Lojong for Children

59 short stories about everyday life and the Buddhist practice of mind training



Read one story at a time or read them together.

About this story booklet

Lojong means “mind training.” It comes from Tibetan Buddhism. Its short reminders are called slogans. You can try them when you’re having fun, when something feels unfair, or when you’re deciding what to do next.

Bodhicitta is sometimes called the heart of awakening. It’s the wish to grow wiser and more compassionate so that all beings can be free from suffering. The slogans give you ways to practice that wish.

Each slogan has a short story and a few words about what it means. You can read a story on your own or have someone read it to you. The children in these stories get upset, change their minds, and sometimes ask for help. You can do those things too.

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Start with the basics

Slogan 1

1 Start with four reminders

The chalk river

Nia and her grandpa drew a river across the driveway. They had only one afternoon together, so Nia made sure he got to draw a boat. Then rain washed away the river. Nia wanted to shout at the clouds. Instead she asked Grandpa if he'd help her draw a smaller river under the porch roof. He drew a tiny boat and let her choose who sailed it.

What it means Life is precious. Everything changes. What we do affects what happens next. Always needing things to go our way can make life harder.

Where Lojong begins

Nia's afternoon holds all four reminders. Time with Grandpa is precious. Rain changes their plans. Nia's choice to ask Grandpa for help gives them another chance to draw. When she lets go of having the river exactly where she wanted it, she finds room for a new idea.

Train in wisdom and compassion

Slogans 2–4

2 See how experiences change

The dragon in the hallway

Eli woke from a dream about a dragon and could still feel his heart thumping. At school, when nobody saved him a seat, he thought, “This whole day is ruined.” By lunch he was laughing at a carrot that looked like a foot. He remembered how certain he’d felt about the dragon. His morning had felt enormous too, and now there was a funny carrot in the very same day.

What it means A dream can feel solid while you’re in it. A bad morning can feel like your whole life while it’s happening. Experiences are real to us, and they change as new things happen.

3 Notice the mind that notices

The last bell

After music class, Jun stayed behind to zip his bag. The last bell was still ringing. Then it faded, and he heard a sneaker squeak. Then he noticed a thought about lunch. “What’s noticing all that?” he wondered. He sat for a moment with his hand on the zipper. There was no little lookout inside his head that he could point to. Still, the sounds and thoughts were being noticed.

What it means A sound comes and goes. A thought does too. Lojong invites you to get curious about the awareness that notices both. This is a question you can explore for yourself.

4 Let go of the helpful thought too

A stick for the puddle

Mara and her cousin used a fallen branch to steady themselves while they crossed a muddy path. On the dry side, Mara set it down. Later, before reading aloud, she told herself, “I can go one line at a time.” The words helped her start. By the second page she was thinking about the fox in the book. The reminder had done its job, just like the branch.

What it means A thought like “This feeling will change” can help when you’re upset. Once it has helped, you can let it go too, like setting down a tool when you’re done.

Train in wisdom and compassion

Slogans 5–7

5 Rest in open awareness

Window weather

Rain ticked against Imani's window. She thought about an unfinished drawing, then about the soup bubbling downstairs. For a little while she sat and let the thoughts come and go. She heard a drop hit the windowsill, and then another. When Dad called her for dinner, the drawing was still unfinished. She went downstairs with a little more room in her head.

What it means You can let sounds, thoughts, and feelings come and go while you sit. Give your mind a little room without needing to follow every thought.

6 Carry that openness into your day

A new scene

In the morning, Max asked Ada if she wanted to trade cards. "Go away," she said. Max decided she'd be grumpy all day. At lunch, he saw her making paper stars and almost walked right past. He slowed down. "How do you fold that point?" he asked. Ada slid a square of paper toward him. "Here," she said. "This corner goes first."

What it means After meditation, things can still feel fixed. Someone who seemed grumpy in the morning might be friendly at lunch. Leave room for people and situations to change.

7 Breathe with compassion

An empty birdhouse

Tess found her brother staring at the birdhouse that had fallen in the wind. She wanted to say, "We can make another," but he looked like he needed a minute. As she breathed in, she let herself notice how disappointed he was. As she breathed out, she wished him a little comfort. Then she sat beside him. After a while he handed her the piece with the crooked blue roof.

