Join Us - IBC Activities

Join Slack for course materials

<https://indianabuddhi-qzm6984.slack.com/ssb/redirect>

IBC Activities

1. Meditation 8am Mon & Wed,
2. Meditation 5:30pm Tues
3. Sunday Intro to Buddhism 11am
4. Sunday Sashi Zangpo 1pm
5. Sunday Geshe La Teachings 3:15pm
6. Wednesday night prayers and chanting 6:30



7 Point Mind Training

1. Presentation of the preliminaries, the basis
2. Training in the awakening mind, the main practice
3. Taking adverse conditions onto the path of enlightenment
4. Presentation of a lifetime's practice in summary (how to use this practice throughout your life)
5. Presentation of the measure of having trained your mind
6. Presentation of the commitments of mind training
7. Presentation of the precepts (the rules) of mind training



Geshe Chekawa Yeshe Dorje
(1101-1775)

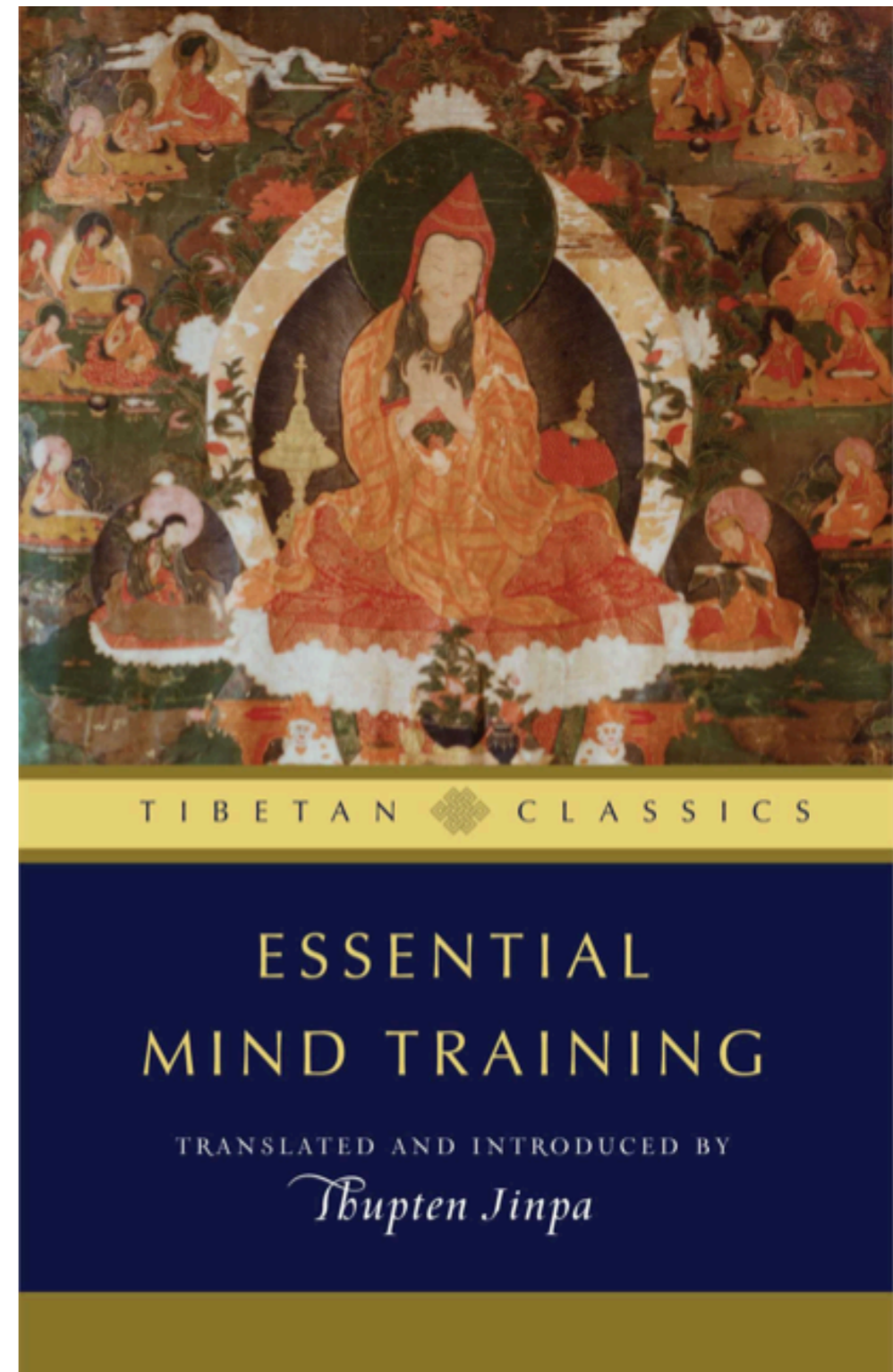
Point 2: Training In The Awakening Mind, The Main Practice

A. Training in ultimate awakening mind

- Train to view all phenomena as dreamlike.
- Examine the nature of the unborn awareness.
- The remedy, too, is freed in its own place.
- Place your mind on the basis-of-all, the actual path.
- In the intervals be a conjurer of illusions.**

B. Training in conventional awakening mind

- Train alternately in the two—giving and taking.
- Place the two astride your breath.
- There are three objects, three poisons, and three roots of virtue.
- In all actions, train by means of the words.



In the intervals be a conjurer of illusions

“Therefore, even though perceptions of self and others, the external environment and the beings within it, and so on arise, it is your delusion that causes nonexistent things to appear [as existing].

Contemplating such things as indistinguishable from illusory horses and elephants, relinquish clinging to substantial reality”



Essential Mind Training
Thupten Jinpa

Point 2: Training In The Awakening Mind, The Main Practice

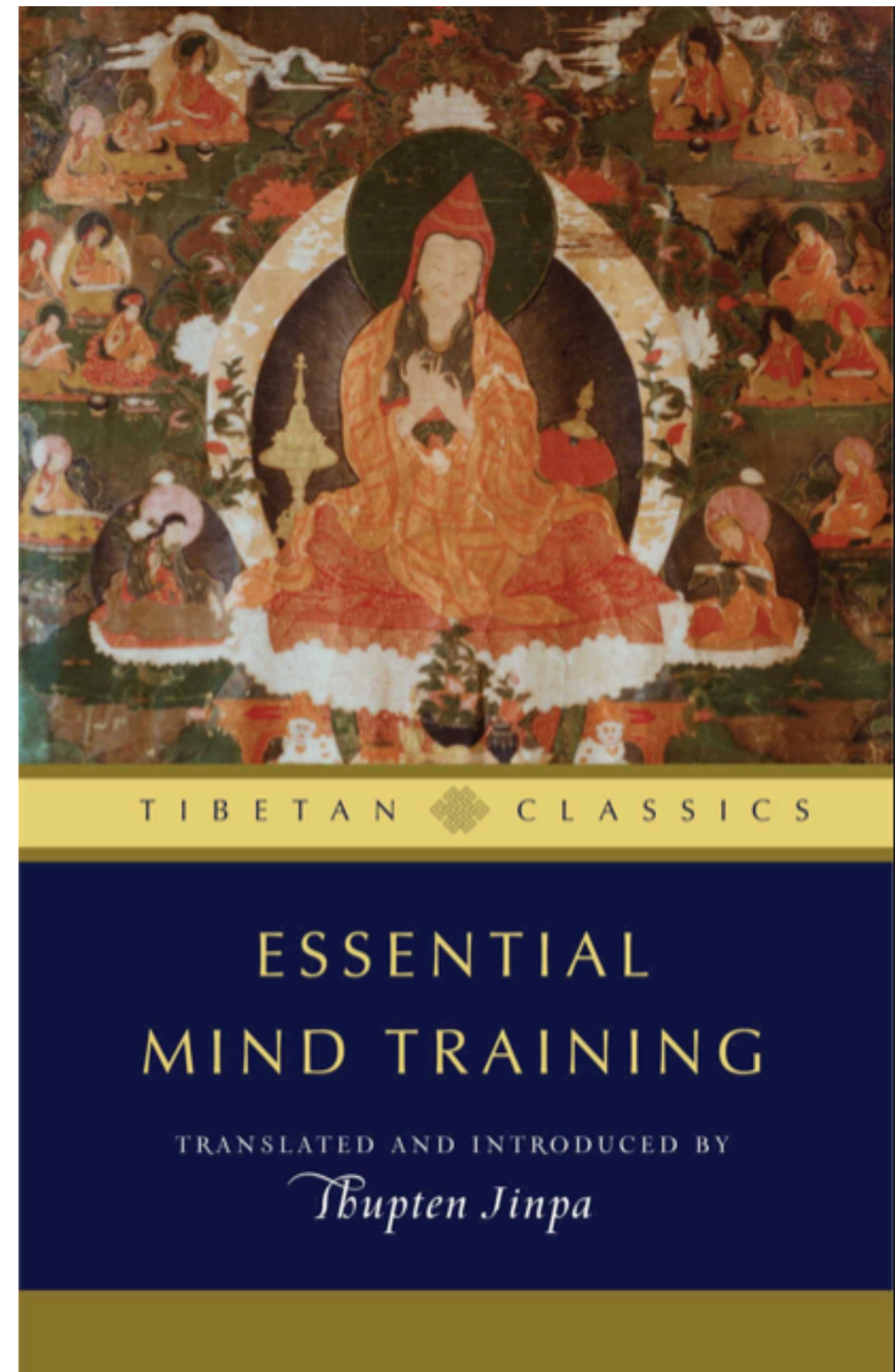
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Train alternatively in the two — giving and taking

