



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

Shantideva Center

Session 3 - June 3, 2025



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

## On Verse 7cd

*Attached to your loved ones you're stirred up like water.  
 Hating your enemies you burn like fire.  
 In the darkness of confusion you forget what to adopt and discard.  
 Give up your homeland –  
 This is the practice of Bodhisattvas.*

- Verse 2, *The 37 Practices of Bodhisattvas* by Togme Sangpo  
 Translated by Geshe Sonam Rinchen and Ruth Sonam

## On Verse 7cd

*By avoiding bad objects, disturbing emotions gradually decrease.  
 Without distraction, virtuous activities naturally increase.  
 With clarity of mind, conviction in the teaching arises.  
 Cultivate seclusion –  
 This is the practice of Bodhisattvas.*

- Verse 3, *The 37 Practices of Bodhisattvas* by Togme Sangpo  
 Translated by Geshe Sonam Rinchen and Ruth Sonam

## On Verse 7cd

A great meditator once said:

*As a beginner I find this life in the mountains enjoyable. Birds and animals come to visit me and I can freely talk with them without it giving rise to anger, attachment and a host of other delusions.*

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, p.115

## On Verse 7cd

Furthermore, the more you spend time alone, the more you come to appreciate and understand yourself. And even if you are surrounded by a crowd, learning to be alone will make you more at peace as you grow older. The more you become peaceful, even in old age, you won't feel lonely. It's impossible.

- *Solid Like a Mountain* by Lama Gyurmey, p.115

## On Verse 7cd

However, individuals who spent most of their youth in the company of others and in crowded environments will struggle with feelings of depression and loneliness later in life. Why? Because they never took the time to be alone, and enjoy their own company.

- *Solid Like a Mountain* by Lama Gyurmey, p.115

## On Verse 7cd

Their minds became addicted to the crowd. So, when they finally find themselves alone, they begin to feel lonely. Especially in old age, when they can no longer attend parties or visit friends, they are left feeling lonely in their empty homes.

- *Solid Like a Mountain* by Lama Gyurmey, p.115





*The Bodhisattva's Jewel  
Garland – Verse 8ab*

## On Verse 8ab

The Junior Tutor to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the late Trijang Rinpoche, said:

*If you find your mind in a state not conducive to performing virtuous actions, do not go and talk idly with someone. Instead, go to sleep. You might not accumulate much virtue but at least you will not accumulate non-virtue.*

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, p.115

## On Verse 8ab

The great Nyingma Dzogchen master, Paltrul Rinpoche, said:

*Now that I am ready to go into retreat I shall stop talking altogether. I shall cease sending my mind out to seek the faults in others and instead I shall spend my time looking within. Life is too short to waste in mental wandering and limitless gossip.*

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, p.115

## On Verse 8ab

*And if by chance you must take part  
In lengthy conversations worthlessly,  
Or if you come upon sensational events,  
Then cast aside delight and taste for them.*

- Verse 5.45, *The Way of the Bodhisattva* by Shantideva

Translated by Padmakara Translation Group

## On Verse 8ab

Moreover, Shantideva says, we can waste a lot of time distracting ourselves with mindless chatter. I'm reminded of a Native American man from the Taos Pueblo called Little Joe Gomez. In the early seventies, he met some people who were practicing complete silence. They were wearing chalkboards around their necks in case they needed to communicate.

- *No Time to Lose* by Pema Chodron, p.126

## On Verse 8ab

This got Little Joe laughing. When someone asked him what was so funny, he said, "Very easy to not talk; very difficult to talk mindfully." As far as he was concerned, the better practice was to converse consciously.

- *No Time to Lose* by Pema Chodron, p.126



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel  
Garland – Verse 8cd*



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel  
Garland – Verse 9abc*

ALTERNATE TRANSLATION  
BY LAMA GYURMEY:

Those who possess enlightened  
vision

And those first setting out  
upon the path –

Regard them both as Buddha.

## On Verse 9abc

This mindset of treating all beings as Buddhas [or spiritual teachers] can be applied in various situations. For example, when encountering some-one less fortunate, we can see them as a Buddha who has come to teach us the importance of compassion and generosity.

- *Solid Like a Mountain* by Lama Gyurmey, p.129

## On Verse 9abc

When faced with someone who is unkind or speaks harshly, we must not respond harshly, but rather we should show them respect. We can view them as a Buddha who is testing our patience.

- *Solid Like a Mountain* by Lama Gyurmey, p.129

## On Verse 9abc

In any case, the way you treat them now is with equality and respect, understood? This is the essence of the idea. Consider them both as your spiritual guides or as Buddhas. The great Indian Master Shantideva instructs us to regard even ordinary beings as Buddhas.

- *Solid Like a Mountain* by Lama Gyurmey, p.129

## On Verse 9abc

So, whether we encounter those who possess the eye of wisdom, and enlightened vision, or conversely those who are just starting out on their spiritual journey, let us treat them with the same reverence we would show a Buddha. Let us respect and honor all beings, for it is through this mindset that we can cultivate humility and truly embody the teachings of Buddhism.

- *Solid Like a Mountain* by Lama Gyurmey, p.129



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel  
Garland – Verse 9de*



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel  
Garland – Verse 10ab*

## On Verse 10ab

*There is no difference between male and female as evil friends [of negative karma] who make you lose this and all future lives – therefore throw them far away like a stone used for cleaning your bottom. The virtuous friend and virtuous companion is the originator of qualities – therefore, correctly devote and dedicate yourself.*

From “Heart Advice of Achos Rinpoche,”  
translated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

## On Verse 10ab

Ordinary people like us are, for the most part, easily influenced by the people and circumstances around us. That is why we should always follow a spiritual friend.

*The Words of My Perfect Teacher* by Paltrul Rinpoche, p.137



## On Verse 10ab

In the sandalwood forests of the Malaya mountains, when an ordinary tree falls, its wood is gradually impregnated with the sweet perfume of the sandal. After some years that ordinary wood comes to smell as sweet as the sandal trees around it.

*The Words of My Perfect Teacher* by Paltrul Rinpoche, pp.137-138

## On Verse 10ab

In just the same way, if you live and study with a perfect teacher full of good qualities, you will be permeated by the perfume of those qualities and in everything you do you will come to resemble them.

*The Words of My Perfect Teacher* by Paltrul Rinpoche, p.138



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel  
Garland – Verse 10cd*

ALTERNATE TRANSLATION  
BY ALEX BERZIN:

Let me rid myself of hostility  
and uneasy mental states,  
And go happily everywhere.

## On Verse 10cd

If we are angry and aggressive, happiness will always elude us. Happiness and contentment are dependent entirely on our attitudes towards daily situations and life in general. Full of anger we cannot even enjoy the good fortune of wealth or delicious food, yet with peace of mind we shall be content with the most basic diet and simple dwellings.

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, p.117

## On Verse 10cd

Gradually, we learn to have more and more strength, so that we are not – to use the Tibetan example – like a dog that, when all the other dogs in the neighborhood start to bark, it starts to bark too.

- Oral Commentary by Alex Berzin

## On Verse 10cd

An example of that would be that when somebody we're with starts to complain about the government and all sorts of things, we join in and get ourselves all worked up about it. "If you can do something, do it; if you can't do anything, don't complain" – it'll just make you feel worse.

- Oral Commentary by Alex Berzin

## On Verse 10cd

A true practitioner of Dharma should be like a bee that is never attracted to just one flower, but flies from one to another. Unlike most people who are fastidious and critical, a spiritual person should have no preferences. ... We should be able to adapt to whatever circumstances we find.

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, pp.117-118

## On Verse 10cd

By remaining in one place too long we make friends, as well as enemies, and become attached to the familiarity of our environment. Je Tsongkhapa was called “The Wanderer” because as soon as people heard he was in one place and came to him presenting offerings, he would move on.

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, p.118

## On Verse 10cd

He acted in this way until he achieved full realization. Then he remained in one place and, speaking from his own experience, gave discourses, founded monasteries, and performed other beneficial activities.

- *Advice from a Spiritual Friend* by Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, p.118



*The Bodhisattva's Jewel  
Garland – Verse 11*

## On Verse 11

Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey used to say, “Life is too short to taste everything, so don’t become a professional tourist of samsara. You don’t have to taste everything of samsara. That’s not going to get you anywhere” – a very helpful piece of advice.

From Oral Commentary by Alex Berzin

## On Verse 11

*The cause of all outer suffering is desire for this life.  
Therefore, you must renounce the desire of this life.  
When the desire for achievement in this life is too strong.  
Then your mind is not happy.*

Advice from Kadampa Geshe Shawagon,  
translated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

## On Verse 11

*When that happens, then all these three happen at once:  
Negative karma, suffering, and a bad reputation.  
Therefore, stop the many various thoughts of desire.*

Advice from Kadampa Geshe Shawagon,  
translated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche

## On Verse 11

*Seeking so many things for the happiness of this life must stop.  
When you are able to turn away from the desire for this life's  
happiness,  
That is the beginning of happiness.*

Advice from Kadampa Geshe Shawagon,  
translated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche