

How to train in the Perfection of Joyous Perseverance

This has 5 parts:

1. What Joyous Perseverance is
2. How to begin the practice of joyous perseverance
3. The divisions of joyous perseverance
4. How to practice
5. A summary

What Joyous Perseverance is

When you have focused upon something virtuous, joyous perseverance is enthusiasm for it.

What is joyous perseverance? It is delight in virtue

Shantideva

The *Bodhisattva Levels* explains it as a flawless state of mind that is enthusiastic about accumulating virtue and working for welfare of living beings, together with the physical, verbal, and mental activity such a state of mind motivates.

How to begin the practice of joyous perseverance

Frequently reflect on the benefits of joyous perseverance and reflect on the faults of not practicing it. You will develop joyous perseverance if you habituate yourself to this reflection.

One who joyous perseveres
Has no difficulty accomplishing any project
Whether mundane or supramundane.
Who among the learned is disheartened by joyous perseverance?

Whose who set forth for buddha's enlightenment,
Perceive the faults of lethargy and sleepiness,
And then continually persevere with enthusiasm.
So have I advised them.

Exhortation to the Wholehearted Resolve

Joyous perseverance is supreme among virtues;
Based on it, you subsequently attain the rest.
Through it you immediately gain a supreme state of joy,
As well as the mundane and supramundane attainments.

With joyous perseverance you attain the pleasures desired in life;
Become possessed with utter purity;
Are liberated, transcending the view of the perishing aggregates;
And reach buddhahood, the supreme enlightenment.

Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras

One who has joyous perseverance
Is not brought down
By prosperity, afflictions,
Discouragement, and petty attainments.

Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras

Because joyous perseverance alone, nothis else, is the principal and highest
cause for the correct attainment of a bodhisattva's virtuous qualities, the
tathagatas have pointed it out, declaring, "Joyous perseverance is what brings
about the attainment of unsurpassed, perfect enlightenment"

Bodhisattva's Enlightenment

If you are free of fatigue and have great joyous perseverance, there is nothing you cannot attain or accomplish.

Compendium of Perfections

Even all non-human beings delight in helping you;
You attain all types of meditative concentrations

And spend all periods of the day and night fruitfully.
Your collection of good qualities does not decline,
And your purposes surpassing the affairs of humankind
Flourish like the blue utpala flower.

Compendium of Perfections

Faults of not Joyously persevering:

The enlightenment of the lazy is exceedingly far and distant.
The lazy lack all perfections from generosity and wisdom. The lazy do not work for others' welfare.

Questions of Sagaramati Sutra

Whoever has laziness--
The single basis for the afflictions--
Whoever feels some laziness
Lacks all good qualities

Mindfulness of the Excellent Teachings

1. The divisions of joyous perseverance

This has 2 parts:

1. The actual divisions
2. The method developing joyous perseverance

The actual divisions

three parts

1. Armor-like joyous perseverance
2. Joyous perseverance of gathering virtue
3. Joyous perseverance of acting for the welfare of living beings

Armor-like joyous perseverance

When bodhisattvas joyous persevere, prior to actively engaging themselves they put on the armor of preliminary enthusiastic thought such as, **"For trillion sets of three immeasurably great eons each composed of days as long as a thousand great eons, I shall not relinquish my joyous perseverance. For the sake of relieving the suffering of a single living being, I would rejoice at remaining on as a hell-being until I attain buddhahood. As I assert myself in this manner for the sake of complete enlightenment, what need is there to mention my perseverance over a shorter period or in the face of lesser suffering?"**

Such is the joyous perseverance that is like armor. A bodhisattva who produces even an aspiration for, or just faith in, such joyous perseverance is steadfast; how much more so one who is endowed with this perseverance, given that he or she develops measureless causes for joyously persevering for the sake of others and for unsurpassed enlightenment that is discouraging or entails hardship.

When you become conditioned to such a state of mind, it becomes the definite cause of your potential for the Mahayana lineages, so train in it.

In as many eons as there are drops of water in the ocean,
Eons in which the years are composed
Of long, drawn out days and nights equal in duration
Even to the temporal limits of cyclic existence,

You produce the spirit of enlightenment once.
Though you likewise have to accomplish every other collection,
You do not become disheartened because of your compassion,
And undiscouraged you achieve sublime enlightenment.

To generate this immeasurable steadfast armor
While disregarding your suffering in cyclic existence
Is declared the first proper undertaking
For the disciplined hero possessed of compassion

Compendium of Perfections

In short, if you can generate a single attitude such as this, you easily complete limitless accumulations and purify measureless obscurations.

This becomes the most excellent cause for never turning back; by just being joyful no matter how long it takes, you quickly become a Buddha. Those who want to become a buddha in a short time, but take no joy at all in the limitless deeds and great length of time required, take a very long time to reach buddhahood, because fail to produce the wonderful courage of the conquerors' children.

After you have put on such armor, you previously persevere for two purposes: to gather virtue and to act for the welfare of living beings

Joyous perseverance of gathering virtue

The joyous perseverance of gathering virtue is applying yourself to the practice of the 6 perfections in order to properly accomplish them.

Joyous perseverance of acting for the welfare of living beings

The Joyous perseverance of acting for the welfare of living beings is properly applying yourself to the practice of the eleven activities for others' welfare.

The method for developing joyous perseverance

As explained above, since you produce, maintain, and increase all the virtues of the 2 collections in dependence upon joyous perseverance, the practice that develops it is very crucial. The method described here is from Shantideva's Bodhisattvacharyavatara -- it is complete as well as easy to understand and sustain in practice.

The method has 4 parts:

1. Eliminating unfavorable conditions that prevent joyous perseverance
2. Gathering the forces of the favorable conditions
3. Based on the elimination of unfavorable conditions and the accumulation of favorable conditions, being intent on joyously persevering
4. How to use joyous perseverance to make the mind and the body serviceable

1. Eliminating unfavorable conditions that prevent joyous perseverance

This has 2 parts:

1. Identifying the factors incompatible with joyous perseverance
2. Employing the methods to eliminate the incompatible factors

1. Identifying the factors incompatible with joyous perseverance

There are 2 factors incompatible with entering the path:

1. **not entering even though you see that you can do the practice**
2. **not entering because you become discouraged, thinking "How can I do such a practice?"**

Indeed there is also not practicing because you are unconcerned with whether you are capable or not, but this is irrelevant here since this explanation is for those pursuing liberation.

Within the first factor there are 2 possibilities:

1. You have the laziness of procrastination thinking "There is still time"
2. You are not procrastinating but you are overwhelmed by your attachment to inferior and common activities

The factors incompatible with joyous perseverance
Are said to be laziness, adhering to what is ignoble,
And self-contempt out of discouragement

Shantideva

Causes for the production of laziness are:

1. indolence - avoidance of activity or exertion; laziness.
2. attachment to the taste of inferior pleasures
3. craving the pleasure of sleep
4. lack of disenchantment with cyclic existence

2. Employing the methods to eliminate the incompatible factors

has 3 parts:

1. Stopping the laziness of procrastination
2. Stopping the attachment to ignoble activities
3. Stopping discouragement or self-contempt

1. Stopping the laziness of procrastination

This involves three meditations:

1. You contemplate that the body you have at present is rapidly disintegrating
2. that after death you will fall into miserable realms, and

3. that it will be difficult to find such an excellent life such as this one again.

Meditation on these stops the notion that there is plenty of time, thereby generating the conviction in your mind that there is no time to spare. These 3 were explained in the person of small capacity.

2. Stopping the attachment to ignoble activities

You see that the sublime teaching is the source of endless joy in this and future lives, and that you lose its great purpose when you are distracted in idle chatter and amusements which are the source of much pointless suffering later. Meditate on this and stop your attachment.

How could you abandon the source of infinite joy,
The highest pleasures, the sublime teaching,
And delight in distractions, and amusements
That are the causes of suffering

Shantideva

3. Stopping discouragement or self-contempt

It's not enough to stop your laziness and attachment to ignoble activities. You must train as a Mahayana practitioner. Therefore if you become discouraged thinking "Someone like me is unable to practice that", you must eliminate this discouragement.

Stopping this discouragement or self-contempt has three parts:

1. Stopping discouragement about the goal
2. Stopping discouragement about the means to attain the goal
3. Stopping discouragement because wherever you are is a place to practice

1. Stopping discouragement about the goal

Q: How could I attain Buddhahood which is the total elimination of all faults if I can't eliminate even a little bit of faults?

A: If you have this attitude you must get rid of it quickly, because it constitutes giving up the spirit of enlightenment. So you must not let this thought hang around, but eliminate it at its early stages.

How to stop it?

Encourage yourself with this thought - "The Bhagavan, the authoritative person who speaks what is true and correct, never what is false or erroneous -- said that even flies, etc will attain enlightenment. That being so, why should I not attain it? -- so long as I do not give up persevering -- inasmuch as human birth gives me an excellent basis and I have the mental

capacity to analyze what to adopt and what to cast aside?"

Furthermore, stop your discouragement with this thought: "In the past there were former buddhas, now there are living buddhas, and in the future there will also be those who reach buddhahood. It is not the case that just one person who has already become a buddha accomplishes the path. Rather, those just like myself, gradually progressing upward, have become buddhas and will become buddhas."

As to this discouragement, since a buddha's good qualities are infinite and results follow from causes, you must accomplish good qualities and remove faults through limitless avenues while on the path. After you have understood this, you may become discouraged when you then take a look at yourself.

However, this discouragement will never arise at a time like the present with an erroneous understanding of the path is in operation.

When your understanding of the path is small you dont get discouraged, because you suppose that the limitless qualities are achieving by one-sidedly pursuing just a small single portion of a quality and intensively working on it. In this case, your not getting discouraged is not a good sign; rather it is a result of not knowing how to proceed on the path, or having a rough understanding but not putting it into practice -- so you are confused by its apparent ease.

When you get a full explanation of the path arranged from beginning to end, you say "If that much is needed, who could do it?", and thoroughly give it up.

Before engaging in the bodhisattva practices it looks easy so they dont get discouraged. At present we dont feel this discouragement because we lack a complete understanding of the practices, so we haven't even reached this level. When we more fully appropriate the teaching then there is a great danger of discouragement and self-contempt.

2. Stopping discouragement about the means to attain the goal

Q: To accomplish buddhahood you have to give away your feet, hands, etc, but I am not capable of such feats.

R: You have to engage in sufferings to that extent this for those who dont even engage in the bodhisattva deeds. Those passing through cyclic existence experience unspeakable suffering. - think about the hell realms, etc. and even here in the human realms this happens so often, and it doesn't even result in your own welfare.

The suffering occasioned by undergoing hardships for the sake of enlightenment is not even a fraction of this suffering, and also has the great purpose of accomplishing both your own and others welfare.

It is like undergoing the pain of an incision
To excise an injurious internal disease

All doctors eliminate illness
Through forms of discomfort which heals it.
Thus, I will bear a little discomfort
To destroy numerous sufferings.

Shantideva

With regard to giving your body you don't do it at the beginning but after losing attachment to your body, and have developed great compassion.

You only give it away after it becomes very easy, as you would give away a vegetable.

3. Stopping discouragement because wherever you are is a place to practice

Q: Reaching buddhahood requires taking limitless rebirths in cyclic existence so I will be harmed by suffering therein. I am not capable of such a thing.

A: Reflect as follows -- bodhisattvas have eliminated all sin; therefore, sin's effect -- the feeling of suffering -- will not arise because they have stopped the cause. Through firm knowledge that cyclic existence lacks intrinsic nature and is like a magician's illusion, they also have no mental suffering. Given that their physical and mental bliss increases, they have no reason to become disheartened, even though they are still in cyclic existence.

Thus, after mounting the steed of the enlightenment spirit,
Which dispels all dejection and fatigue,
You proceed from joy to joy.
What sensible person would become discouraged?

Shantideva

Likewise, do not become discouraged even by being delayed in cyclic existence for an immeasurable length of time, because a long length of time is not in itself a reason to be disheartened. If suffering is extremely intense, even a brief period of it is disheartening. But if there is no suffering and you are happy, even a long time is not disheartening

Also, since the completion of endless collections is not difficult, do not discourage yourself with the thought "To become a buddha required completing limitless collections of merit and sublime wisdom. This is so difficult that I could not possibly do it."

First: motivate yourself with the desire to attain the goal of limitless buddha qualities for the

welfare of the limitless beings you intend to help.

Next: focus on remaining in cyclic existence for a measureless period of time and take the bodhisattva vows, thinking "I shall accomplish the limitless collections!"

Then: as long as you keep the vows, whether your mind is distracted by other things or not, asleep or awake, you will constantly accumulate merit as vast as space

Because beings are limitless and your wish to free them is limitless, the merit is limitless, because of the limitless of this, know that the limitless buddhahood is not hard to gain.

It is most wonderful to think "If only I could attain buddhahood in a brief time for the sake of living beings", because you are moved by the very intense power of your love, compassion, and the spirit of enlightenment. However, when you are not in the sphere of these motivations, and you see the necessity of a very long training in endless deeds and that much hard work is required, you might think "If this is the case, who could possibly do it?" If you then seek a quick path you directly damage the engaged spirit of enlightenment and indirectly damage the aspirational spirit of enlightenment.

You capacity for the Mahayana lineage steadily weakens, and your enlightenment fades into the remote distance, for you have utterly contradicted what Nagarjuna and Asanga determined to be the conquerors own thought on how to increasingly strengthen the spirit of enlightenment.

Thus, since becoming discouraged brings not benefit and only leads to further discouragement, understand well the methods for achieving enlightenment and lift up your mind. When you do this, the completion of your aims is as if in your hand

Arya Asanga say repeatedly that you have both to know well the methods of trainings in extensive practice without being discouraged and to not be satisfied with only minimal qualities.

Right now even if you gain the slightest small good quality you are content to meditate on it solely on it. Then someone who knows the path tells you that it is just a small part of the path and with just that you wont go anywhere and you become discouraged.

Thus, those who do not remain satisfied with just some portion of virtue, who seek higher distinction, and who are not discouraged even with the necessity to learn limitless trainings are extremely rare.

Gathering the forces of the favorable conditions

This has 4 parts:

1. Developing the power of aspiration
2. Developing the power of steadfastness
3. Developing the power of joy
4. The power of relinquishment

1. Developing the power of aspiration

As it is said that yearning acts as the basis for joyous perseverance, aspiration here refers to yearning. The need to generate it is stated in Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds.

My present destitution has arisen
From not aspiring for the teachings
Both now and in the past.
Who would forsake aspiration for the teachings?

The Sage declared aspiration
The root of all aspects of virtue.

Its root, in turn, is constant meditation
On Karma's fruitional effects

This means that the way to develop aspiration is to meditate on how pleasant and unpleasant effects arise from virtuous and nonvirtuous karma respectively.

Faith acts as the basis of yearning, so that the faith of conviction in the two types of karma and their effects will generate two kinds of desire:

1. to eliminate nonvirtuous karma
2. and adopt virtuous karma

You consider karma and its effects in general, and in particular, the causality underlying the benefits of the bodhisattva deeds and the faults of violating them.

Once you aspire to the Mahayana, you enter its door through a commitment to clear away all faults and achieve all good qualities for yourself and others

You must exhort yourself -- I will have to meditate for many eons to purify myself of every single fault along with its latent propensity and to develop every single good quality to its fullest extent. Yet since I don't have even a fraction of the joyous perseverance needed to clear away faults or accomplish good qualities, I have pointlessly wasted my leisure.

2. Developing the power of steadfastness (power of pride)

Developing the power of steadfastness means that you bring to conclusion, without turning back, anything at which you joyously persevere.

First, do not try to engage in everything -- examine the situation carefully. If you see that you

can do it, engage in it, whereas if you cannot do it, then you don't start.

You should not even start in the first place things that you will do for a while, and then discard. The reason is because if you get habituated to giving up and stopping in the middle, then in your future lives you will do this as well. Consequently, your sins will increase and suffering, etc.

You will not accomplish other virtues, because you will be thinking of carrying out your earlier commitment; there will be an inferior result because you turned away from your earlier commitment, and your earlier commitment will not be fulfilled, because you did not follow through.

In summary, committing yourself to do something but leaving it unfinished, is a hindrance to your accomplishing of other projects, and the conditioning destabilizes your commitment to the vows you have taken.

First I examine the endeavor
And then undertake it or not.
If unable, it is best not to undertake it,
But once begun, I will not turn back.

Otherwise I will be conditioned to this [starting and then stopping] in other
lives
And my sin and suffering will increase.
Also, other actions and their results
Will be poor and unaccomplished.

Therefore, if you want to complete what you have committed yourself to do, cultivate three types of pride.

You should have pride in three areas:
Action, ability, afflictions.

Shantideva

Pride About Action:

Means that no matter who else may be your companion as you practice the path, you do not count on them but accomplish it yourself alone.

I shall alone do it - this is the pride of actions

Liberation depends on oneself;
It never occurs through the help of others.

Nagarjuna 'Friendly Letter'

The thought 'I alone shall achieve this without expectations of others,' is similar to pride, so it is given the name "pride about action"

Pride About Ability:

Means that you accomplish your own and others welfare thinking: Since living beings are under the power of afflictions, they are unable to achieve even their own welfare, much less the welfare of others. I am able to accomplish the welfare of both myself and others.

The beings of the world, subject to the afflictions,
Cannot even achieve their own welfare.
They are not as able as I am,
So I shall do it for them.

Shantideva

Furthermore, practice while thinking, "If these beings strive at lowly activities without interruption, why should I not perform the actions that will achieve the perfect effect?"

If others perform lowly actions,
How can I be idle?

Shantideva

However, when you achieve these 2 prides [action, and ability], you should not do so with self-conceit, out of contempt for others. Rather, regard others with compassion, and do not mix in any pride.

I do not do it out of pride,
I should have no pride.

Shantideva

Thinking "Others are not capable; I am able", again resembles pride, so it is labelled 'pride'.

Pride About Afflictions:

Means that with contempt for the afflictions at all occasions, you think **"I shall be victorious over these; they shall never defeat me."** It means being steadfast after you have generated the courageous thought to destroy the incompatible factors.

I shall conquer all;
Nothing shall defeat me.
I, a child of the Victorious Lion,
Shall continue to have this pride.

Shantideva

Even a crow acts like a garuda
When it finds a dying snake.
If I am feeble,
Even a slight shortcoming will harm me.

How can one who gives up, discouraged,
Find freedom from destitution?

Shantideva

If you apply these 3 prides, even great incompatible factors cannot block you, so you must generate these three kinds of pride.

Against one who strives with pride
Even great obstacles will be in trouble.

So, with a steadfast mind
I will overcome my shortcomings.

Shantideva

Otherwise, if practitioners are defeated by their shortcomings, their desire to conquer the afflictions of the three realms will be an embarrassment among the learned

If i am defeated by shortcomings,
My desire to conquer the three realms is a joke.

Shantideva

It is called 'pride about the afflictions', because you have contempt for the afflictions and then want to destroy them.

Thus, stop expecting something from others and put on the armor of doing it alone. That is, be confident and think, "Unlike me, others cannot do it, I can do it." When you practice with this perspective, you are sure that you will defeat the afflictions -- that they will never defeat you -- and you consider that it would be a mistake to abandon your commitment after a while. **Train yourself until your mind is steadfast in the desire to finish everything to which you have committed yourself after you have carefully examined whether you can do it.**

3. Developing the power of joy

You develop the power of joy after the power of aspiration, an intense yearning produced a joyous perseverance not previously present, and you achieved the power of steadfastness(also called the power of pride) which causes the perseverance that has already developed to be irreversible.

The power of joy means that when you when you first engage in an activity, you do it joyfully, and once you have engaged you have a sense of insatiable in that you do not want to discontinue the activity

With respect to how you develop this insatiability:

Like those who want the pleasure that results from play,
Bodhisattva's are passionate
About any activity that they do.
Insatiable, they take joy in their work.

Shantideva

So strive with an attitude like that of children who engage in play without being satiated. **That is, you must be just as insatiable about what causes pleasurable results as you are about the results themselves.**

Even though they work for the sake of happiness,
It is uncertain whether happiness will come.
But as for those whose work itself is happiness,
How can they be happy unless they work?

Shantideva

This also the reason why being satiated is wrong.

If I am never satiated by sensual desires,
Which are like honey on a razors edge,
How could I be satiated with merit,
Whose fruition is happiness and peace?

Shantideva

Develop an attitude of being insatiable as it describes above^^

Thus, in order to being to completion the virtuous activities in which you have engaged, enter them as a sun scorched elephant enters a pleasing lotus pond at noon. Train in this attitude until your produce it.

Thus, in order to finish the work,
I shall enter into it just as
An elephant, scorched by the midday sun,
Comes upon a pond and plunges in.

Shantideva

4. The power of relinquishment

If you become physically or mentally fatigued from your perseverance, you must rest for a while. Otherwise, you will become later disheartened, thereby later preventing your joyous perseverance.

Immediately after you have rested, persevere again, and when you have completely finished your earlier activity, do not let this satisfy you. **You must joyously persevere at other, higher activities**

When my strength declines,
I shall leave the task so I can do it later.
When it is really done, I shall set it aside,
Seeking the next task, and the next.

Shantideva

The next task is important, because if you consider each earlier good quality sufficient, this will be a big obstacle to the attainment of many higher attributes

The above presentation shows how to joyously persevere. Do not overexert yourself. You must avoid being both overly intense and being overly relaxed, so make your effort continuous like a river.

In order to make yourself more exalted
You never overexerted or relaxed too much.
Thus your good qualities are indistinguishable
By former and later phases.

Matreya 'Praise in One Hundred and Fifty Verses'

Practice at a measured pace that you can sustain. For example, a louse proceeds at a modest pace but never stops, so it soon arrives; whereas a flea takes great successive leaps and then stops, so it never gets there.

Bo-do-wa

c. Based on the elimination of unfavorable conditions and the accumulation of favorable conditions, being intent on joyously persevering.

After you have thus identified the three conditions unfavorable to joyous perseverance, you attend to their remedies.

You generate three powers:

1. **power of aspiration** - the favorable condition for weakening those as-yet unweakened unfavorable conditions.

2. **power of steadfastness** - the cause of not turning back once you have started
3. **power of joy** - never wants to discontinue the activity once you have engaged in it.

Through the **power of relinquishment** you become adept at how to joyously persevere.

At this point you must develop the power of being intent on joyous perseverance, so I will explain this.

As to how you are to act when you joyously persevere at eliminating what is to be eliminated:

As a seasoned warrior approaches
A sword-fight with an enemy,
I shall parry the blows of the afflictions
And strongly strike the afflictions, my enemies.

Shantideva

When practioners battle their afflictions, they must persevere as they become proficient at 2 things:

1. **taking defensive precautions and thus avoiding a wound to their mind**
2. **on the offensive, destroying the afflictions by applying their remedies**

Otherwise, you may defeat a partial part of the afflictions, but are robbed of some aspect of of virtue by other afflictions, or else develop a great fault in their mind so that the harm of the afflictions and the creation of virtue are equal, in which case it will be hard to make further progress in the virtuous practice of applying the remedy.

To cite an example:

Some think that knowledge is the most important thing, so they acquire knowledge and rid the confusion of ignorance through studying, but meanwhile because they were not cautious about the other afflictions, their mindstream is utterly ruined by the stain of wrong behavior.

Other people may think that meditation and discipling the mind is much more important than knowledge and thus emphasize meditation.. casting away caution about the enemy, confusion, neither they study nor learn the teachings, so they become greatly confused about engaging in what is to be adopted and rejecting what is to be cast aside under the rules of the vows they have taken and are thus continually overcome by infractions.

If you drop your sword in battle,
Out of fear, you quickly pick it up.
Likewise, if I lose my weapon of mindfulness,
In fear of hell, I quickly retrieve it.

Shantideva

O lord, the Sugata declared mindfulness of the body
To be the one path to follow
Hold fast to it and guard it.
When mindfulness declines, all virtues perish.

Nagarjuna 'Letter to a Friend'

Furthermore, regarding the object to which mindfulness attends, mindfulness apprehends the object that wisdom has fully discerned; mindfulness does not distinguish its object on its own.

Q: What does wisdom discern?

In general, wisdom discerns everything to be adopted and everything to be cast aside as explained in the scripture; in particular, it discerns what is to be adopted and what is to be cast aside according to the vows that you have taken Therefore, once you apply mindfulness and vigilance to these, you will complete your practice; you will not be successful by just applying mindfulness and vigilance within the narrow confines of attention to an object of meditation

What is more, when warriors are in battle, they strive from the beginning not to lose their sword; when by chance they do drop it, they pick it up immediately. **These 2 actions rest on a fear of being killed that is not mere words** Likewise, those who cultivate the path are afraid to lose the mindfulness that does not forget what is to be adopted and what eliminated; even if they lose it, they immediately reapply it. **These 2 actions are based on development in their minds of a real terror of falling into miserable realms as a result of the pollution of infractions and faults that occur when mindfulness lapses**

This in turn depends on having made karma and its effects central to their practice and then sustaining that approach

Those who fail to develop the awareness that these points are profound instructions sever the root of the good qualities ensuing from the practice that delights the learned, the sacred foundation of the path.

Q: Well, why is it necessary to look with fear upon even minor misbehavior, and not let it continue but immediately stop it?

A: Like how a small wound from a poison arrow start small but spreads fast to infect the whole body. **Even when wrong behavior does not make anything more than a small wound on the mind, if you ignore it, it will quickly pervade your mind so that it becomes large. Therefore, from the start you must prevent wrongdoing before it takes place and, if it does happen, you must discontinue it immediately.**

Just as poison spreads through the body,
Carried by the blood,
So a fault pervades the mind
If it finds an opportunity.

