

## **Self and others**

As you wish to be happy, so you should wish others to be happy too. As you wish to be free from suffering, so you should wish that all beings may also be free from suffering. You should think, “May all living creatures find happiness and the cause of happiness. May they be free from suffering and the cause of suffering. May they always have perfect happiness free from suffering. May they live in equanimity, without attachment or hatred but with love towards all without any discrimination.”

To feel overflowing love and almost unbearable compassion for all living creatures is the best way to fulfil the wishes of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Even if for the moment you cannot actually help anyone in an external way, meditate on love and compassion constantly over the months and years until compassion is knit inseparably into the very fabric of your mind.

As you try to practise and progress on the path, it is essential to remember that your efforts are for the sake of others. Be humble and remember that all your exertions are child’s play compared to the vast and infinite activity of the Bodhisattvas. Like parents providing for the children they love so much, never think that you have done too much for others—or even enough. Even if you finally manage to establish all living creatures in perfect Buddhahood, simply think that all your wishes have been fulfilled. There must never be so much as a trace of hope for any benefit for oneself in return.

The essence of the Bodhisattva practice is to go beyond self-clinging and dedicate yourself to serving others. The Bodhisattva’s activity hinges on the mind, not on how your actions might appear externally. True generosity is the absence of clinging, ultimate discipline is the absence of desire, and authentic patience is the absence of hatred. Bodhisattvas are able to give away their kingdom, their body, their dearest possessions, because they have completely overcome any inner impoverishment and are unconditionally ready to fulfil the needs of others.

- Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche