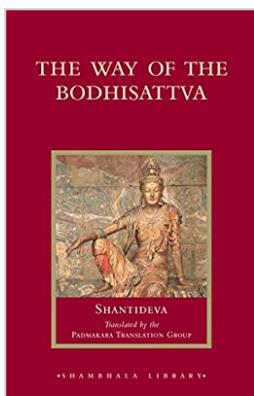


The Way of the Bodhisattva

By Shantideva



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Treasured by Buddhists of all traditions, *The Way of the Bodhisattva* (*Bodhicharyavatara*) is a guide to cultivating the mind of enlightenment, and to generating the qualities of love, compassion, generosity, and patience. This text has been studied, practiced, and expounded upon in an unbroken tradition for centuries, first in India, and later in Tibet. Presented in the form of a personal meditation in verse, it outlines the path of the Bodhisattvas—those who renounce the peace of individual enlightenment and vow to work for the liberation of all beings and to attain Buddhahood for their sake.

This version, translated from the Tibetan, is a revision by the translators of the 1997 edition. Included are a foreword by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, a new translator's preface, a thorough introduction, a note on the translation, and three appendices of commentary by the Nyingma master Kunzang Pelden.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Shantideva was an Indian Buddhist while Buddhism still flourished in India. His great work, the *Bodhicharyavatara*, or "Entrance to the Path of Awakening," became a major text of Tibetan Buddhism long after it went out of circulation in its homeland. It is a handbook on how to realize the nature of existence and of compassion that arises from such realization. The Dalai Lama said of it, "If I have any understanding of compassion and the practice of the Bodhisattva path, it is entirely on the basis of this text that I possess it." Like the *Book of Proverbs*, the *Bodhicharyavatara* is a timeless work of wisdom, the longevity of which is due to the quality of its verse as much as to its wisdom. For the first time, an attempt has been made to recover that poetic immediacy by rendering the text in iambic lines.

Regard your body as a vessel,
A simple boat for going here and there.
Make of it a wish-fulfilling gem
To bring about the benefit of beings.

With this translation, gleaming in its clarity, a Buddhist classic becomes an English classic. Worthy of recitation and committing to memory, Shantideva's words on such topics as doing good, reading sutras, guarding the mind, keeping good company, and on the nature of the mind and reality can take on a life of their own, to grow and blossom in a new native tongue. The text booms, like the voice of a Shakespearean actor, as if it were not the bodhisattva but the book itself that proclaims:

And now as long as space endures,
As long as there are beings to be found,
May I continue likewise to remain
To drive away the sorrows of the world.

--*Brian Bruya*

From Publishers Weekly

One of the many Buddhist masters who have written profoundly and with clarity about the wellsprings of the Buddhist traditions is Shantideva, a seventh-century Buddhist scholar who taught at Nalanda, one of the great monastic universities of ancient India. Shantideva's *Bodhicharyavatara*, one of the foundational texts of Tibetan Buddhism, deeply influenced the Dalai Lama, who once remarked that his own understanding of the bodhisattva path is based entirely upon Shantideva's text. Bodhisattvas are beings who renounce nirvana and vow to work for the welfare of all beings. The *Bodhicharyavatara*, which means "An Entry Into the Activities of Enlightenment," is an outline of the path that bodhisattvas should follow as they seek to teach others the path to nirvana. Thus, this collection contains meditation exercises and moral instruction for bodhisattvas to practice as they engage in their work. Shantideva's work is required reading for an understanding of Tibetan Buddhism, and the clarity and crispness of this new translation make it an accessible way into the world of Tibetan Buddhism.

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Review

"Shantideva's work is required reading for an understanding of Tibetan Buddhism, and the clarity and crispness of this new translation makes it an accessible way into the world of Tibetan Buddhism."—

Users Review

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Alexandra Sauer:

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Sonya Ewing:

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