“If you do not thoroughly exchange your own happiness with others’ suffering, you will not become a buddha. Even in samsara you’ll have no joy.

From now on, to lessen harm to yourself and pacify the sufferings of others, give your self to others and protect others as you would your self.”

Shantideva



Thubten Jinpa, Essential Mind Training

Quoting Shantideva

Understanding the Inner Demon of “Self”

Self Grasping Ignorance

Believing there’s an inherent self which exists independently of causes & conditions, parts, & conceptual labels

All suffering arises from self grasping ignorance because if there is no dualistic ignorance that separates self & other, believing they truly exist, then there will be no suffering

Emptiness is the antidote to this

Self Cherishing

Believing that “I” or “me” is more important than all other sentient beings. Self consciousness, Inferiority, and feeling one isn’t good enough is similar because it requires Self-Centered preoccupation about “me, me me”

Self cherishing is fueled by ignorance, then strengthened by desire for what one wants, and aversion to what one doesn’t

Love/compassion are the antidotes to this

What Causes Suffering?

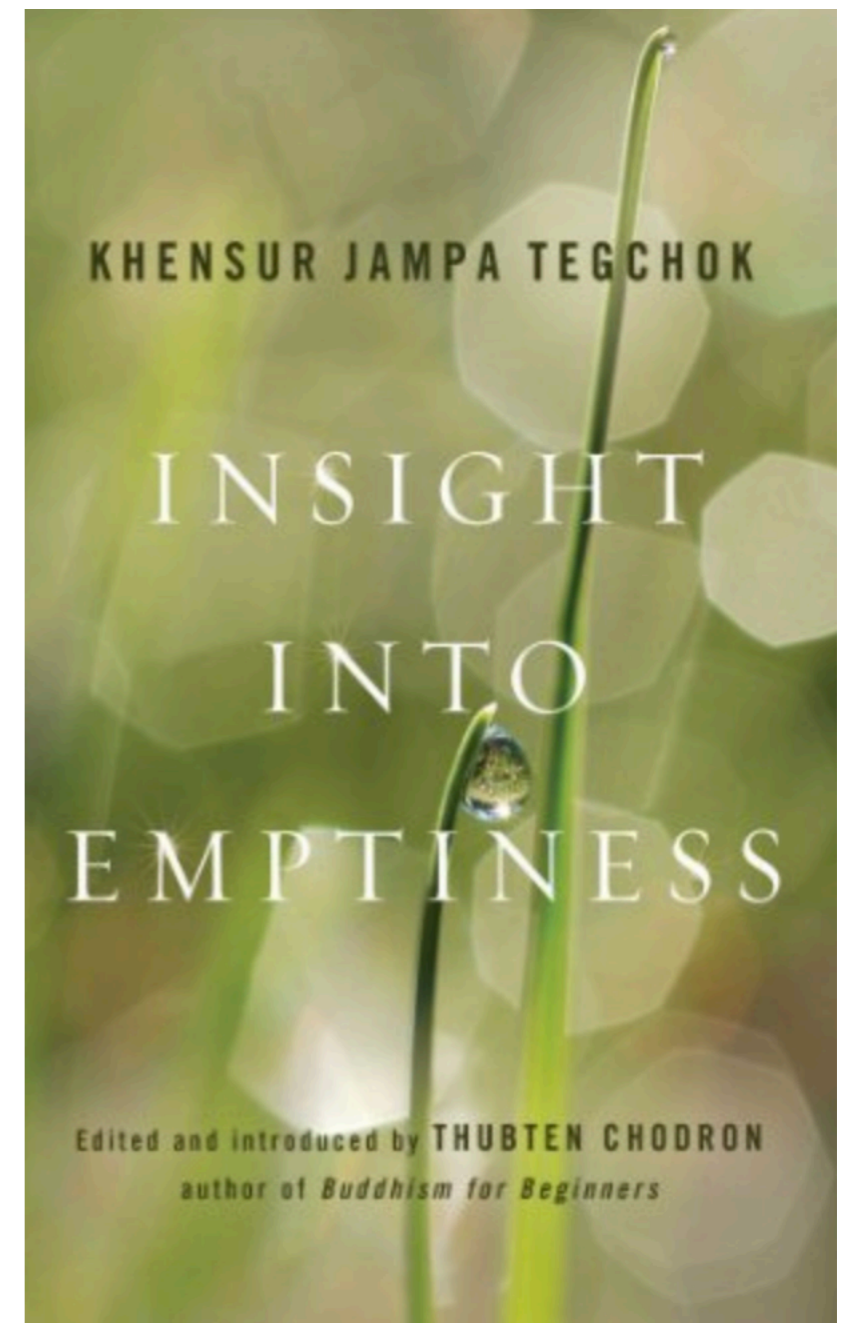
84,000 afflictions



Attachment, Anger, Confusion
Desire, Aversion, Ignorance



Self Grasping Ignorance



Changing our vantage point

- When we do the 4 immeasurable, we say “may all sentient beings be free from suffering **AND ITS’ CAUSES**”
- Lojong teaches us that self-cherishing and self-grasping are like a deep, painful splinter
- It’s important to contemplate the defects of self grasping and self cherishing



Quick Reflection

- Contemplate 1 current challenge you're dealing with in your own life. It can be an old challenge you've been dealing with, or a new/current challenge
- Let the feeling tone you have about it grow for a minute. Open to the feeling tone
- Pull out the splinter of self from the equation, and pretend that situation is happening in a movie to two actors. Try to really believe it's happening to "someone else"
- What happened to the feeling tone as you imagined the actors



Tonglen Preparatory Practice (Bodhichitta)



Visualize your dear mother standing in front of you

- **Gratitude & Deep Appreciation**
- Don't start with all beings because then you may fabricate the compassion & not really feel it
- 9 months pregnancy, sickness, vomiting, hunger, coldness, pain, suffering all for you
- The insanely painful act of childbirth was excruciating
- Upon birth, you didn't even know how to feed yourself, clothe yourself, use the restroom- she fed you possibly from her very own body, cleaned you from your own filth, gave you everything you needed
24/7
- Once you were born, nothing else really mattered for her- you became the center of her universe
- Everything you know how to do today was directly or indirectly taught to you by her
- If you really think about it, you're experiencing the dharma due to your mother's kindness- she gave you life, and extended it by raising you when you were helpless

Tonglen Preparatory Practice (Bodhichitta)



Compassion

- Most of the things she had to do for you caused her to wander further in samsara. In a sense, she is to a degree, now wandering in samsara for your sake. Unfortunately, she's suffering. She's suffering all the suffering that can occur in samsara (desire/aversion/ignorance)
- Focus only on this one person such as your mother. Focus on this one person alone until you actually feel unbearable compassion, not just the thought that you should feel it, but you actually feel it. Only then, gradually expand it
- In terms of how you expand this, once you feel unbearably intense compassion in this life, then extend to those other people you love such as friends, relatives, people you know personally & love a great deal, then those you naturally feel compassion for such as beings of 3 lower states who are presently suffering terribly
- And people in desperate circumstances living in war torn countries, homeless, starving, desperately ill, and so on
- Then those people who are comfortable, but doing terrible things, so are going to be born in a lower state even hell, in their next life. And once you've been able to generate real compassion for each of these beings, then you can extend it to those for whom you have a hard Time feeling compassion. Those of who you're afraid, those who harm you & dislike you whether they're humans or spirits
- Finally, extend it to all beings

