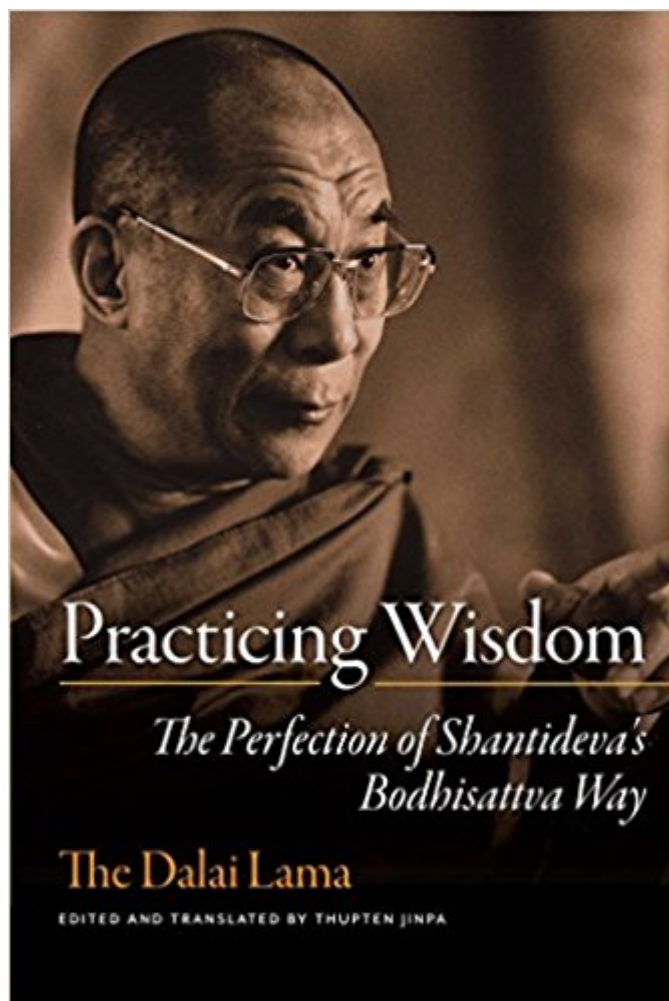


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Practicing Wisdom: The Perfection Of Shantideva's Bodhisattva Way



Synopsis

Like the bestselling *A Flash of Lightning in the Dark of the Night*, *Practicing Wisdom* focuses on Shantideva's *Way of the Bodhisattva*. While the former includes only a brief introduction to Shantideva's complex and crucial ninth chapter on insight, *Practicing Wisdom* is a full and detailed follow-up commentary, making it an invaluable statement on the fundamental concept behind Buddhist thought and practice. Shantideva says at the beginning of the final chapter of his *Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*: "All branches of the Buddha's teachings are taught for the sake of wisdom. If you wish to bring an end to suffering, you must develop wisdom." Shantideva's ninth chapter is revered in Tibetan Buddhist circles as one of the most authoritative expositions of the Buddha's core insight, and all other Buddhist practices are means to support the generation of this wisdom within the practitioner. In *Practicing Wisdom*, the Dalai Lama reaffirms his reputation as a great scholar, communicator, and embodiment of the Buddha's Way by illuminating Shantideva's verses, drawing on contrasting commentaries from the Nyingma and Gelug lineages, and leading the reader through the stages of insight up to the highest view of emptiness. These teachings, delivered in southern France in 1993, have been masterfully translated, edited, and annotated by Geshe Thupten Jinpa, the Dalai Lama's primary translator and founder of the Institute of Tibetan Classics.

Book Information

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Wisdom Publications (June 15, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0861711823

ISBN-13: 978-0861711826

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (9 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #471,292 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #41 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > Mahayana](#) #71 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > Dalai Lama](#) #117 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > History](#)

Customer Reviews

This book is truly remarkable, even among the excellent books written by His Holiness. It is a

transcript of teachings he gave in the early 90s on the 9th chapter of Shantideva's classic "Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life" (Bodhisattvacaryavatara). The 9th chapter is a very difficult chapter to read, because it deals with the understanding of ultimate reality according to the Madhyamika (Middle Way) tradition. However, this is a most important topic, since liberation can only come from realization of emptiness. Therefore, commentaries are essential. His Holiness already published some of his talks on the 9th chapter as a small yellow book called "Transcendent Wisdom". This current book is perhaps much better for a general audience, though, because it is so clearly written and ably translated by Geshe Thubten Jinpa. It is so clear, that even difficult subjects appear comprehensible. Also, each chapter ends with a brief meditation on the preceding topic. That really helps one to ground one's knowledge and achieve insights. I have already recommended this book to several other people, and have heard very positive responses. If you are interested in this topic, or Shantideva's text, this book is a very good choice. By the way, the translation of choice for Shantideva's book is the one by the Padmakara translation group, published by Shambhala. That is the one used in this book. However, even if you haven't read Shantideva's work, or don't have it, the full text of chapter 9 is given here, and therefore this book can stand alone as well.

The books by the Dalai Lama seem to be of two kinds; those meant for the initiate or the curious to pick up some understanding of basic Buddhist teachings and those meant for the serious practitioner of Buddhism and spirituality. This book is certainly in the latter category. It is a book that can be used as a study guide for the renowned Chapter Nine of Shantideva's "The Way of the Bodhisattva." Certainly own this book as a companion book. Many Buddhist organizations have used Shantideva's book as a study text, as we did at the Sarasota Mindfulness Meditation Center, the first eight chapters serving as preface for the profundity of Chapter Nine. The Dalai Lama's book provides a reliable foundational study guide to the original text. It's surprising there aren't dozens if not hundreds of reviews of this book. A previous reviewer is certainly correct that it "is MUST for any serious Buddhist student." It should be digested in small bites following the advice to hear, reflect and meditate on each of the bites.

This book is a MUST for any serious Buddhist student. The book is a commentary on the 9th Chapter of Shantideva's "A Way to the Bodhisattva way of Life". His Holiness is very clear, specially on a subject as difficult as this one.

Absolutely splendid for advanced practice of the dharma, especially students of Tibetan Buddhist

philosophy/religion who have lots of experience with meditation based on compassion/wisdom.

Philosophy without practice is incomplete. Practice without theory can lead you astray. Practicing Wisdom clarifies the ultimate argument for altruism and the Bodhisattvas way of life.

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