

Train Wholeheartedly

You could say, "Live wholeheartedly." Let everything stop your mind and let everything open your heart. And you could say, "Die wholeheartedly, moment after moment." Moment after moment, let yourself die wholeheartedly.

I have a friend who is extremely ill, in the final stages of cancer. The other night Dzongzar Khyentse Rinpoche telephoned her, and the very first words he said were, "Don't even think for a moment that you're not going to die." That's good advice for all of us; it will help us to live and train wholeheartedly.

These teachings are elusive, even though they seem so concrete: if it hurts, breathe in it; if it's pleasant, send it out. It isn't really something that you finally and completely "get." We can read Trungpa Rinpoche's commentaries on mind training and read the text by Jamgyon Kongtrul. We can read them and try to apply them to our lives, and we can let them continually haunt us, haunt us into understanding what it really means to exchange oneself for others. What does that really mean? And what does it mean to be a child of illusion? What does it mean to drive all blames into oneself or to be grateful to everyone? What is bodhichitta, anyway? Trying to speak these teachings to you is-for me-a chance to digest them further. Now you are going to find yourselves speaking them and living them and digesting them. May you practice these teachings and take them to heart. May you make them your own and spread them to others.

From Start Where You Are : A Guide to Compassionate Living by Pema Chodron,

Train Wholeheartedly

Without indulging any distraction, train yourself only in mind training, being completely involved with this one concern.

From The Great Path of Awakening : An Easily Accessible Introduction for Ordinary People by Jamgon Kongtrul, translated by Ken McLeod.

Practice Decisively

Before we engage in a practice, we should first of all consider whether we are up to it. Have we fulfilled any necessary prerequisites? Looking at the four preliminaries mentioned at the outset of this Mind Training, for example, we should examine whether we have some foundation there. If not, and if we aspire to this path, then we should work to become familiar with the preliminaries. After this foundation is established, reappraise the practice again. See whether it continues to hold promise, whether it could be effective in bringing about some transformation in our life. Only with this necessary preparation should we begin the practice, and then go into it fullmindedly and with whole heart. With this decisiveness we can carry through patiently and with courage for the long term, and spare ourselves from withdrawing halfway through, thinking we are not really up to this.

Excerpted from: The Seven-Point Mind Training(first published as A Passage from Solitude : Training the Mind in a Life Embracing the World), by B. Alan Wallace.

Do Not Underestimate Your Ability.

We should cease weighing our capability for doing a task then recoiling from work we consider beyond our capacities. When we are deeply involved in the practice, we should not shirk responsibility. Instead, we should unhesitatingly give ourselves to any beneficial task, no matter what it might be. We should be like warriors and face any task without a trace of fear or reticence. However, in the initial stages of practice, it is unwise to grasp at what is overly difficult, for the mental inability to cope may lead to unnecessary depression and discouragement. Yet as we develop our mind, it is important to eradicate all delusions of incapability that we may harbor.

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Be Zealous in Your Training

Let us train wholeheartedly, completely saturating ourselves with the Mind Training; sometimes meditating on emptiness, sometimes on detachment from this life and sometimes on compassion towards beings. Through investigation and examination, we should endeavor to practice the methods of cultivating the Mind Training more and more.

From Enlightened Courage, by Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche