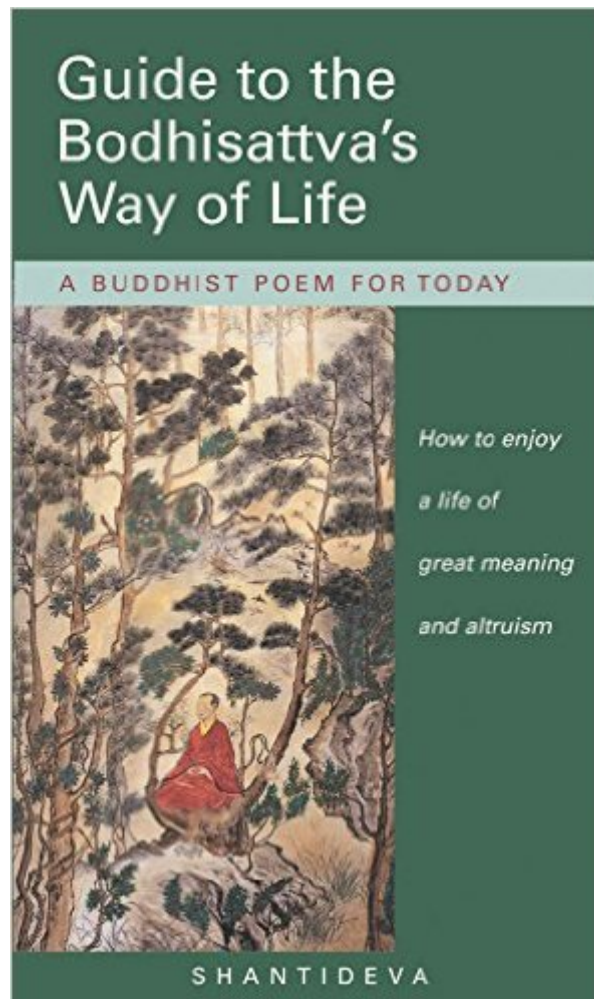


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# Guide To The Bodhisattva's Way Of Life: How To Enjoy A Life Of Great Meaning And Altruism



## Synopsis

This famous and universally loved poem for daily living has inspired many generations of Buddhists and non-Buddhists since it was first composed in the 8th century by the famous Indian Buddhist master Shantideva. This new translation, made under the guidance of Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, conveys the great lucidity and poetic beauty of the original, while preserving its full impact and spiritual insight. Reading these verses slowly, while contemplating their meaning, has a profoundly liberating effect on the mind. The poem invokes special positive states of mind, moves us from suffering and conflict to happiness and peace, and gradually introduces us to the entire Mahayana Buddhist path to enlightenment.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a terrific translation of Shantideva's classic poem, but, as a relative newcomer to Buddhist thought, I found it to be quite challenging. It is a text to be studied and savored. Despite its relatively short length, it still took me a couple of weeks to finish since I was constantly taking breaks to digest and interpret what was being said. I also must admit that, coming from a somewhat materialistic, Western background, it takes a shift in mental gears to focus on the needs of others as a means of gaining happiness. I'd also like to mention that this book is of a very high quality on the physical plane. The print is elegant. The texture of the paper is pleasing and the artwork is exceptional.

Guide To The Bodhisattva's Way Of Life: A Buddhist Poem For Today presents the classic 8th

century poem by Shantideva in a thoroughly reader accessible and elegantly translated English text which was transcribed under the guidance of Geshe Kelsang Gyatso. The poem itself offers wisdom in the art of balancing altruism with personal happiness and self-satisfaction. Shantideva's Guide To The Bodhisattva's Way Of Life is a core recommendation for dedicated Buddhist Studies collections and reading lists.