Tonglen Preparatory Practice (Bodhichitta)



Compassion

- Must Remember that all beings, all of whom have been your parents do not want to suffer, but they are suffering. They didn't choose to suffer. They're suffering because the things they did caused suffering. Not only that, but in most cases, they're presently engaged in courses of action which will cause them terrible future suffering as well.
- **Contemplate this until you think I have to do something about this; I must do something & think in repayment of their kindness, I must alleviate their suffering. I must make them happy. I must help them.**
- **Practice this preparation for the training in relative bodhichitta until that result to help all beings becomes unconditional**

Tonglen - Actual Practice



Tonglen Practice (giving & taking)

- **Taking their suffering (Compassion)**

- MustRoot Text says- practice giving and taking alternately
- Coordinate them with the breath, or with your breathing
- All things in samsara are included in the 4 noble truths, specifically all aspects of affliction or samsara are included in the truth of suffering and the truth of the cause of suffering. Here we are concerned with the alleviation of suffering, and bringing compassion
- The objects of your compassion, all of whom [are just like you because they want happiness & don't want to suffer], are directly harmed and hurt by suffering, but they're equally hurt indirectly by the causes of them because suffering can't happen without its cause
- So, you want to take suffering AND the cause of suffering from them
- So the attitude of the taking part, of taking and sending is that you want to remove from each and every being all of the suffering that they are experiencing and all of the causes of suffering, Karma, and Kleshas
- So, the attitude is that I am going to take from all beings all of their suffering and its causes, take these things into myself
- Approach this with the attitude that these things need to go somewhere. Actually they don't, but you take the attitude they do. And you want them to be transferred from others into you. Along with the enthusiastic willingness to take upon yourself the sufferings of others, you're also cultivating a joy. And the joy is, how delightful it will be if I can actually do it. You have to believe it. You have to cultivate the actual joy - I really want this to happen & that it would be great.

Tonglen - Actual Practice



- **Giving them love**

- Think that ALL of your possessions, happiness, every pleasure you enjoy, everything you experience that brings you any joy whatsoever and all of the good deeds, the result or imprints of the good deeds you've ever done, or will do, and **all of your happiness, without any reservation, you give it all away to all beings, and if you think I really want them to have this.** In the meditation, you imagine that every being has a complete set. **It's not like you have a limited set of happiness that gets divided into small parts for each person. Instead, it's replicated & they all get it.** Again, cultivate a fierce delight about the fact beings are really enjoying this
- In order to make this easy, as a practice and clear, traditionally you coordinate it with your breathing and with the imagination of darkness and light, so as you breathe in, you think that all of the wrong doing veils (klesha veil, and cognitive veil) and **all of their sufferings are pulled out of all beings in the form of suffering, and gathers as a dark mass is inhaled by you through your nostrils and it dissolves into your heart. At that moment think that all beings, from this moment onward, are now forever free from the results of wrong doing and all suffering.**
- When you breathe out, think that all of your happiness and all of your good deeds, and the imprints of those good deeds, leave you in the form of rays of light. Like moonlight. It's soothing like moonlight. Good strong light that soothes them. It leaves your nostrils and dissolves into each and every being, and think that immediately all those beings achieve the state of a Buddha, and pause to reflect upon that with delight. So this coordination of the intention of taking and sending, the imagination of darkness and light, and the breathing, these 3 things coordinated together constitute the main practice of the entire mind training tradition, so this is done repeatedly throughout the main body of the meditation

Tonglen - Actual Practice



- Think in post meditation, you can also do it whenever you think about it
- **Shantideva said: “As long as you’re unwilling to full exchange your happiness for the sufferings of others you will not achieve buddhahood, and you will never find any happiness in Samsara.”**
- He’s saying as long as you’re too selfish to do this because what blocks you from being a Buddha is selfishness. Not only that, you won’t be happy anytime in Samsara. There are 2 thoughts- in samsara you can’t ever really be truly happy, but you won’t even experience conventional happiness because you’re selfish.
- The source of happiness is being unselfish. As long as you desire your own happiness, you can’t be happy. It can’t work