



How to Live the
Compassionate Life:
*The Bodhisattva's Jewel
Garland* by Lama Atisha

Shantideva Center

Session 2 - May 27, 2025



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel
Garland* – Verse 4ab

On the Eight Worldly Dharmas

For your Dharma practice to be pure, it is necessary to have abandoned the comforts of this life: that is, to have renounced the eight worldly dharmas.

- *Path to Enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism* by Geshe Loden, p.229

On the Eight Worldly Dharmas

The eight worldly dharmas are:

- Being pleased when receiving wealth.
- Being displeased when losing wealth.
- Being pleased when experiencing pleasure [or comfort].
- Being displeased when experiencing misery [or discomfort].

- *Path to Enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism* by Geshe Loden, p.230

On the Eight Worldly Dharmas

- Being pleased at being famous.
- Being displeased at being in disrepute.
- Being pleased when praised.
- Being displeased when denigrated.

From *Path to Enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism* by Geshe Loden, p.230

On Verse 4ab

If one is wealthy, there is the great suffering of collecting and protecting.

If one is a beggar, one is free of desire for this life, and the result is peace and happiness.

There is inner wealth.

From “Advice from Kadam Geshe Kharag Gomchen,”
translated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

On Verse 4ab

*If I face poverty, so be it! In lack of riches I'll rejoice!
I will have nothing to protect and nothing to lose.
Whatever quarrels and conflicts there might be,
All arise out of desire for wealth and gain—that's certain!*

From "How to Transform Sickness and Other Circumstances" by
Togme Sangpo, translated by Adam Percy for Lotsawa House

On Verse 4ab

*If I find wealth, so be it! In prosperity I'll rejoice!
If I can increase the stock of my merits that will suffice.
Whatever benefit and happiness there might be, now and in the
future,
All result from merits I have gained—that's certain!*

From "How to Transform Sickness and Other Circumstances" by
Togme Sangpo, translated by Adam Percy for Lotsawa House



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel
Garland – Verse 4cd*

On Verse 4c

In his *Friendly Letter*, Nagarjuna said,

If you have contentment then even though you may be robbed of everything, consider yourself the richest man; but should you lack contentment, then no matter how rich you may be, you are a servant of your wealth.

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, p.108

On Verse 4d

Meditate on the great kindness of all beings.

- From *Seven-Point Mind Training* by Geshe Chekawa, as translated in *The Kindness of Others: A Commentary on the Seven-Point Mind Training* by Geshe Jampa Tegchok, p.24



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel
Garland – Verse 5ab*



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel
Garland – Verse 5cd*

On Verse 5cd

The ten non-virtuous actions*:

The three actions of body:

1. Killing
2. Stealing
3. Unwise sexual behavior

* See handout “The Ten Non-virtues and Their Results”

On Verse 5cd

The ten non-virtuous actions*:

The four actions of speech:

4. Lying
5. Divisive speech
6. Harsh speech
7. Meaningless speech

* See handout “The Ten Non-virtues and Their Results”

On Verse 5cd

The ten non-virtuous actions*:

The three actions of mind:

8. Covetousness
9. Harmful intent
10. Wrong view

* See handout “The Ten Non-virtues and Their Results”

On Verse 5cd

The four general characteristics of karma:

- 1) The certainty of karma
- 2) The increase of karma
- 3) Actions not done do not bring results
- 4) Actions done are not wasted

On Verse 5cd

Furthermore, Atisha advises us to stabilize our faith and confidence. In the Buddhist context, faith does not arise from fear, but is based on reason. Confidence in the teachings arises when we experience for ourselves how non-deceptive they are. It is said that such conviction is the mother of firm understanding.

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, p.112

On Verse 5cd

The three types of faith:

- 1) Clear faith (or admiring faith)
- 2) Aspiring faith (or longing faith)
- 3) Convinced faith (or faith of conviction)



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel
Garland – Verse 6ab*



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel
Garland – Verse 6cd*

On Verse 6cd

The five wrong means of livelihood:

- 1) Flattery
- 2) Coercion
- 3) Hinting
- 4) Bribery
- 5) Hypocrisy

On Verse 6cd

You can determine whether a job is suitable to be Skillful Livelihood by asking yourself three interrelated questions.

[1] First, is my job an inherently wrong occupation?

- *Eight Mindful Steps to Happiness* by Henepola Gunaratana, p.134

On Verse 6cd

“Monks, a lay follower should not engage in five types of business. Which five? Business in weapons, business in living beings, business in meat, business in intoxicants, and business in poison.

“These are the five types of business that a lay follower should not engage in.”

- From the Vanijja Sutta

(https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/AN/AN5_177.html)

On Verse 6cd

[2] Second, does my job lead me to break the five moral precepts?

- *Eight Mindful Steps to Happiness* by Henepola Gunaratana, p.136

On Verse 6cd

[3] Finally, are there other aspects of my job that disturb me and keep my mind from settling down?

- *Eight Mindful Steps to Happiness* by Henepola Gunaratana, p.138



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel
Garland – Verse 7ab*

ALTERNATE TRANSLATION
BY ALEX BERZIN:

Let me rid myself of all material
burdens

And adorn myself with an
arya's gems.

On Verse 7ab

Thus we should abandon attachment for external ornaments while retaining within us the gems of a superior person. There are seven of these inner gems to adorn our mind, named and explained at the conclusion of this text [in verses 25 and 26abc, which are placed just after this verse in James B. Apple's translation].

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, p.114



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel
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26abc*

On Verses 25 & 26abc

When we talk about a gem, we shouldn't just think of a jewel, rather we should think of a treasure that we build up more and more. ... They're never going to run out. Nor can they be stolen.

- Oral Commentary by Alex Berzin

On Verses 25 & 26abc

From the spiritual point of view, we are progressing well if we have the awakening mind as our friend and these seven gems as our wealth. Rechungpa once requested his master, Milarepa, for permission to go to Lhasa in central Tibet. After Rechungpa departed, Milarepa was saddened. When asked why, he said, “My moon-like disciple has gone away and I, like a dog, stay behind.”

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, p.136

On Verses 25 & 26abc

When he was further asked what wealth and companions were sent along with his disciple, Milarepa replied,

I sent him away with the wealth of the seven gems and the friend of the awakening mind. I have no worries about his safety now.

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, p.136