

BCA Chapter 1, Verse 35, Text Section 296-301

***But whoever looks at a bodhisattva with a devoted mind,
The fruits of this will multiply far more than these evil thoughts.
Even in greatest adversity, the sons of the victors
Never generate negativity; instead, their virtues
naturally increase.***

BCA 1-35 Text section 296

Whoever merely looks at a bodhisattva with a devoted attitude, with an attitude of admiration, and thinks, “This person is truly wonderful!” will gather incalculable merit. The positive consequences of generating devotion toward a bodhisattva are stronger than the negative consequences of generating a negative attitude against a bodhisattva. Even if one does horrible things to a bodhisattva, he will never retaliate and commit negative actions himself. Whatever happens to a bodhisattva is transformed into an enhancement of virtue. The bodhisattva only manifests an ever increasing stream of goodness.

BCA 1-35 Text section 297:

Examples like those Khenpo Kunpal quoted from the Niyataaniyataa-mudraavataara-sūtra are called ‘unlikely examples’ or ‘impossible examples’

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A bodhisattva who is devoted to the great vehicle refers to a bodhisattva who is on the paths of accumulation and of application . Such a bodhisattva is a beginning bodhisattva. It is of special importance to help and support beginning bodhisattvas, whose bodhicitta is not strongly developed. Harming a beginning bodhisattva is a grave misdeed. As we cannot distinguish between beginning and advanced bodhisattvas, we should practice pure perception toward all beings.

Therefore, Buddha Shaakyamuni said, “Except for me or those like me, beings should not fathom beings”.

This means that only the Buddha and tenth level bodhisattvas can truly distinguish the level of realization of other sentient beings. Only if we truly follow the conduct of a bodhisattva, do we avoid generating the negative karma

of harming other bodhisattvas. Since knowing who is or who is not a bodhisattva is largely impossible, we cannot rely on our own judgement, and our only recourse is to practice pure perception.

BCA 1-35 Text section 298:

Bodhisattvas are beings *who turn bad omens into auspicious conditions, who allow bad conditions to arise as enhancements*. Bad omens connote bad signs, something inauspicious, and even obstacles. For ordinary beings all these situations and circumstances are something that must be avoided and not something that must be accepted or welcomed. Such beings seek out methods to overcome these difficult events.

When a bodhisattva yogin encounters bad omens and inauspicious events, he feels so confident and fearless that he invites them. He uses these obstacles to test his dharma practice. He perceives bad omens as auspicious circumstances, as aids. Instead of rejecting them he will joyously invite them. The yogin bodhisattva has the strength to transform obstacles into enhancements for his practice due to his bodhicitta. When the yogin dwells within bodhicitta without wavering, no circumstances can harm his practice. Everything he encounters becomes an enhancement. Even if suffering from a mortal sickness, he takes this as an enhancement for his practice, joyously thinking, "May the suffering and sicknesses of all sentient beings ripen on my body. May all sentient beings be established on the level of ultimate happiness." In this way he views any situation with the 'eye of bodhicitta'. He dwells within bodhicitta unmoving like a mountain.

BCA 1-35 Text section 299:

Whatever adversities bodhisattvas may experience, however badly people might treat them, their dharma practice will not be impeded. They perceive negative conditions as *something that purifies (their former) negative deeds, as something that brings forth virtue*. Initially, everything they experience supports them, encouraging them toward virtue. Next, adversities provide the condition for letting virtue increase, eventually creating the causes for the bodhisattvas to attain complete and perfect enlightenment. Many bodhisattvas attained enlightenment based on bad friends and difficult circumstances.

The famous nun Palmo suffered from leprosy. She practiced the sadhaana of Avalokiteśvara, was cured of her disease and, in her very body, went to the celestial Buddhafields. Milarepa reached enlightenment due to the kindness of his enemies. A practitioner must know the key point of how to transform negative conditions into enhancements for practice. Only then will dharma practice flourish.

As serious as a practitioner's difficult experiences may be, he should understand them as something that purifies his former negative deeds. People who slander him become the true object of his pity and compassion, since he knows they are accumulating bad karma. At the same time, he also knows that he is experiencing the slander due to his own bad karma. If a practitioner had no bad karma left at all, no one would ever speak negatively about him. All the gossip, slander, evil talk, jealousy and so forth are simply a sure indication that one's own bad karma is ripening. It is virtually impossible to say anything negative about the Buddha. One might not agree with his view, but to find a fault within the Buddha is difficult even for negatively-minded people. There are neither karmic causes nor karmic conditions remaining within the Buddha.

If true bodhisattvas are slandered, their fame becomes greater. If you beat and abuse a true bodhisattva, his charisma will shine forth to an even greater extent. All negative conditions are for him an enhancement and remove obstacles.

