



Shāntideva

THE WAY
OF THE
BODHISATVA

A TRANSLATION OF THE
Bodhicharyāvatāra

REVISED EDITION

TRANSLATED FROM THE TIBETAN
BY THE PADMAKARA TRANSLATION GROUP

FOREWORD BY THE DALAI LAMA



SHAMBHALA

Boston & London

2011

Shambhala Publications, Inc.
Horticultural Hall
300 Massachusetts Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02115
www.shambhala.com

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Cover art: *Seated Guanyin Bodhisattva*. Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127).
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri (Purchase: Nelson Trust) 34-10.
Photograph by Robert Newcombe.

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Second edition, revised

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Santideva, 7th cent.

[Bodhicaryavatara. English.]

The way of the Bodhisattva: a translation of the Bodhicaryavatara / Shantideva; translated from the Tibetan by the Padmakara Translation Group; foreword by the Dalai Lama.—Rev. ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

eISBN 978-0-8348-2565-9

ISBN 978-1-59030-388-7 (pbk.: alk. paper)

1. Mahayana Buddhism—Doctrines—Early works to 1800. I. Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV, 1935– II. Padmakara Translation Group III. Title.

BQ3142.E5P33 2006

294.3'85—DC22

2006014801

88.

To have such liberty unmarred by craving,
Loosed from every bond and tie—
A life of such contentment and such pleasure,
Even Indra would be pressed to find!

89.

Reflecting in such ways as these
Upon the excellence of solitude,
Pacify completely all discursiveness
And cultivate the mind of bodhichitta.

90.

Start reading here, at verse 90.

Strive at first to meditate
Upon the sameness of yourself and others.⁹⁷
In joy and sorrow all are equal;
Thus be guardian of all, as of yourself.

91.

The hand and other limbs are many and distinct,
But all are one—the body to be kept and guarded.
Likewise, different beings, in their joys and sorrows,
Are, like me, all one in wanting happiness.

92.

This pain of mine does not afflict
Or cause discomfort to another's body,
And yet this pain is hard for me to bear
Because I cling and take it for my own.

93.

And other beings' pain
I do not feel, and yet,
Because I take them for myself,⁹⁸
Their suffering is mine and therefore hard to bear.

94.

And therefore I'll dispel the pain of others,

For it is simply pain, just like my own.
And others I will aid and benefit,
For they are living beings, like my body.

95.
Since I and other beings both,
In wanting happiness, are equal and alike,
What difference is there to distinguish us,
That I should strive to have my bliss alone?

96.
Since I and other beings both,
In fleeing suffering, are equal and alike,
What difference is there to distinguish us,
That I should save myself and not the others?

97.
Since the pain of others does no harm to me,
I do not shield myself from it.
So why to guard against “my” future pain,
Which does no harm to this, my present “me”?

98.
To think that “I will have to bear it”
Is in fact a false idea.
For that which dies is one thing;
What is born is something else.

99.
“It’s for the sufferers themselves,” you’ll say,
“To shield themselves from injuries that come!”
The pain felt in my foot is not my hand’s,
So why, in fact, should one protect the other?

100.
“True, it’s inadmissible,” you’ll say,
“It happens simply through the force of ego-clinging.”
But what is inadmissible for others and myself

Should be discarded utterly!

101.

Continua and gatherings, so-called,
Like garlands and like armies, are unreal.
So there is no one to experience pain
For who is there to be its “owner”?

102.

Suffering has no “possessor,”
Therefore no distinctions can be made in it.
Since pain is pain, it is to be dispelled.
What use is there in drawing boundaries?

103.

“But why dispel the pains of all?”
You cannot argue in this way!
If “my” pain is removed, so too should that of “others.”
If theirs is not, then neither should be mine.

104.

End Reading at Verse 103

“Compassion makes us feel such pain,” you say,
“So why should we make efforts to engender it?”
But thinking of the sufferings of beings,
How can you regard as great the smart of your compassion?

105.

And if through such a single pain
A multitude of sorrows can be cured,
Such pain as this all loving people
Strive to foster in themselves and others.

106.

Thus Supuṣhpachandra,^{[99](#)}
Knowing that the king would cause him harm,
Did nothing to escape from tribulation,
That the pains of many should be ended.