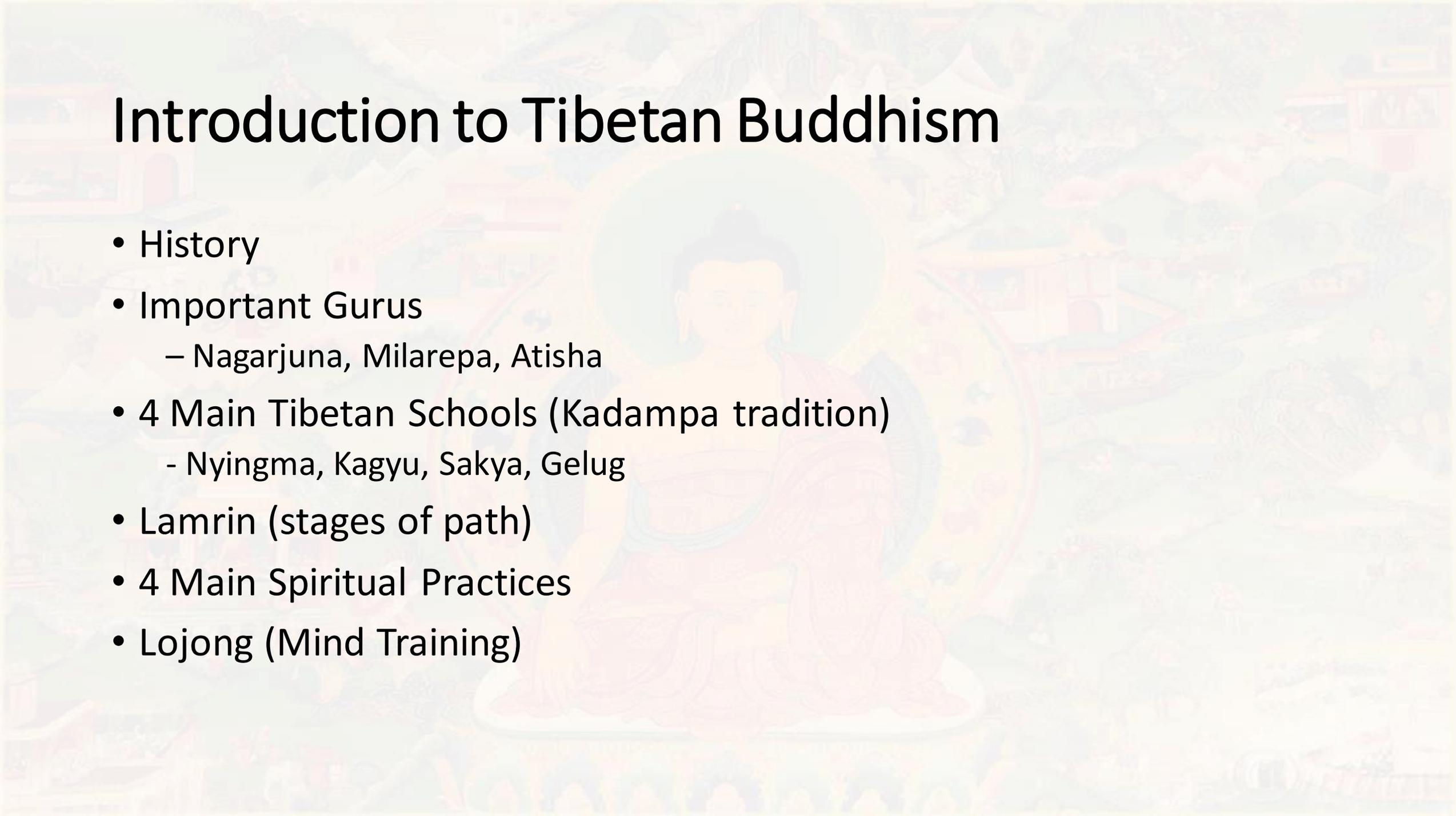




Mind Training The Tibetan Tradition

Dr. Ong Tien Kwan

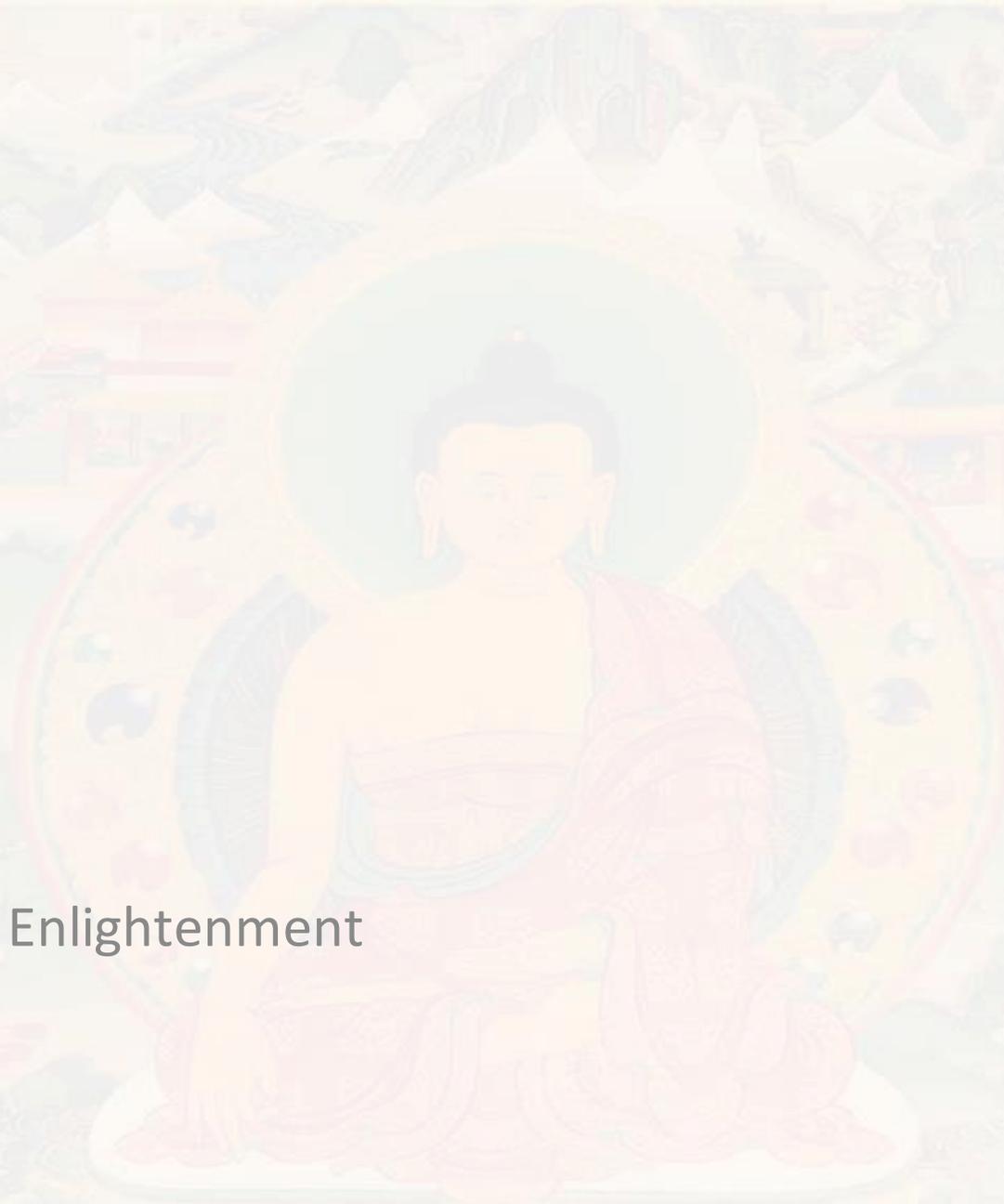
Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism



- History
- Important Gurus
 - Nagarjuna, Milarepa, Atisha
- 4 Main Tibetan Schools (Kadampa tradition)
 - Nyingma, Kagyu, Sakya, Gelug
- Lamrin (stages of path)
- 4 Main Spiritual Practices
- Lojong (Mind Training)

Lamrin

Stages of the Path to Enlightenment



Lamrin (Stages of the Path)

- Atisha – "A Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment" (*Bodhipathapradīpa*)
- Became known as the Kadampa tradition
- 3 kinds of person:
 1. Modest motive – happiness in samsara, good rebirth
 2. Medium motive – abandon worldly pleasures, ultimate peace
 3. High motive – seek to alleviate sufferings of all beings

Modest Motive (Good Rebirth)

1. All must die
2. Rebirth in woeful planes is suffering
3. Aim for higher rebirth
 1. Take refuge in Triple Gems
 2. Understand Law of Kamma
 3. Practice Dana and Sila in body, speech, mind

Moderate Motive – Ultimate Peace

- Realisation of the 4 Noble Truths
 - Truth of Dukkha
 - Truth of the Cause of Dukkha
 - Truth of the Cessation of Dukkha
 - Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Dukkha
- Dependent Origination (12 Links)

High Motive - Bodhicitta

- Developing Bodhicitta
 - Lojong (Mind Training)
 - See all beings as your mother
 - Instruction on how to exchange self interest for others' interest (to think of self less)
- Six Perfections
 1. Dana (Generosity)
 2. Sila (Morality)
 3. Patience
 4. Joyful Efforts
 5. Concentration
 6. Wisdom

21 Lamrin Meditations

1. Our precious human life
2. Death and impermanence
3. The danger of lower rebirth
4. Refuge practice
5. Actions and their effects
6. Developing renunciation for samsara
7. Developing equanimity
8. Recognizing that all living beings are our mothers
9. Remembering the kindness of living beings
10. Equalizing self and others
11. The disadvantages of self-cherishing
12. The advantages of cherishing others
13. Exchanging self with others
14. Great compassion
15. Taking
16. Wishing love
17. Giving
18. Bodhichitta
19. Tranquil abiding
20. Superior seeing
21. Relying upon a Spiritual Guide

4 Main Spiritual Practices

1. Renunciation

- Renounce worldly pursuit of happiness
- Turn inward towards spiritual happiness

2. Bodhicitta

- Knowing beings are trapped in delusion of worldly pursuits gives rise to compassion to help them to be free from sufferings
- In order to do that, one needs to free oneself first from delusion

3. Emptiness

- Realising truth of emptiness is the deepest wisdom necessary to transcend ignorance and sufferings
- Perspectives
 1. Emptiness is the fact that everything changes, no lasting substance or identity
 2. The map is not the territory – our own representations of reality is not the reality
 3. The void is not empty – fullness, of the deepest and most profound peace and love, and interconnectivity of beings

4. Vajrayana (Diamond Path)

- Usually practised after realisation of above three.
- Use of skillful means (visualisation, mantras, blissful subtle energy) to realise the source of all beings (ground zero, void)

Lojong

Mind Training

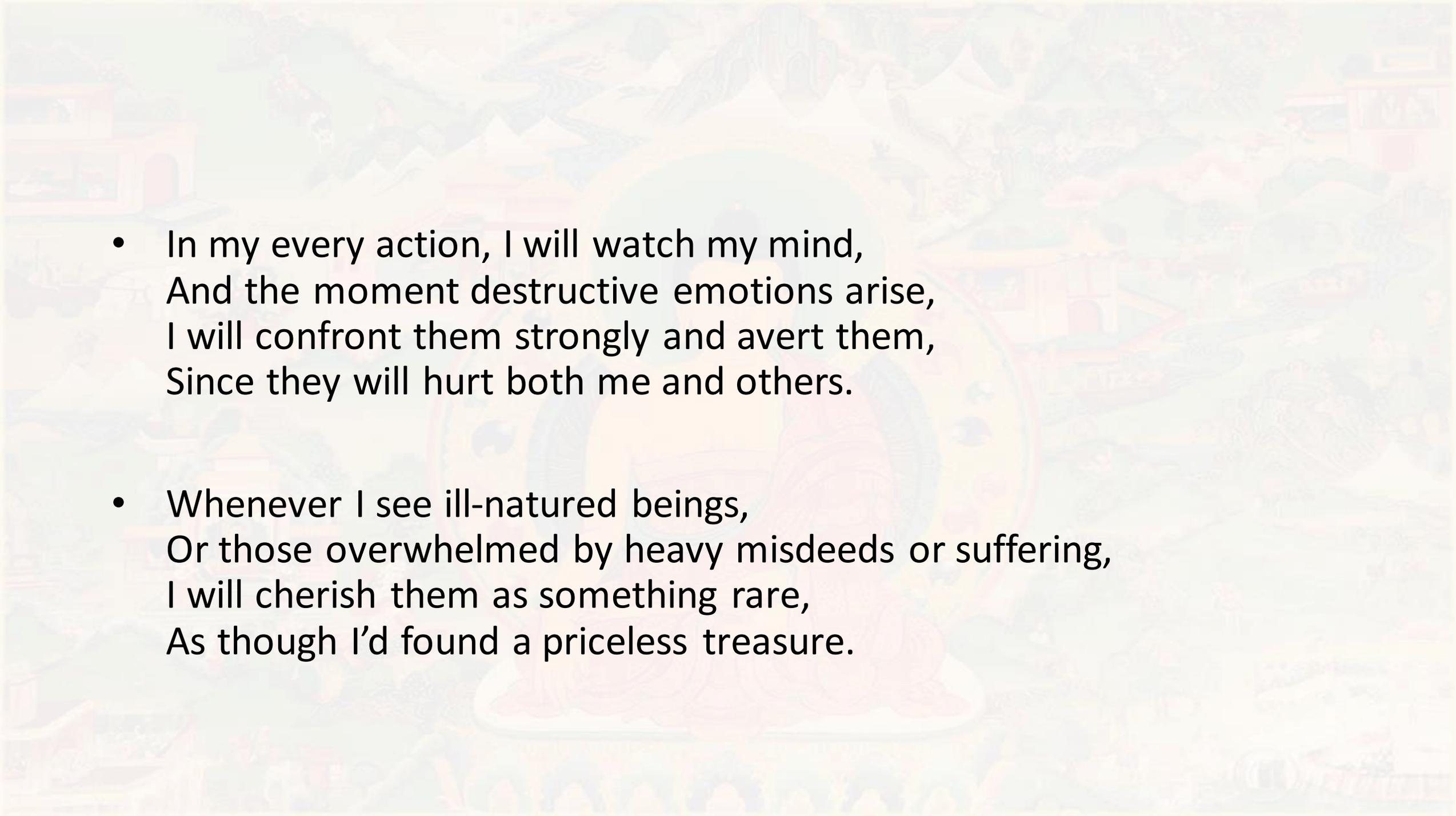


Lojong (Mind Training)

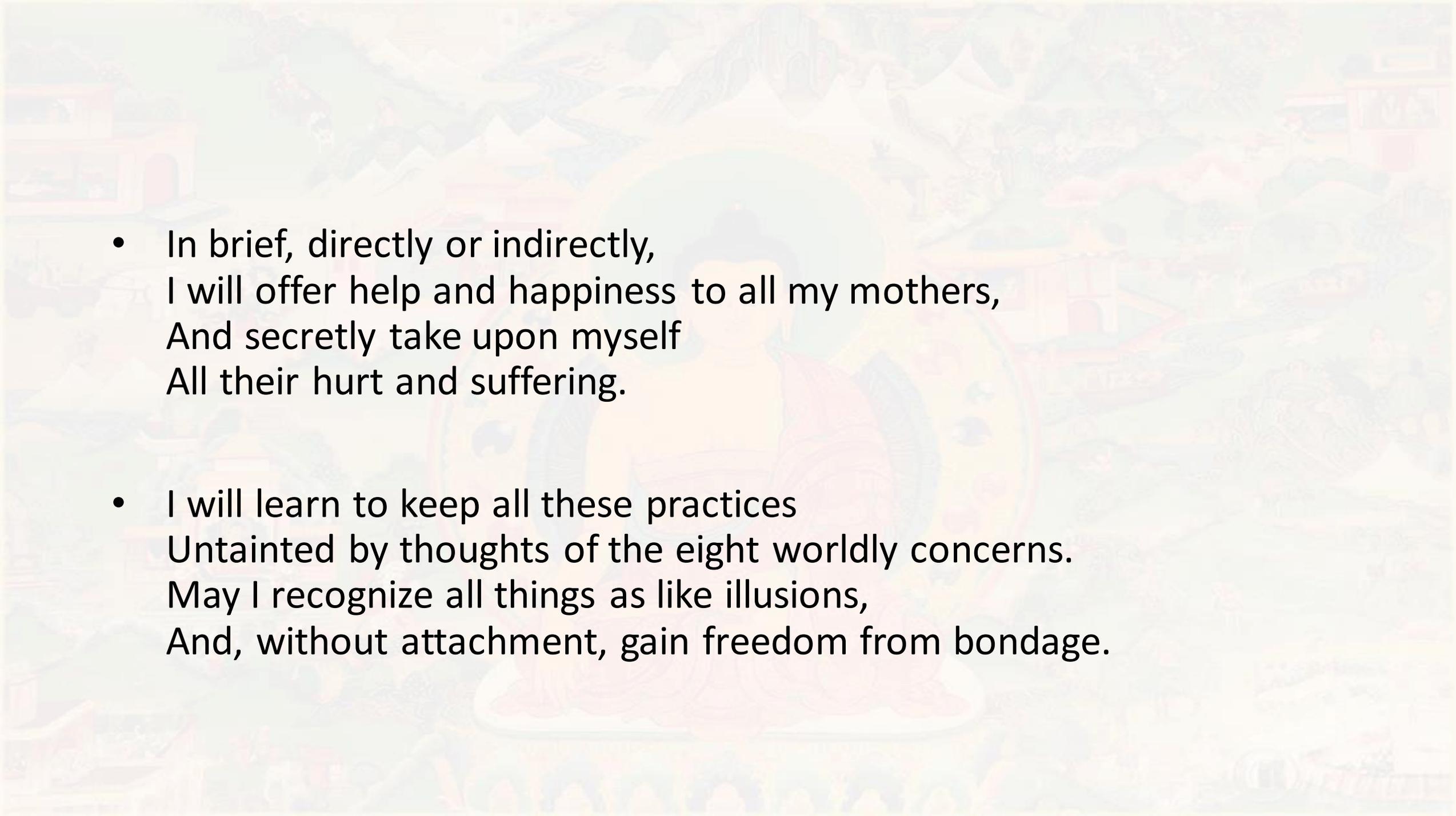
- Based on Atisha's 11th century teachings
- Practice involves purifying ones motivations and attitudes
- Main aims: Major re-orientation of attitude by
 1. Turning away from self-centreness
 2. Transforming adversity into opportunity
- Geshe Langri Thangpa's ***Eight Verses for Training the Mind***
- Chekawa Yeshe Dorje's ***7 Points of Mind Training***
- Je Tsongkhapa's ***Lamrin Chenmo***

8 Verses for Training the Mind

- By thinking of all sentient beings
As more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel
For accomplishing the highest aim,
I will always hold them dear.
- Whenever I'm in the company of others,
I will regard myself as the lowest among all,
And from the depths of my heart
Cherish others as supreme.

- 
- In my every action, I will watch my mind,
And the moment destructive emotions arise,
I will confront them strongly and avert them,
Since they will hurt both me and others.
 - Whenever I see ill-natured beings,
Or those overwhelmed by heavy misdeeds or suffering,
I will cherish them as something rare,
As though I'd found a priceless treasure.

- Whenever someone out of envy
Does me wrong by attacking or belittling me,
I will take defeat upon myself,
And give the victory to others.
- Even when someone I have helped,
Or in whom I have placed great hopes
Mistreats me very unjustly,
I will view that person as a true spiritual teacher.

- 
- In brief, directly or indirectly,
I will offer help and happiness to all my mothers,
And secretly take upon myself
All their hurt and suffering.
 - I will learn to keep all these practices
Untainted by thoughts of the eight worldly concerns.
May I recognize all things as like illusions,
And, without attachment, gain freedom from bondage.

7 Points of Mind Training

1. Preliminaries to Mind Training
2. Main Practice in Bodhicitta
3. Transforming Adversity into Path of Awakening
4. Applying the Practice throughout One's Whole Life
5. Signs of Proficiency in Mind Training
6. Commitments to Mind Training
7. Precepts of Mind Training

All in, there are 59 slogans

Preliminaries

- [Pema Chodron] The preliminaries are also known as the four reminders. In your daily life, try to:
 1. Maintain an awareness of the preciousness of human life.
 2. Be aware of the reality that life ends; death comes for everyone.
 3. Recall that whatever you do, whether virtuous or not, has a result; what goes around comes around.
 4. Contemplate that as long as you are too focused on self-importance and too caught up in thinking about how you are good or bad, you will suffer. Obsessing about getting what you want and avoiding what you don't want does not result in happiness.

Regards all dhammas as dreams

- Regard all experiences – pain, pleasures; hot, cold; love, hate – as dreamlike
- You may believe that they are solid, substantial, real but they are really not
- "Nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God."

Drive all blames into one

- Break the habit of seeking someone or something to blame when things go wrong
- Cultivate the habit of looking within instead
- All sufferings have the Self as its source
- This approach transforms adversity into opportunity and reduces sufferings for self and others

Be grateful to everyone

- Everyone is your mother
- Everyone is your guru
- Be thankful to your enemies for they help you to become aware of your shortcomings (areas you can improve on)



All dhamma agrees at one point

- All dhamma and all experiences lead to one point – the Self
- Our problem is our self-absorption



Always maintain only a joyful mind

- Adversity can be an opportunity when perspective is shifted
- Everyone is a teacher
- A grateful mind is a joyful mind --> love, compassion