What it means In a gentle version of tonglen, notice that someone is having a hard time as you breathe in. As you breathe out, wish them some ease. This is a practice of caring.

Train in wisdom and compassion

Slogans 8–10

8 Turn three habits into three kinds of care

Three turns with the ball

At recess, Rafi wanted to pass only to his best friend. A loud kid named Jalen annoyed him, and he barely noticed Mei, who stood at the edge of the court. Rafi passed to Mei. Then he took a breath when Jalen shouted for the ball and asked him to call more softly. When his best friend wanted a third turn, Rafi saved it for someone who was still waiting.

What it means We can cling to people we like, push away people who bother us, or ignore people we hardly know. Practice generosity, patience, and attention when those habits show up.

9 Take a slogan with you

Words in a pocket

Luz kept a scrap of paper in her coat pocket. It said, “One breath first.” She forgot about it until the bus was late and her little brother asked for the third time why they were still waiting. Her fingers found the paper. She breathed once. “I wish I knew,” she said. “Want to see if we can spot it from here?”

What it means A slogan is a short reminder you can use during ordinary things like packing your bag or waiting for your turn.

10 Start with your own hurt

A seat at the table

Mina walked into the lunchroom and saw that her usual table was full. She sat somewhere else and wished the sting in her chest would ease. Then she spotted a boy wandering with his tray. Maybe he knew that sting too. She moved her bag off the chair beside her. “You can sit here if you want.” She was glad when he did.

What it means In tonglen, your own hurt can help you understand what others feel. Give yourself the same care you’d wish for another child.

Practice when things get hard

Slogans 11–13

11 Use a setback to practice

The rained out picnic

Rain soaked the field on the day of the class picnic. Dom had been waiting all week to fly his kite. He leaned his forehead on the bus window until the teacher asked who could help carry lunch inside. He still wanted to fly the kite. He took one end of the lunch crate anyway. In the gym, someone spread out the picnic blanket, and Dom saved a dry corner for the teacher.

What it means When a plan falls apart, you can feel upset and still find one thing to practice. Getting help can be part of that practice.

12 Notice what clinging adds to a problem

The tall tower

Suri's cousin knocked into the tower they were building. Suri snapped because she wanted hers to be the tallest at the library club. Her cousin backed away. Suri looked at the blocks she'd spread into the aisle. "I left these where people walk," she said. "Can we move the base?" Her cousin helped clear a path, then asked if the next tower could have a tunnel.

What it means Ask whether needing to win, be right, or get your way is making a problem bigger. You can take responsibility for your choices. Other people are responsible for theirs.

13 Notice who helps you learn

A different way across

At swim class, Mateo wanted to cross the pool as fast as his friend. An older swimmer saw him gulp water and showed him how to slow his kick. The next day a younger swimmer held up their lane, and Mateo felt himself getting impatient. He remembered how long one lap had felt yesterday. "I can wait here," he said. He held the wall until there was space.

What it means Some people show us kindness directly. Others give us a chance to practice patience or ask for help. You can appreciate what you learned and keep a safe distance from someone who hurts you.

Practice when things get hard

Slogans 14–16

14 Look closely at confusion

A whisper by the cubbies

Amal heard whispering behind the cubbies and thought, “They’re laughing at me.” The thought arrived before she could tell who was talking. It had no shape she could hold, even though her cheeks felt hot. Then one of the kids bent down and pulled a paper frog from a shoe. As Amal heard it give a silly squeak, her first guess began to loosen.

What it means A worried thought can pop up without a clear starting point. It appears, it has no solid shape, and it can change. All of this happens in the same moment of noticing.

15 Meet trouble in four ways

The torn seed packet

Ivy tore a packet of seeds while arguing over the garden tools. She fetched a tray to save the seeds, then told her partner what she’d done and offered to replace the packet. At planting time she shared some of her own seeds with a group that was short. Before they dug, she remembered how her aunt had taught her to start over after a mistake. She put the spare trowel where everyone could reach it.

What it means Here’s an everyday version of four traditional practices. Build up helpful actions, repair harm you caused, meet trouble with generosity where you can, and remember what supports your practice.

16 Pause when life surprises you

The flying pencil case

A pencil case slid off Kai’s desk and hit the floor with a bang. He was already opening his mouth to blame the kid beside him. He felt both shoes on the floor for a second. Then he saw his backpack strap looped around the case. He’d pulled it down himself. “Oops,” he said, and caught a rolling pencil with his foot.

What it means A surprise can make you react before you know what happened. A pause gives you time to notice and choose what to do.

Practice throughout your life

Slogans 17–18

17 Grow five strengths

Five chances to listen

Bea wanted to give her brother time to finish his stories. At breakfast she decided to try. At dinner she practiced again and set her fork down so she could listen. When “I know!” came rushing up, she caught it before it escaped. That night she hoped she’d remember tomorrow, especially if he told another long story about his favorite bug.

What it means Decide how you want to act. Practice often. Do helpful things that make kindness easier. Catch habits that cause harm. Make a wish to keep growing.

18 Keep practicing through all of life

Grandad and the swallows

When Grandad was very ill, Hana sat by his bed and told him the swallows had come back. He said he hoped they’d find enough mud for their nest. She liked that he still had room to care about the birds. After he died, Hana’s aunt helped her say goodbye. When Hana saw a swallow at the window, she remembered Grandad’s wish and made one of her own for the little birds.

What it means This traditional slogan brings the five strengths to the end of life, too. We can learn now to let go, remember kindness, and wish others well, even during a sad goodbye.

If this story reminds you of someone you miss, you can read it with a grown-up you trust.

Notice how you are growing

Slogans 19–20

19 Ask if you’re making more room for others

A map with two trails

Jo had the map on a family walk and wanted to take the long trail. His sister said her legs were tired. Jo almost pointed out that he was the one holding the map. Instead, he showed her a shorter loop that still went past the creek. He wanted to see the creek, and she wanted to sit by the water. They folded the map together.

What it means One way to see whether mind training is helping is to notice how tightly you hold on to “me first” or “my way.” Your own needs matter, and so do other people’s.

20 Be an honest witness to your choices

The good helper badge

Zoe’s teacher thanked her for carrying a bin of books. Zoe knew she’d grabbed it partly because she wanted the classroom helper badge. Later she saw another bin by the door. “Is this one going back too?” she asked the librarian. It was. This time the hallway was empty, and Zoe liked how the librarian’s arms relaxed when she took the bin.

What it means Other people see what you did. You can also look honestly at why you did it. Take useful feedback seriously and check in with yourself.

Notice how you are growing

Slogans 21–22

21 Make room for quiet joy

The crooked lantern

Sam's best friend was moving, and Sam felt glum at the neighborhood lantern walk. His lantern leaned so far sideways it looked like a duck with a cold. When a little kid saw it and laughed, Sam laughed too. A moment later he missed his friend again. He carried the funny lantern home, glad he had gone.

What it means In Lojong, joy can mean trusting that there's something worth practicing even on a rough day. You can feel sad and still notice one moment of warmth.

22 Try it in the middle of a mess

Two minutes before the curtain

In rehearsal, Ava remembered to wait her turn. On show night, the hall was loud and three people asked for the same prop. Ava started to yell over them, then heard Sol trying to finish a sentence. She leaned closer. Sol knew where the prop had gone. They found it under a costume two minutes before the curtain went up.

What it means It's easier to remember patience in a quiet room. You can see your practice growing when you remember it in a noisy room or during a disagreement.

Live your practice with others

Slogans 23–25

23 Keep three promises in practice

The slippery steps

At the skating rink, Noor promised to look out for others and keep trying to be patient. Then a beginner blocked the steps and her friend groaned, “Just go around him.” Noor waited until he had both hands on the rail. She asked if he needed the attendant. Later, when the same friend slipped, Noor waited for her too.

What it means Stay faithful to the basic teachings, act with care, and practice patience with everyone. Mind training shows up in how you treat people.

