



The Asian Classics Institute



Diamond Mountain University

Name:
Date:
Location:
Track:
Grade:

IN-DEPTH COURSE III

Master Shantideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life Exchanging Self & Others

Homework, Class Four

1) At this point in the text, Master Shantideva repeats his teaching that the force of habit is so strong that, with practice, we can get good at anything. Why has he brought this point up?

2) Conceptually, the most important step in the entire exercise of working with the border between others and ourselves comes now in the text, where we try to move into another person's body. How does the switch from the first step of our practice (treating ourselves and others the same) to the second step (exchanging each other) happen?

3) Master Shantideva next says that we should “Come to understand that for myself it’s wrong, but for all others it’s an ocean of fine qualities.” What is the “it” here?

4) At this point in the text, the “other guy” complains that there are just too many other people around for me to switch places with all of them: it would be just too much to keep his mind on. How does Master Shantideva counter this objection?

5) Master Shantideva then says that we do manage to think of our bodies as ourselves, even though they are not ourselves. Aren’t they ourselves?

6) Master Shantideva says that, once we have exchanged ourselves with others, then we can work for others and not have any feelings of pride or self-importance. Explain why this is true.

7) Once we have exchanged ourselves and others, we can also avoid any desire for a future karmic result only for ourselves, from helping others. Quote the half a verse with which this point is made. (Sanskrit and Tibetan tracks in those languages also.)

8) At this point in the text, Master Shantideva mentions the fact that the enlightened being named Loving Eyes (Avalokiteshvara, or Chenresik in Tibetan) has instructed his followers that—if they are ever in even the slightest trouble—then they can call on his name, and it will help them. How does this relate to the subject we're covering?

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, try to remember three times in the last 24 hours when you have concentrated only on cherishing yourself, on your needs. Then try to remember three times that you have cherished others, concentrating on their needs.