

Eight Verses of Mind Training



Geshe Langri Thangpa (1054-1123)

Eight Verses of Mind Training

by Geshe Langri Thangpa (1054-1123)

1

With the intention of attaining
The highest goal, may I¹ always
Cherish all sentient beings
Who are greater than a wish-fulfilling jewel.²

2

Whenever I interact with others,
May I consider myself the lowest of all,
And from the depths of my heart
Cherish the others as supreme.

3

In all activities, may I examine my mind,
And as soon as an affliction arises
That endangers myself and others
Strongly confront and avert it.

4

When I encounter ill-natured beings,
Overwhelmed by intense negativity and suffering,
May I cherish them as if chancing upon
A precious treasure that is hard to find.

5

When others, out of envy, mistreat me
With abuse, slander, and the like,
May I take the defeat upon myself
And offer the victory to the others.

6

Even when someone I have helped,
Or in whom I have placed great hope,
Harms me most unreasonably,
May I look upon him as an excellent spiritual guide.

7

In short, may I directly or indirectly
Offer benefit and joy to all my mothers,
And may I secretly³ take upon myself
All their pain and suffering.

8

May all this be undefiled by
The stains of the eight worldly concerns⁴,
And through understanding all phenomena as illusion,
May I be released from the bondage of attachment.⁵

(Translated by Geshema Kelsang Wangmo. Edited by Tica Broch.)

¹ In an earlier version of the *Eight Verses of Mind Training* in Tibetan, the verses do not end with the word “shog”, which is translated here as “may I”, but with “bslab”, which can be translated as “I will train myself”. Therefore, according to the earlier version of this text, the first verse can be translated as:

“With the intention of attaining
The highest goal, I will train myself
To cherish all sentient beings
Who surpass a wish-fulfilling jewel.”

However, since His Holiness the Dalai Lama usually teaches the *Eight Verses* based on the version in which the verses end in “shog”, the English translation here is based on that version.

² According to the Tibetan version of the *Eight Verses of Mind Training*, this verse can also be translated to mean that the wish-fulfilling jewel refers to the highest goal.

However, Geshe Chekhawa (1102-1176) and other masters explain in their commentaries on this text that sentient beings are greater than a wish-fulfilling jewel, so the English translation here is based on these explanations.

³ In the earlier version of the *Eight Verses of Mind Training*, instead of “gsang bas”, which is translated here as “secretly”, it says “gus pas”, which can be translated as “respectfully”:

“...and respectfully take upon myself
all their pain and suffering.”

⁴ The eight worldly concerns are attachment to (1) pleasant experiences, (2) a good reputation, (3) praise and (4) gain, and attachment to avoiding (5) unpleasant experiences, (6) a bad reputation, (7) blame, and (8) loss.

⁵ According to the earlier version of the *Eight Verses of Mind Training*, the last verse can be translated as:

“By keeping all this undefiled from
The stains of the eight worldly concerns,
And through understanding all things as illusion,
I will train myself to be released from the bondage of attachment.”