



Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

Self Study Questions for Chapter 3 of the Bodhicharyavatara: *Taking Hold of Bodhichitta*

This is a set of questions you can use to self assess your knowledge and understanding of the teachings and reference material relating to the third chapter of the Bodhicharyavatara, *Taking Hold of Bodhichitta*. You can use these questions if you find it helpful.

You may answer these questions either from your memory alone or by referring to the materials you have available. All of the answers can be found in the video teachings, but you can also refer to the root text *The Way of the Bodhisattva*, the transcript of Rinpoche's teachings from 1997-2001 or the commentary by Khenpo Kunpal. You can do this in whatever way suits you. For example you might like to set aside a certain amount of time to answer some or all of the questions in writing.

Chapter 3 Questions

1. What are the four branches of the Eight (or Seven) branch practice discussed in the third chapter?
2. What are the three categories of beings for whom we are rejoicing in the beginning of the third chapter, and what are the cause and result of each of them that we rejoice in?
3. Please explain in your own words how rejoicing works as an antidote to jealousy.
4. The Eight (or Seven) branch practice is here discussed not only as a prayer but as something to practice in our daily life. From a practical, everyday point of view, what does it mean to request the teachings and request the enlightened beings to stay with us?

5. Dedicating all our merits and positive deeds is not only for the ultimate purpose of the enlightenment of all the sentient beings, but it is said that it's also a practice of compassion. In a number of stanzas specific compassionate aspirations are made as a dedication - list as many of these as you can.
6. Please name the three bases of ego-clinging and the four mind training methods to work with them.
7. What are the meaning and purpose of 'giving away the body' as a practice of mind training?
8. What is the difference between dedication and aspiration? Why is it important to make a very vast dedication instead of a small one?
9. What are the three kinds of bodhisattva motivations?
10. What are the two traditions of taking the Bodhisattva's vows?
11. Why is it important to rejoice after having generated the bodhichitta and taken the vows?
12. What are the metaphors or images used to describe the bodhichitta in the last few stanzas of the third chapter?