



Name: _____

Date: _____

Grade: _____

CULTIVATING JOYFUL EFFORT

HOMEWORK FOR CLASS FIVE

1. What is the karmic cause for being attracted to spiritual things, and what does Master Shantideva say about someone who is attracted to the Dharma but doesn't act on it?

According to Je Tsongkapa's *Lam Rim Chenmo*, Arya Nagarjuna's *Ratnavali*, and other texts, "wordview begets worldview," that is, it is through cultivating our spirituality we create the karma to be attracted to spiritual things in the future. Master Shantideva says that a person who had actually done this and was therefore attracted to the Dharma, but then just ignores and casts aside that interest instead of cultivating it, is very foolish.

2. What is root of all goodness according to the Buddha? And what, in turn, is the root of the root of all goodness?

Attraction to what is good (*chanda* in Sanskrit) is the root of all goodness, and the root of it is repeatedly calling to mind the effects of karma.

3. What are the four "laws" of karma?

1) Karma is "definite": if you do a good deed, you will receive a pleasant result; if you do a bad deed, you will receive an unpleasant result. 2) Karma grows. 3) If you don't create the cause, you will never receive the result. 4) If you do create the cause, you will always receive the result.

4. Relate and explain the metaphor used in the *Sutra of the Diamond Banner* to illustrate the kind of confidence required for bringing to a successful conclusion all those good deeds which we undertake.

This text states that, when the sun shines upon the earth, it is never stopped from shining by the fact that some people may be blind, or that some mountains may be taller than others—the sunlight touches any location that is ready to receive it. Just so, bodhisattvas perform their activities for the sake of others: their deeds are never stopped by the problems that certain individuals may have in receiving them, and these deeds ripen and liberate those disciples who are ready to receive them.



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5. What should we do before we start any virtuous project or undertaking?
And what should we do once we have started?

Master Shantideva encourages us to check to be sure we have the capability of carrying out a project or undertaking before we start it. It is better not to even start if we don't intend to finish a meritorious activity. But once we have started it, we should never turn back until it is completed.

6. What are the karmic results of not doing what you say you will?

You will have that habit in the future, your suffering will increase, and "another timely opportunity to act is wasted, and what needs to be done is left unaccomplished."

7. What is the "self-confidence of accomplishment"?

It is when you are willing to take total personal responsibility for something, without waiting for or expecting others to help you with it. It is "when you say, 'I am willing to do this thing all by myself.'"

8. What is Master Shantideva's reasoning for saying that we should be willing to undertake our deeds on behalf of living beings all by ourselves, even if no one else helps us?

He says that, since the great majority of living beings have no idea at all what they should do even to help themselves, for they are at the complete mercy of their mental afflictions, it is no surprise that they might be unwilling to help us in deeds meant to aid all other beings. Therefore we should be ready at all times to undertake our virtuous deeds gladly by ourselves, without any help from anyone else at all.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes a day thinking about your own past tendency to say you will do things and then not do them and the negative consequences of such behavior.

Meditation dates and times: