

# The Perfection of Generosity

## The Process of Learning the Perfections

This has 2 Parts: 1. How to train in the bodhisattva deeds in general 2. How to train in the last 2 perfections

## How to train in the bodhisattva deeds in general

2 parts: 1. Training in the perfections that mature the qualities you will have when you become a buddha 2. Training in the 4 ways to gather disciples that help others matures

## Training in the perfections that mature the qualities you will have when you have become a buddha.

6 parts:

1. How to train in generosity
2. ethical discipline
3. patients
4. joyous perseverance
5. concentration
6. wisdom

### 1. How to train in generosity

4 sections: 1. What generosity is 2. How to begin the development of generosity 3. The divisions of generosity (ch 9 - 10) 4. A summary (ch 10)

#### a. What generosity is

`What is the nature of generosity? It is the intention accompanying bodhisattva's disinterested non-attachment to all of their possessions and their body, and, motivated by this, the physical and verbal actions of giving things to be given.

Bodhisattva Levels

**` It is the virtue of a generous attitude, and the physical and verbal actions which are motivated by this**

The physical and verbal aspects of generosity are not the main thing; the main thing is the mental aspect. This is because you perfect generosity after you destroy your stingy clinging to all that you own - your body, resources, and roots of virtue — and you completely condition your mind to giving them away to living beings from the depths of your heart, and not only that, but also to giving to others the effects of this giving aswell.

`If generosity were perfected  
By removing beings' poverty,  
Since beings are still destitute  
How could past saviors have perfected it?

Generosity is perfected, it is said,  
Through the attitude of giving away to all beings  
All your possessions, along with the effects of this.  
Therefore, generosity is a state of mind.

Bodhisattva Levels

` So the practice of generosity entails generating in various ways the intentions to give and steadily increasing this generosity, even though you may not be actually giving away something to others.

## **b. How to begin the development of generosity**

Simply destroying all stinginess towards you body and possessions is not the perfection of generosity, for stinginess is included within attachment. If this were so, if the hinayana arhats have totally eliminated it along with its seeds.

What is required, is not only clearing away the stinginess' tightfistedness which prevents giving things away, but also that you develop from the depths of your heart the intention to give away to others all your possessions.

**For this you have to meditate on the faults of holding on to things and the benefits of giving them away.**

Though you make much effort to care for your body, which has no substance, you have to discard it. By sincerely giving it away to others you fulfill many of your own and others aims.

`By giving away everything I pass from sorrow,  
So my mind reaches nirvana.  
As I have to give up everything at death,  
It is best to give it to living beings.

Shantideva

` There are so many disadvantages to not giving, and much good comes from giving.

If you are able to generate intense delight as you contemplate the many benefits of giving things away and great fear as you reflect on the faults of tightfistedness, you will naturally produce a generous attitude.

Accordingly, generate the thought of giving away everything to others at the conclusion of cultivating love and compassion, or at the conclusion of reflecting on the life stories of the conqueror, his children, and so forth.

**If you stop the craving that conceives of everything to be your personal property and the repeatedly condition your attitude of giving it all away to others, you will be called a bodhisattva**

**If you use food, clothing, shelter and so on that you have sincerely given away to all beings, and you do so with craving for your personal welfare, forgetting the thought, “I will use them for others welfare”, then you commit a major infraction. If you just forget or are only thinking about a single being because of attachment, its a minor infraction.**

## c. The Divisions of Generosity

3 parts: 1. How everyone should practice it 2. Divisions of generosity relative to particular persons 3. Divisions of actual generosity

### 1. How everyone should practice it

Asanga's **Mahayana Compendium** says that you practice generosity in association with the 6 supremacies:

1. **Supreme Basis** - you practice generosity on the basis of the spirit of enlightenment, i.e. you act after you have been motivated it.
2. **Supreme Things** - means that in general you give all objects that can be given, and even when you are engaged in specific acts of generosity, you not give up the thought of giving everything away
3. **Supreme Aim** - when you give away things to all living beings for the sake of their immediate happiness and ultimate benefit.
4. **Supreme Skill-in-means** - when generosity is imbued with non conceptual sublime

wisdom; beginning bodhisattvas should take this to be the wisdom that knows the lack of inherent nature in objects

5. **Supreme Dedication** - you dedicate the virtue from generosity to complete enlightenment.
6. **Supreme Purity** - when you stop both the afflictive and cognitive obscurations

## **2. Divisions of Generosity relative to particular persons.**

In general it is said that lay bodhisattvas make gifts of material things and ordained bodhisattvas make gifts of teachings.

## **3. Divisions of actual generosity**

3 parts: 1. The gift of the teachings 2. The gift of fearlessness 3. Material gifts (ch 9 - 10)

### **a. The gift of the teachings**

The gift of teaching is teaching the sublime teaching without making mistakes, teaching the arts and the like (which are blameless and proper to learn), and involving others in upholding the fundamental precepts.

### **b. The gift of the fearlessness**

The gift of fearlessness is protecting living beings from fear of humans such as kings and robbers, from fear of non-human beings such as lions, tigers, etc, and from fear of the elements such as water and fire.

### **c. Material Gifts**

2 Parts: 1. Generosity of actually giving material things 2. Generosity which is just mental

#### **1. Generosity of actually giving material things**

3 parts: 1. How to give away material things 2. What to do if you are unable to give 3. Relying on the remedies for the hindrances to generosity

## **How to give away material things**

4 parts: 1. Recipients of giving 2. The motivation for giving 3. How to give 4. Things to give

### **1. Recipients of giving**

There are 10: 1. Friends and relatives who help you 2. enemies who harm you 3. ordinary people who neither harm nor help you 4. those with good qualities such as ethical discipline 5. those with flaws such as faulty ethical discipline 6. those inferior to you 7. those equal to you 8. those superior to you 9. the rich and happy 10. the miserable and destitute

## 2. Motivation for giving

2 sections: 1. What kind of motivation is required 2. What kind of motivation must be eliminated

### a. What kind of motivation is required

Your motivation should have 3 attributes: 1. **a focus on purpose** - thinking “based on this I will complete the perfection of generosity, a precondition for unexcelled enlightenment” 2. **a focus on the thing to be given** - thinking “from the outset a bodhisattva gives away all possessions to living beings, so the material goods that I am giving belong to others, and it is as if they are receiving things kept in trust” 3. **focus on the recipient** - which thinks “Since these recipients, whether asking for the gift or not, bring to completion my perfection of generosity, they are my teachers.” ☹️ Once the giving is free from stinginess, The giver must compassionately make gifts Which are given equally with an even-mindedness To those who are superior or inferior recipients

The result of such giving Go to both self and other at the same time. Holy beings praise the giving without stinginess To those who seek gifts.

Chandrakirti ☹️

### 2. What kind of motivation must be eliminated

**1. A motivation that believes in the supremacy of bad views** Lacking this means that you do not give while thinking “There is no result from generosity”, “harmful blood offerings are religious”, etc

**2. A motivation that is arrogant** Lacking this means you do not despise the person who asks for something, you do not compete with others, and, after you give something, you do not conceitedly think, “I am so generous; no-one else can do like this”

You should do like this:

At the times when you were learned and very intelligent you did not praise yourself.;  
You extolled and revered other persons who had few good qualities.  
When you maintained a mass of good qualities, you seized on even a small fault in your own behavior.

Praise of infinite Qualities

**3. A motivation for support** Lacking this means that you do not give with the hope of getting praise or fame

**4. A motivation of discouragement** Lacking this means that when you give after becoming

joyful even before the act of giving, you are filled with faith and then have no regret after giving. And even when you hear about a bodhisattva's vast acts of generosity, you are not discouraged, but intensify your enthusiasm without belittling yourself.

**5. A motivation in which you turn your back on someone** Lacking this means that you give out of an evenhanded compassion that is impartial toward enemy, friend, and ordinary persons.

**6. A motivation of expecting something in return** Lacking this means that you do not give to others out of the hope that they will help you, but because you see that these beings are bereft of happiness, burned by flames of craving, without the power to relieve their sufferings, and naturally miserable.

**7. A motivation of expecting fruition** Lacking this means that you do not hope for the fruition of an excellent body and resources in future lives, but give because you see that all composite things are without substance, but can contribute to unexcelled enlightenment. This does not stop you from expecting these results in the short term, but stops you from taking the mere body and resources of cyclic existence to be your goal.

—

Give something when you are free of distractions and feelings of dislike or anger.