

Entering by Practice

- means following four practices that encompass all other practices
- accepting adversity
- adapting to conditions
- seeking nothing
- acting in accordance with the Dharma

accepting adversity

- from The Essence of Mahayana Practice (pdf)
- <https://www.thezensite.com/ZenTeachings/Translations/Essence-of-Mahayana-Practice.pdf>

What is the practice of accepting adversity? When suffering, a practitioner of the Way should reflect:

For innumerable kalpas, I have pursued the trivial instead of the essential, drifted through all spheres of existence, created much animosity and hatred, maligned and harmed others endlessly. Even though now I have done no wrong, I am reaping the karmic consequences of past transgressions. It is something that neither the heavens nor other people can impose upon me. Therefore I should accept it willingly, without any resentment or objection.

adapting to conditions

Sentient beings are without a self, being steered by karmic conditions. Suffering and joy are experienced together as a result of causes and conditions. Any reward, blessing or honor is a consequence of past causes; nothing remains when the necessary conditions are exhausted. So what is there to be joyful about? Knowing that success and failure depend on conditions, the mind remains unmoved by the wind of joy, experiencing neither gain nor loss. This is to be in harmony with the Way. Therefore it is called the practice of adapting to conditions

seeking nothing

Third, to seek nothing. Ordinary people, in their perpetual ignorance, crave and form attachments to everything, everywhere. This is called seeking. The wise are awakened to the Truth, and choose reason over convention; even though their forms follow the law of causality, their minds are at peace and empty of effort. Since all existence is empty, there is nothing to be desired. Blessing and Darkness always follow each other. This long sojourn in the Triple Realm is like living in a burning house; to have a body is to suffer, how can one attain peace? Those who understand this renounce all mundane existence, cease desires, and

stop seeking. The sutra says, “To seek is to suffer, to seek nothing is bliss.” It follows that to seek nothing is to truly follow the Way. This is the practice of seeking nothing.

acting in accordance with the Dharma

Fourth, to act in accordance with the Dharma. The principle of intrinsic purity is the Dharma. By this principle, all forms and characteristics are empty, without defilement and attachment, without self or others. The sutra says, “In the Dharma there are no sentient beings, because it is free of the impurities of sentient beings. In the Dharma there is no self, because it is free of the impurities of self.” When the wise believe in and understand this principle, they should also act in accordance with the Dharma. There is no parsimony in the Dharma, so practice the giving of body, life, and possessions without any reservation. Understand and achieve “triple emptiness”, with no reliance and no attachment. One liberates others without becoming attached to form, thus removing impurities. This benefits oneself, benefits others, and also glorifies the bodhi path . Dana is perfected this way; so are the other five paramitas. In order to relinquish delusions, one practices these six perfections, yet nothing is practiced. This is to act in accordance with the Dharma.