

## ***BCA Chapter 1, Verse 25, Text Section 280***

*The fact that this most exalted jewel of the mind,  
This intention to benefit all beings,  
Which does not arise in others even for their own sake,  
Has now taken birth in my mind is an unprecedented wonder.*

### **BCA 1-25, Text section 280**

Bodhicitta is the exalted jewel of mind, the king among thoughts. *That it has now taken birth in my mind is an unprecedented wonder*, as miraculous as the wish-granting tree of the gods appearing in the human world. Relative bodhicitta arises through the power of a spiritual friend, through the power of the cause, through the power of the root, through the power of studying, and through the power of familiarization with virtue.

See Khenpo Choga's commentary on 'development of relative bodhicitta, achieved through tangible indicators' at text section 242-247.

The 'power of the root' refers to compassion since the development of bodhicitta is based on compassion. Compassion leads to bodhicitta. 'Nying-je', the Tibetan term for compassion, means the 'foremost quality of the heart'. Someone who has accumulated many negative deeds in former lifetimes may find it impossible to develop bodhicitta in this life. Due to former negative deeds that person will have only negative thoughts and inclinations. Therefore, training in the methods for gathering the two accumulations and for purifying the two obscurations is extremely important.

Practicing the 'seven branch service' builds up the positive conditions in the mind necessary for bodhicitta to arise. The seven branch service is: 1) the branch of presenting offerings, 2) the branch of paying respect, 3) the branch of confessing negative deeds, 4) the branch of rejoicing, 5) the branch of requesting the buddhas to turn the wheel of dharma, 6) the branch of requesting the buddhas not to enter into nirvana, and 7) the branch of dedicating the roots of virtue for the benefit of others. The practices of the seven branch service are explained in great detail in chapters two and three of the bodhisattvacaryaavataara.