Geshe Kelsang Gyatso's new translation of the famous and universally loved poem Guide to the Bodhisattva's way of life by Shantideva (8th century), is a condensation of all Buddha's teachings and how they can be integrated into our daily life. It is a beautiful, lyrical poem that contains all the essential elements to complete the path to enlightenment: instructions on the benefits of bodhichitta, how to purify negative states of mind and cultivate positive states of mind, how to be conscientious when engaging in any type of mental, physical, or verbal action, how to reduce disturbing thoughts and distractions that can cause the mind to become unpeaceful and uncontrolled, how to practice patience effectively, how to train in effort while exercising our spiritual path, how to develop and improve our concentration so we can meditate powerfully on profound subjects such as emptiness, the ultimate nature of reality, and finally this precious poem contains a beautiful dedication for all those who are suffering from fear, frustration, illness, poverty, war, and famine, that they may swiftly be freed from their unfortunate conditions, and maintain a happy and peaceful mind. I recommend this beautiful poem to those interested in pursuing a happy, peaceful life filled with meaning. I recommend reading the verses slowly whilst contemplating their profound meaning. The words are precious and blessed and you can actually experience improvement in the mind just by reading it! There is a lot contained in the verses so I recommend taking time to enjoy them!

The translation by Neil Elliot and Kelsang Gyatso is interpolated at least in some verses, and it brings some distortions into Shantideva's text. In Chapter 5, Tharpa Publications, 2002, p.61, both translators give the following translation of Shantideva: Verse 88 I should listen to Dharma With respect and a good heart, Recognising it as the supreme medicine For curing the pains of anger and attachment. Verse 89 I should teach the vast and profound Dharma with a pure intention, Free from any wish to acquire wealth or reputation; And I should always maintain a pure motivation of bodhichitta And make great effort to put Dharma into practice. Verse 90 I should explain Dharma to release those who are listening From samsara, the cycle of suffering, And to lead them to the ultimate goal - The attainment of full enlightenment. This "translation" is a spin of what Shantideva is actual saying. Although there are different translations the real verses by Shantideva are similar to

Dr. Alexander Berzin's translation (available online):(88) I shall not explain Dharma to those lacking respect, To those with heads bound (with cloth) while not being sick, To those holding parasols, canes, or weapons, Or to those whose faces are veiled,(89) Nor the vast and profound to those who are modest, Nor to women without (also) a man. I shall always pay equal respect To the modest and the supreme Dharma teachings.(90) I shall not join to the Dharma for the modest Those who are vessels for the vast Dharma teachings, Nor shall I cause them to abandon (bodhisattva) behavior, Or entice them into (merely reciting) the sutras or mantras. Verses 88-89 refer to the Vinaya, the code of monastic discipline for monks and nuns. The reason to offer a distorted version of the verses might be that in the NKT the Vinaya, the monastic code of discipline for monks and nuns is absent, and that there was a need in order to maintain the group doctrine to twist Shantideva's verses so that the translation fits into the inner thinking of the New Kadampa Tradition. Another reason could be that the translators lack professional skills. There is an online commentary of these verses by a respected Tibetan Buddhist master:[...]Therefore, instead of recommending this translation by the New Kadampa Tradition I would recommend reliable and careful translations of Shantideva's masterpiece, such as:-*The Way of the Bodhisattva (Shambhala Classics)* by Padmakara Translation Group- *A Guide To The Bodhisattva Way Of Life*, Santideva (Author), Vesna A. Wallace (Translator), B. Alan Wallace (Translator)-*A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* by Stephen Batchelor As commentaries to Shantideva's text I can recommend:-*The Nectar of Manjushri's Speech: A Detailed Commentary on Shantideva's "Way of the Bodhisattva": A Detailed Commentary on Shantideva's "Way of the Bodhisattva"*-*The Way of Awakening: A Commentary on Shantideva's Bodhicharyavatara*

I counted almost 50 verses of this translation that give a different meaning than that found in three other translations which I possess. Some of the verses appear to be complete creations made up by the translator! Also, despite Tharpa's claim that their translation was done "under the compassionate guidance of Venerable Geshe Kelsang Gyatso" his commentary on the text appears to favor the translations which I possess-- he seems unaware that the Tharpa translation differs from these! I advise readers who want to better understand Geshe Kelsang Gyatso's commentary of the text to read the translations done by the Padmakara Translation Group or that done by Vesna and Alan Wallace or that done by Stephen Batchelor. And why has no student of Geshe Kelsang Gyatso noticed these problems in all the ten years that the book has been in circulation????

I bought this book thinking it was more like a novel, but its actually "verses" of poems. You can just

read one verse a day and contemplate on it as a daily meditation.

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