Tulku Urgyen instructed that every practitioner should apply the sūtra teaching on training in goodness in four ways:

Although accused, do not respond with accusation.
Although attacked, do not respond with aggression.
Although beaten, do not strike back.
Although exposed, do not respond by exposing others.

Tulku Urgyen commented that you might be falsely blamed for something terrible. You might be accused of something bad you did not do or say. A yogin does not respond to accusation by saying, "I didn't do it." He does not retaliate by accusing others. When anger or aggression comes at him, he never answers with aggression. However harsh the words may be, however bold the aggressor, the yogin does not get upset. Even if attacked physically and beaten, he never hits back; he sits still, taking the beating silently. As long as the yogin is on the path, he is not free from defects. So, when someone exposes his faults, he does

not become upset or defensive. He might say, "What you observe is true. I am at fault."

If you apply these points, you will have no enemies; you will not be a target for aggression. Whatever bad things might be said or done to you, they will cause no harm. As you do not respond to negativity, people will tire of picking fights with you. Train yourself and try to accomplish this much patience. If you stick to these points, you may be called a practitioner. Give the gain to others and keep the loss for yourself. Allow others to be right, even if it makes you wrong.

Behavior should always accord with the teachings.

Do not be disturbed; harmonize with every situation.

Do not waste time in pointless endeavors, such as socializing and watching movies.

Do not spend time in idle talk and gossip.

Do not be careless in your actions.

Keep the precepts and vows you have taken.

Persist in gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom.

Always generate devotion to your root guru.

Be courageous in the view; be humble in your conduct.

Do as Tilopa advised Naropa:

Child, perception arises interdependently.

Naropa, until you realize the unborn essence

Never leave the vehicle Of the two accumulations.

This is how Tulku Urgyen taught on training in goodness in four ways.

BCA 1-35 Text section 300:

Those practitioners who are meek in courage and unskilled in the techniques of the bodhisattvas are easily overwhelmed the moment a few minor inconvenient circumstances arise. In order to become courageous, a practitioner must train his mind through meditation on bodhicitta. A bodhisattva should alternate between times of retreat and seclusion on the one hand and times of engagement with ordinary beings on the other. After a period of time in retreat he should check whether he can maintain his bodhicitta in the face of negative-minded people. You should train in all methods of dispelling obstacles and applying enhancements. A meek bodhisattva is someone who has not applied the methods of mind-training and who lacks endeavor. Those 'unskilled in methods' refers to

those who lack knowledge. Such practitioners are easily overwhelmed by minor inconvenient circumstances.

When they are well fed and warmed by the sun they look like real practitioners, but they cannot handle any difficult situation without losing their composure. They look like real practitioners, like models for (real) practitioners, but in fact they are just feeble imitations, poor copies of a real practitioner.

As it is said:

Well fed and warmed by the sun, he is a role model for practitioners.
When meeting difficult circumstances, he is an ordinary being.

BCA 1-35 Text section 301:

Such feeble copies of practitioners are like candles in the wind. Wind can be either an aid or a hindrance for fire. When the wind rises, a small candle is blown out. In that case the wind has become a hindrance to the fire. Even when a strong wind blows, it does not harm a forest fire but enhances it. In the same way, a feeble practitioner falls apart in the face of obstacles, while a true practitioner is stable in his bodhicitta practice and transforms every situation into an aid on the path to enlightenment. In adversities his realization is greatly enhanced. He is like a forest fire that is supported by the wind. The stronger the wind blows, the stronger does the fire blaze.

The signs of a good dharma practitioner are devotion, compassion, renunciation, wisdom-knowledge, certainty, radiant confidence, a happy frame of mind, a peaceful frame of mind, inner courage and fearlessness. He practices the ten virtuous actions to the best of his ability and avoids the ten nonvirtuous actions as much as he is able. He embraces all his actions with bodhicitta. The abovementioned qualities all stem from a mind well trained in bodhicitta. These are some guidelines for a practitioner.

There are two kinds of circumstances, positive circumstances and negative ones. A practitioner must train in bodhicitta so that he no longer becomes afraid and weak in the face of negative circumstances. Negative circumstances are easy to recognize. One should understand that positive circumstances can become a great obstacle for a practitioner. When a yogin becomes famous, gathers many students and receives great donations and offerings, he must by all means

remain humble and free from attachment. He must constantly meditate on the 'four ends of impermanence':

The end of birth is death.

The end of gathering is dispersal.

The end of riches is loss.

The end of high positions is to fall.

When people treat a bodhisattva respectfully, he must respond with humility.

When others treat him badly, he must generate internal courage and never lose his composure.