24 Change your attitude and be yourself

The joke book

Leo loved jokes and could tell them from breakfast to bedtime. At camp, he noticed that Dani often started a story and then went quiet while he talked. One evening he closed his joke book and said, “What happened after the canoe tipped?” Dani made the best frog noise Leo had ever heard. The next day he still told his jokes, and he asked Dani to do the frog.

What it means You can loosen the habit of thinking only about yourself while still laughing at the same jokes and liking the same things.

25 Treat tender spots with care

The word on the board

When Ben paused over a long word, a few kids giggled. Rosa knew how hard Ben had worked to read this part aloud. She waited. When he found the word, she kept her eyes on the story. At lunch she asked if he wanted to sit by her. He did, and they talked about the dog in the book.

What it means Someone’s body, disability, or sore spot deserves privacy and respect. A joke about it can hurt even if other kids laugh.

Live your practice with others

Slogans 26–28

26 Stop collecting other people's faults

The teammate with the orange socks

Remy kept thinking about the pass Cameron missed. On the way to the next game, he saw Cameron kneeling by a younger player to fix a shoelace. Cameron was wearing those ridiculous orange socks again. Remy still wished they'd made that pass. He could also remember who always waited for the last player to leave the field.

What it means It's easy to replay what someone did badly and decide that's who they are. Give yourself room to notice the rest of the person.

27 Start with your biggest sticking point

The half told story

Arlo wanted to change everything about how he acted at school by Monday. Then his friend said, "I keep losing the end of my stories when you jump in." At lunch Arlo heard his friend say, "And then the goat…" He nearly guessed what happened. He took a bite of his sandwich and heard the whole story. The goat had climbed into a wheelbarrow.

What it means Some habits cause more trouble than others. Pick a habit that regularly gets in the way of kindness and give it some attention.

28 Practice without keeping a scorecard

Chairs for the concert

After choir practice, May stacked chairs and thought, "That makes three helpful things today." Then she saw a small kid pulling a chair that was too heavy. She forgot her tally and picked up the other side. By the time they reached the stack, the kid was telling her about the song he wanted to sing next week.

What it means Kindness takes time to grow. When you're busy checking whether you've improved or earned a reward, it's easy to miss the person in front of you.

Live your practice with others

Slogans 29–31

29 Watch what sneaks into a good deed

The tricky knot

Jules knew every knot in the craft book. When Dani's bracelet came loose, Jules reached for it and started to say, "This is easy." Dani pulled the thread closer. Jules felt the itch to show off. "Want me to hold this end while you tie it?" she asked. Dani nodded, and Jules held it steady while Dani finished the knot.

What it means A kind act can feed pride if you use it to feel better than someone else. Notice that urge and come back to what the other person needs.

30 Loosen your grip on grudges

The cold bench

A friend broke a promise to meet Zaid at the park. For two days Zaid replayed it, adding old things he was mad about. At their next practice, he told his friend, "I waited a long time. Can you text if plans change?" Then he went to help set up the goals. As he pulled a net over the frame, he realized he'd gone a whole minute without hearing the argument in his head.

What it means When hurt keeps coming back, you may start looking for reasons to stay mad. You can name the hurt and set a boundary while giving yourself a break from replaying it.

31 Speak about others with care

The group chat

A class chat filled up with jokes about a child who had dropped lunch in the cafeteria. Dee typed a joke too, then pictured the child opening the chat. She deleted it. The messages kept coming, so she showed the thread to a trusted teacher and explained what had happened. Later she asked the child if they wanted to play cards.

What it means Words can carry harm even when the person is out of the room. Telling a trusted adult what happened is a way to get help.

Live your practice with others

Slogans 32–34

32 Let go of plans to get even

The unlocked shed

Owen's friend laughed when Owen missed a shot. Later Owen found his friend's bike beside the open shed and thought about hiding it. He stood there a moment, still angry. Then he closed the shed and went to find his friend. "I'm upset about the joke," he said. "I'm going home for a while. We can talk tomorrow."

What it means After someone hurts your feelings, you might wait for a chance to hurt them back. You have other choices, even when you're still angry.

33 Leave the sore spot alone

The torn corner

Nico was furious when June ripped a corner off his drawing by tugging it across the desk. He almost shouted a secret June had told him about her family. The secret had nothing to do with his picture. "I worked hard on that," he said. "Please ask before you touch it." June slid the drawing back and offered to get tape.

What it means In an argument, you may know exactly what would embarrass the other person. Stick to what happened and what needs to change.

34 Carry your share

Glitter under the shelf

Imani spilled glitter and hoped Dad would think the cat had done it. Then she pictured Dad sweeping while she watched. "It was me," she told him. "Can you show me how to get it out from under the shelf?" Dad fetched a brush, and Imani swept until the cat could walk by without sparkling.

What it means When you made a mess or agreed to a job, take your part seriously. You can ask for help and still own your part.

Live your practice with others

Slogans 35–36

35 Give up racing for the best spot

The window seat

At the museum, Fin dashed for the only window seat in the little theater. He liked being first. Then he saw a shorter kid stand on tiptoe behind him. There were several seats where Fin could see just fine. He moved over and said, “You can have the window.” From the next seat he still saw the dinosaur’s enormous foot.

What it means Competition can be fun in a game. Grabbing the best share or rushing to get credit can make an ordinary moment unfair.

36 Keep your kindness straightforward

The borrowed ruler

Hugo lent Sol an eraser and later said, “Now you have to let me use your ruler.” Sol looked confused. Hugo realized he’d turned a favor into a deal Sol had never heard about. “You can still borrow the eraser,” he said. “Could I use your ruler when you’re finished?” Sol told him how many lines he had left to draw.

What it means Sometimes we offer a favor because we secretly hope the other person will owe us. Give freely when you can. If you need something, ask directly.

Live your practice with others

Slogans 37–38

37 Keep your practice from becoming a brag

The expert on calm

Leah told her cousins she knew all about patience because she meditated. A minute later she snapped when they took too long to choose a game. Her cousin raised an eyebrow. Leah felt her face get warm. She took a breath and said, “I interrupted you. What were you going to pick?” The cousins ended up choosing a game Leah had never played.

What it means Mind training can become another way to feel superior. The practices work best when you use them to notice your own habits.

38 Look for a win that leaves others well

The winning picture

When the club picked a photo for its poster, Nate wanted to use the one where he looked great and a teammate was caught mid-sneeze. A few kids thought it was hilarious. Nate imagined seeing his own sneeze on the hallway wall. He asked for one more photo. His teammate got to stand in the front this time, and Nate still liked the picture.

What it means Notice when your fun or advantage depends on another person being hurt or left out. See if there’s a fairer way to get what you need.

Keep coming back to practice

Slogans 39–41

39 Bring one caring aim to what you do

The library cart

Alia had three jobs at the library fair. She decided to look for ways to make the day easier for whoever came next. She parked the book cart where a wheelchair could pass, put the tape where the next volunteer could find it, and held a door while someone carried a box. By the end of the fair she'd forgotten which of those jobs had been on her list.

What it means You can bring the wish to ease suffering to a chore, a game, or a conversation. It can guide small choices all day.

40 Use the same caring aim when you slip

The collapsed puppet

A puppet fell apart minutes before the class show. Ezra yelled at his partner, who went very quiet. Ezra remembered he'd wanted everyone to feel welcome backstage. He let out a long breath. "I'm sorry I yelled. Can I help with the puppet?" His partner pointed to a loose knot. Ezra held the strings steady while she tied it.

What it means When you've caused harm or a strong feeling takes over, come back to compassion. It can help you decide what to fix and how.

41 Begin with a wish and end with a look back

Two halves of a day

At breakfast, Pia decided to give her new lab partner time to answer. During science she jumped in too early once. The next time she watched a bubble rise in the beaker while she waited. Her partner spotted another bubble before Pia did. That evening, Pia remembered both moments and decided she'd try waiting for a bubble again.

What it means At the start of the day, decide how you want to practice. At the end, notice what happened and choose what to try next.

