



The Asian Classics Institute



Diamond Mountain University

Name:
Date:
Location:
Track:
Grade:

IN-DEPTH COURSE II

Master Shantideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

The Chapter on Killing Anger

Final Examination

1) Perhaps the most famous verse from the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* on the art of not getting angry appears not in the chapter on patience but in the preceding chapter, the one devoted to maintaining one's awareness. Quote all four lines of this verse. (Sanskrit and Tibetan tracks, in these languages.)

2) Discuss the idea of a "fire hazard," with regard both to anger and also our more general, daily Buddhist practice.

3) Talk a little about the idea of the "range" of anger.

4) Obviously, this “Chapter on Patience” will be dealing with the various methods that we ourselves can use to avoid all of the many problems associated with anger. These methods can be divided into two very broad categories: name and describe these two. (Tibetan track also name in Tibetan.)

5) There is one verse from the Patience Chapter which advises us how to stop this immediate cause of anger. It is perhaps the most famous verse from the chapter, and is often quoted by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Give the entire verse. (Sanskrit and Tibetan tracks give in **both** English and your track language.)

6) There are two lines (half a verse) from the text which describe *why* we can learn to deal with progressively greater types of pain. Quote the lines, and then discuss briefly whether these words directly reflect the ultimate goal of the worldview of Lord Buddha. (Tibetan and Sanskrit tracks include both that and the English.)

7) What comforting advice does Master Shantideva give about trouble or obstacles that arise during our attempts to improve our minds?

8) With this class, the third in the course, we reach the second of the three kinds of patience, which is infinitely more important than the other two. Name this type and describe it, incorporating the description from *The Great Book on the Steps of the Teaching* (*Tenrim Chenmo*) of Geshe Drolungpa. (Tibetan track also name this type of patience in Tibetan.)

9) Perhaps one of the most important ideas of all of Buddhism—nay, one of the most important ideas of all time—is found in the patience chapter at this point. To sum it up, Master Shantideva says, “If we’re really going to deal with the bad things that happen in our lives—the things that hurt us, and upset us, and make us angry—then we’re going to have to *find out why they happen in the first place.*” He proceeds then to give us, basically, three different choices about where the bad things in the world come from. Describe these three choices, in language that modern-day people can relate to.

a)

b)

c)

10) Quote the verse in which Master Shantideva states that antidotes which are illusory are not only not ineffective, but in fact that only kind of antidotes that could ever stop all of our pain. And then summarize briefly the explanation of this verse by the incomparable Gyaltsab Je. (Sanskrit and Tibetan tracks quote in these languages too.)

11) With class four, we begin our study of the third of the three types of patience. Name it, and state how it's described in Geshe Drolungpa's famous work, *The Great Book on the Steps of the Teaching (Tenrim Chenmo)*. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan.)

12) Describe the thought process used in the "method of compassion" for dealing with our own anger. Finish up your description with the two exquisite lines by Master Shantideva on this particular method. (For the two lines, Sanskrit and Tibetan tracks add these languages.)

13) Give the wonderful verse where Master Shantideva advises us to get angry at the force that actually lies behind it when another person hurts us.

14) The “other person” in this section of the chapter then comes to Master Shantideva and argues that they really do need things, in order to live a longer life—because then they will have more time to work off their past negative deeds, and accomplish the good deeds they have not yet done. How does the Master reply, and how does this relate to the question of the *style* with which we do our good deeds? Complete your answer, finally, with the powerful second half of the verse on this subject. (Tibetan and Sanskrit tracks in these languages.)

15) Some of the greatest violence ever committed in the course of our human history has been the violence done to each other by religious groups. Master Shantideva's specific comments on this point are certainly some of the most noble sentiments ever expressed in the literature of any of the world's major religions. Explain first how the Master advises us to deal with the religious violence in the form of slander or destruction of places of worship, sacred images, or holy books.

16) In this section of the chapter is found the one verse which more than any other summarizes the basis of the third kind of patience: the attitude of "It's my own karma." Quote the verse, and again discuss briefly whether this approach completely covers the ultimate worldview of the *perfection* of patience. (Tibetan and Sanskrit tracks give the verse in these languages.)

17) Towards the end of the chapter, Master Shantideva will be making the point that—if we can maintain our patience—then the number of people who appear in our lives to try our patience will automatically become fewer and fewer, since they are actually *produced* by our anger. Describe the verse in this section of the chapter which presents the very pleasant extreme of this thinking.

18) In a very powerful metaphor about a prisoner, Master Shantideva points out that it may actually be *less* painful if—when someone slugs you on one side of the face—you turn your face to the other side and voluntarily let them slug you again. Quote the half a verse that presents this metaphor, and explain what it means to the Master. (Tibetan and Sanskrit tracks in these languages.)

19) After discussing antidotes to the anger we feel when others hurt us or those close to us, Master Shantideva continues on to discuss the anger we feel when others help or praise people that we don't like. In essence then he is equating two of our most popular mental afflictions. Name them.

20) Describe the quite painless method that Master Shantideva gives, at the very beginning of this class reading, for dealing with the anger we feel when someone praises a person that we don't like. For good measure, also mention the very specific positive result that coping with anger this way can have.

21) What is perhaps the most serious negative result of wishing against the happiness of other people? In your answer, include the two lines from the reading which are most *relevant*. (Sanskrit and Tibetan tracks answer in these languages.)

22) Master Shantideva follows with a verse that talks about people who squander all their money trying to attract the attention of others; and people who even risk their very lives and go to war, all with the hope of doing deeds that will make them famous—which he notes is especially silly, since if (and when) you die, there’s no one left to enjoy the fame. But then in the middle of this verse he says, “And anyway, what is it exactly that the alphabet can do for you?” Explain the two meanings of this question.

23) Master Shantideva says that our desire for praise and fame makes us similar to crazy people who are struggling to enter a house of pain. This makes people who criticize us—who prevent us from attaining praise and fame—like wonderful friends who are locking us out of the pain house. He then says that “it’s as if an enlightened being has granted us their blessing.” Explain the higher implications.

24) Suppose we are trying to accomplish some virtuous deed, and another person hinders us from doing so. Using the definition of a cause, explain why they are therefore actually *helping* us to do so; and then throw in two very appropriate side notes on this point.

25) Master Shantideva next moves from the concept of our enemy as an essential cause for the practice of patience to the idea of the enemy being like a field where we plant the seeds of our good deeds. Name and explain the two fields he mentions here. (Sanskrit and Tibetan tracks also name in these languages.)

26) Describe, in a famous half-verse, the connection between what we do to all the other beings around us, and what we do to the Buddhas themselves. (Sanskrit and Tibetan tracks in these languages.)

27) When we finally realize how much it hurts the Buddhas when we hurt other people, we feel a natural wish to ask all these enlightened beings to forgive us for all the pain we have caused them in the past. Describe the two offerings which Master Shantideva mentions we can make, and which incidentally possess a tremendous power to remove much of the bad karma of hurting the Buddhas.

28) The Buddhas are the embodiment of compassion itself; and the Buddhas themselves are embodied in someone else. Who is that, and how?

PLEASE WRITE YOUR NAME CLEARLY AS YOU WOULD LIKE IT TO APPEAR ON YOUR CERTIFICATE.
THANK YOU!

NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

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