



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

##### *Homework, Class Eight*

1) Master Shantideva lists five things that getting famous *doesn't* do for you; Master Prajnakara Mati further mentions that these five are a traditional list of benefits that a wise person would hope for from anything, because they better allow you to serve other people. Name the five.

2) The “other guy” in the chapter of course then comes back—saying, in essence, “I can understand that getting famous may not help me in those five ways, but it does bring me great pleasure of mind.” How does Master Shantideva respond to this argument? What caveat does Master Prajnakara Mati include?

3) 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.

4) How might being overly concerned about fame or reputation also affect ones daily spiritual practice?

5) The nature of fame is that in almost all cases it is quickly lost. How does Master Shantideva characterize our normal reaction to no longer being the center of attention?

6) Then follows an interesting exchange. Master Shantideva points out that words themselves are not possessed of consciousness—and so it is completely impossible that *they* are praising us intentionally. The “other guy” (usually our own mind, actually) then comes back with the argument that—when someone praises us—it means that they are happy with us, and we can take a wholesome joy in their happiness. All this happiness, we continue, is prevented if a person criticizes us; and so it is reasonable to feel anger at this person. Explain the two ways in which the Master responds.

7) Master Shantideva then lists four undesirable results that occur when we get praise or fame from others. Quote the verse in which he does so. (Tibetan and Sanskrit tracks in these languages.)

8) Given the various problems that come from getting praise or fame, how then does Master Shantideva advise us to view those who hinder us from obtaining them? And how does this way of viewing things fit in with the ultimate worldview that we are attempting to maintain?

9) Quote the half-verse in which Master Shantideva speaks of how things and fame affect ones liberation; then ruminate a bit on why it is true. (Tibetan and Sanskrit tracks quote in those languages.)

10) 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.

*Meditation assignment:* 15 minutes a day, struggling with the idea that the people who most annoy you could be enlightened beings with some higher purpose in mind; and trying to guess that purpose.