Keep coming back to practice

Slogans 42–44

42 Stay steady when things go either way

The two scoreboards

On Saturday, Robin's team won. Robin was thrilled and thanked the other goalie for a good game. On Sunday, the team lost, and Robin wanted to walk straight to the car. Then he saw the same goalie gathering cones. Robin took a corner of the cone bag and carried it with him, even with the sting of losing still there.

What it means Good luck can make us forget others. Bad luck can make it hard to see past our own frustration. Both are chances to practice patience.

43 Keep two commitments under pressure

The dare

Some kids dared Alia to tip a classmate's bag onto the floor. She wanted to stay part of the group. She also remembered her promise to care about what happened to other people and to learn how to help. "Leave his bag alone," she said. When they kept reaching for it, she stepped away and got a teacher.

What it means Hold on to basic care for others and to your wish to wake up to what helps everyone. You can stand by those commitments and get to safety.

44 Practice three hard steps

The sharp reply

Whenever her little brother touched her clay, Isa called him a pest. One afternoon she heard the word about to come out and stopped. "Please ask first," she said. The next day she forgot and snapped. She tried again the day after that. By Friday, "Please ask" came out before "pest," and her brother actually asked.

What it means First, notice the habit. Next, interrupt it. Over time, make the helpful response easier to repeat.

Keep coming back to practice

Slogans 45–47

45 Find three kinds of support

A place to try

Lena asked the school librarian how to slow down when she felt rushed. The librarian showed her how to put both feet on the floor and take one breath. They chose a quiet corner where Lena could practice after lunch. At first Lena thought the breath was too small to matter. She was curious enough to try it for a few days and see.

What it means Lojong grows with a trustworthy teacher, helpful conditions for practice, and a mind willing to learn. People who practice with you can help create those conditions.

46 Keep three good things growing

The promise by the door

Jin's uncle had shown him how to wait while someone found their words. Jin liked the reminder because his own words sometimes got stuck. One morning he thanked his uncle for teaching him. Then his neighbor stopped him by the door to tell a slow story. Jin had promised himself he'd listen to the end. He stayed long enough to hear about the turtle.

What it means Keep appreciating trustworthy teachers, enjoying the teachings, and honoring the promises you make in practice.

47 Let your thoughts words and actions agree

Pull up a chair

Nadia thought the new student might want a place at the lunch table. "Want to sit with us?" she asked. She moved her backpack and pulled up a chair. When the new student began to tell them about her old school, Nadia set down her juice box and listened.

What it means Your body, speech, and mind can all help someone. Think with care, speak with care, and let what you do match.

Keep coming back to practice

Slogans 48–50

48 Practice with people outside your circle

The bus stop bench

Every day Farah said hello to her friends at the bus stop. She usually ignored the older student who sat alone at the far end. One chilly morning he dropped a glove. Farah set it on the bench where he could see it. “I think this is yours,” she said, then went back to her friends.

What it means Compassion can reach friends, strangers, and people you find hard to be around. You can care from a safe distance when you need to.

49 Get curious about what bothers you

The tapping pencil

Toby got so annoyed by Vic’s tapping pencil that he wanted to grab it. He held his own pencil instead and noticed he’d lost his place each time the tapping started. He wanted to finish one tricky line. “Could you tap on your notebook? It’s quieter,” he asked. Vic tried it. Toby found his place again.

What it means Notice the person or situation that brings up resentment. With some space, you can learn what sets off the feeling and what you need.

50 Practice with the day you have

The loud kitchen

Cam wanted a quiet minute to settle down, but the dog was barking and the blender was running. He set his palms on the counter and felt how cool it was. His sister was trying to pass behind him with a bowl. Cam moved his feet to give her space. The kitchen was still loud. He’d found a little room anyway.

What it means A quiet room or a good mood can make practice easier. A busy day still gives you moments to remember what matters.

Keep coming back to practice

Slogans 51–53

51 Put what matters most first

The first turn

Vera had waited all morning to try the new swing. When she arrived, Lou was already waiting. Vera could have slipped past him while he tied his shoe. She held the swing steady instead. “You were here first,” she said. Then she went to ask how long everyone thought a turn should be.

What it means Lojong asks us to put compassion and waking up ahead of getting our own way. This life gives us a chance to practice right now.

52 Check what you call practice

The wrong kind of glad

At the spelling bee, Cole grinned when a kid he disliked missed a word. He liked being the one still standing. Later the same kid got a tricky word right in a practice round. Cole heard how carefully she sounded it out. “That’s a hard one,” he said. This time the smile came from seeing how pleased she was.

What it means Patience, compassion, and joy can get mixed up. You might call yourself patient when everything goes your way, or feel pleased when someone you dislike gets in trouble. Look at where your attention goes.

53 Keep coming back

The blue shoelaces

Every morning, Mae meant to remember to speak gently to her little sister. Some mornings she did. On others, they quarreled before they found their shoes. Mae began using her blue laces as a reminder. A week later, on a day they’d already quarreled, she tied the laces and went back to ask her sister to walk with her.

What it means Some days you’ll remember to practice. Other days you’ll forget. Steady practice grows by returning again and again.

Keep coming back to practice

Slogans 54–56

54 Give one practice your whole attention

The long way home

As they walked home, Adrian's cousin started telling him about a rough day. Adrian was halfway through a game on his phone. He put it in his pocket and took the longer path past the trees. By the time they got home, his cousin had reached the part she'd been trying to tell him all afternoon.

What it means When you choose a way to help, give it your attention for a little while. A small action can be done wholeheartedly.

55 Look closely at what happens in your mind

The missing drawing

When Leila's drawing vanished, her first thought was, "Finn took it." Then she remembered what she'd actually seen. Finn had walked past the desk. She also remembered sliding some papers into her folder. The drawing was there. She traced the whole thing back in her mind, surprised by how fast a walk past her desk had turned into a story about Finn.

What it means You can learn from a reaction by examining what set it off, what story your mind told, and what helped it settle.

56 Care for yourself when you feel stuck

The wobbly bridge

Milo's model bridge collapsed, and he thought, "Everything I make falls apart." For a while he sat with his head on his arms. His aunt came in and asked if she could sit beside him. After a minute, Milo lifted his head. "This bridge is what I'm upset about," he said. "Can you hold one side while I look at the joint?"

What it means "Poor me" can become a loop that makes it hard to see what might help. Your hurt deserves care, and you can take one small step when you're ready.

Keep coming back to practice

Slogans 57–59

57 Make space for someone else's good news

The lead in the play

Ellis wanted to play the pirate captain. When his friend got the part, his stomach sank. He took a little time by himself before going over. "I liked how you said the line about the storm," he told her. He still wished he'd been picked, and he was looking forward to hearing her say that line onstage.

What it means Jealousy can show you what you wish you had. Notice the wish and practice being glad that someone else got something good.

58 Pause before you get swept up

The almost sent video

Kei filmed a friend slipping on a patch of mud. Everyone laughed, and Kei nearly sent the clip to the class chat. Her thumb hung over the arrow. She pictured her friend seeing it passed around at school. Kei put the phone away and went to see if her friend needed a hand up.

What it means In a burst of excitement, irritation, or silliness, it's easy to say whatever comes to mind. A little steadiness helps you see who might be affected.

59 Be kind even when nobody claps

The quiet cleanup

When the playground emptied, Tessa saw the box of sidewalk chalk sitting open under a dripping gutter. She tucked the chalk away and put the box in its usual spot. The next morning a few children found it and drew a long purple train. They never knew who'd put the chalk away. Tessa stepped over the tracks and went to join her friends.

What it means Praise can feel good. The help you give still matters when nobody notices who gave it.

FOR FAMILIES AND TEACHERS

A note for grown ups

These stories are written for children ages 8 to 12. Each one gives a child a concrete way into a Lojong slogan. You can read a story aloud and let the child decide whether to talk about it. Slogan 18 includes the death of a grandparent. Read it together or return to it later if that feels right for the child.

The headings and explanations are child-friendly adaptations of the Tibetan Buddhist teachings attributed to Geshe Chekawa Yeshe Dorje. The booklet follows the 59-slogan numbering presented by Lamrim Path. Wording and order can vary by lineage and edition.

Lamrim Path · Numbered slogan list Lotsawa House · Root text