Shantideva

Q: Well, how do those who want victory over the afflictions apply mindfulness and vigilance?

A: You must concentrate.

A practitioner must be as concentrated
As someone carrying a pot full of mustard oil
Who is fearful when a swordsman before him
Threatens to kill him if he spills a drop.

Shantideva

While you are concentrating, if in general you should behave wrongly or in particular you should experience the causes of laziness -- such as sleepiness, etc -- you should not assent to them, but must confront and avert them.

Thus, if a snake came onto your lap,
You would hastily stand up.
Just so, if sleepiness and indolence come,
Quickly avert them.

Shantideva

Further, do not merely discontinue faults, but actively feel displeasure at their having occurred.

think "From now on I shall make sure that this fault never occurs"

Whenever a fault occurs,
I shall reproach myself and long ponder,
"By all means I will do whatever it takes
So that this shall never happen again"

Shantideva

Strive at any deep causes that give rise to the continuous, powerful mindfulness that is the root of this practice. Rely on such activities as keeping the company of excellent teachers and companions, and broad learning, which are the causes of this powerful mindfulness.

"In any of these situations
I will practice mindfulness."
With this motive aspire to meet teachers
And engage in appropriate activities

Shantideva

In summary, you must study and discern well what bodhisattva training required you to adopt and to cast aside, and then joyously persevere at continuously being mindful in all your conduct of what you have understood about what to adopt and what to cast aside. Hence, it is extremely important not to err about that at which you are to persevere

c. How to joyously persevere to make the mind and body serviceable

The method for using joyous perseverance to make the mind and body serviceable is the power of mastery. Shantideva sets forth in the chapter on consciousness the necessity of learning the bodhisattva trainings; the extremely grave consequences if you do not train in these once you have pledged to do so; how to regard the afflictions as your enemy; and the ways to generate the courage that looks upon the hardship of battling the afflictions as an ornament rather than a burden.

Meditate on these before taking up the task of training in the bodhisattva deeds. Thus, stopping all the inhibitions that prevent you from using your body and mind for virtuous activity, rise gladly to that task.

Q: What form will the joyous perseverance produced by such efforts take?

A: Just as wind drives a piece of cotton to and fro, a joyful energy, enthused for virtue, controls your body and mind. When you act along with this energy, joyous perseverance is well established. Once you produce this, you will easily achieve all of the collections.

Just like cotton under the power
Of a wind that blows to and fro
So I will be drive by enthusiasm;
In this way I will accomplish all

Shantideva

Although such tasks are difficult, it is wrong to give them up.

"The sublime state, difficult to each.
Is not attained without hardship."
Knowing this, you intensified your joyous perseverance
Without concern for yourself

Matreceta 'Praise in One Hundred Fifty Verses'

d. How to Practice

You must practice any kind of joyous perseverance in association with the six supremecies and the six perfections. The generosity of joyous perseverance is establishing other in joyous perseverance after you have established yourself therein. The remaining perfections are in accord with the earlier explanation.

e. A summary

The recollection and cultivation of the spirit of enlightenment -- the basis of the bodhisattva deeds -- inspires you to train in order to set all living beings in joyous perseverance. So, steadily increase this spirit and then aspire to and train in the methods of joyous perseverance for those at high levels.

Also, strive as you are able at the methods of learning joyous perseverance for a beginning bodhisattva.

In particular, effectively stop the various forms of discouragement, these being uniquely subject to elimination by joyous perseverance.

Mentally put on the armour of joyous perseverance that is enthusiastic about the following:

- the goal of enlightenment

- the aim of accomplishing the happiness and eliminating the suffering of all living beings
- the very long period of time
- the limitless collections
- the immeasurable hardships

Strive at this attitude, because as the **Questions of Subahu Sutra** says, just by generating the powerful surge of such resolve, you accumulate a great wave of merit.

If you do not do this, you fail to secure your Mahayana lineage, and you are also continually stained by wrongdoing. Then, in other lives as well, you will find it very difficult to learn the bodhisattva deeds.

Also, after you have become aware of such things, even if you do not practice perfectly motivate yourself in that direction. If you then joyously persevere to the extent that you are able, then, as the **Questions of Subahu Sutra** says, you will quickly complete the perfection if joyous perseverance in future lives, without suffering and with little difficulty.