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菩提薩摩埵四摂法

BODAISATTA-SHISHOBO

Four Elements of a Bodhisattva's Social Relations

Bodaisatta means "bodhisattva," a person who is pursuing the Buddhist truth; *shi* means "four"; and *shobo* means "elements of social relations" or "methods for social relations." The four are *dāna*, free giving; *priya-ākhyāna*, kind speech; *artha-carya*, helpful conduct; and *samāna-arthatā*, identity of purpose, or co-operation. Buddhism puts great value on our actual conduct. For this reason, our conduct in relating to each other is a very important part of Buddhist life. In this chapter Master Dogen preaches that these four ways of behaving are the essence of Buddhist life. He explains the real meaning of Buddhism in terms of social relations.

[71] **First is free giving.** Second is kind speech. Third is helpful conduct. Fourth is cooperation.¹

[72] "Free giving"² means not being greedy. Not being greedy means not coveting. Not coveting means, in everyday language, not courting favor.³ Even if we rule the four continents, if we want to bestow the teaching of the right truth, we simply must not be greedy. That might mean, for example, donating treasures that are to be thrown away to people we do not know. When we offer flowers from distant mountains to the Tathāgata, and when we donate treasures accumulated in our past life to living beings, whether [the gift] is Dharma or material objects, in each case we are originally endowed with the virtue that accompanies free giving. There is a Buddhist principle that even if things are not our own, this does not hinder our free giving. And a gift is not to be hated for its small value, but its effect should be real. When we leave the truth to the truth, we attain the truth. When we attain the truth, the truth inevitably continues to be left to the truth. When possessions are left to be possessions, possessions inevitably

1. 四摂法 (SHI-SHOBŌ), the four methods for social relations, or the four elements of sociability (from the Sanskrit *catvāri saṃgraha-vastūni*—see Glossary), are listed and explained in chap. 66 of *Daichido-ron*. They are also mentioned in the *Devadatta* chapter of the Lotus Sutra (LS 2.208), and in the 11th chapter in the 12-chapter edition of *Shobogenzo*, *Ippyakuhachi-homyomon*. See Book 4, Appendices.

2. 布施 (FUSE), from the Sanskrit *dāna*.

3. Master Dogen first explains the Chinese characters, 布施 (FUSE), "free giving," with the Chinese characters, 不貪 (FUDON), "not being greedy," which he then explains using a Japanese word written in kana, むさぼる (貪) (*musaboru*), "to covet." Finally he takes his explanation further using another colloquial Japanese word へつらう (*hetsurau*), which means to curry favor through groveling, flattery, et cetera.

turn into gifts. We give ourselves to ourselves, and we give the external world to the external world. The direct and indirect influences of this giving pervade far into the heavens above and through the human world, even reaching the wise and the sacred who have experienced the effect. The reason is that in becoming giver and receiver, the subject and object of giving are connected; this is why the Buddha says, "When a person who gives comes into an assembly, others admire that person from the beginning. Remember, the mind of such a person is tacitly understood."⁴ So we should freely give even a single word or a single verse of Dharma, and it will become a good seed in this life and in other lives. We should freely give even a single penny or a single grass-stalk of alms, and it will sprout a good root in this age and in other ages.⁵ Dharma can be a treasure, and material gifts can be dharma—it may depend upon [people's] hopes and pleasures. Truly, the gift of a beard can regulate a person's mind,⁶ and the service of sand can gain a throne.⁷ Such givers covet no reward, but just share according to their ability. To provide a boat or to build a bridge are free giving as the *dāna-pāramitā*.⁸ When we learn giving well, both receiving the body and giving up the body are free giving. Earning a living and doing productive work are originally nothing other than free giving. Leaving flowers to the wind, and leaving birds to time,⁹ may also be the meritorious conduct of free giving. Both givers and receivers should thoroughly learn the truth which certifies that Great King Aśoka's being able to serve half a mango¹⁰ as an offering for hundreds of monks is a wide and great service of offerings.¹¹ We should not only muster the energy of our body but should also take care not to overlook suitable opportunities. Truly, it is because we are originally equipped with the virtue of free giving that we have received ourselves as we are now. The Buddha says, "It is possible to receive and to use [giving] even if the object is oneself, and it is all the easier to give to parents, wives, and children." Clearly, to practice it by oneself is one kind of free giving,

4. Paraphrased by Master Dogen in Japanese from chap. 24 of *Zo-itsu-agon-gyo*, the fourth of the Āgama Sūtras.

5. Traditionally *dāna* is categorized into *amisa-dāna*, 財施 (ZAISE), "giving of material gifts" (by lay Buddhists to monks) and *dharma-dāna*, 法施 (HOSE), "giving of dharma" (by monks to lay Buddhists). Master Dogen alludes to that distinction in these two sentences. A third category of *dāna* is sometimes added, namely *abhaya-dāna*, 無畏施 (MUI-SE), "giving of fearlessness." See, for example, LS 3.252.

6. Alludes to the story that when an officer in the court of the Tang emperor Taiso (reigned 627–649) fell sick and needed the ashes from a beard for medicine, Taiso burnt his own beard and gave the ashes to the officer.

7. The *Aiku-o-kyo* (King Aśoka Sūtra) tells the story of a child who was playing in the sand when the Buddha came by on an alms round. The child put an offering of sand into the Buddha's food bowl, and by virtue of his giving he later became King Aśoka.

8. 檀度 (DANDO). 檀 (DAN) represents the sound of the Sanskrit *dāna*. 度 (DO), lit. "crossed over," represents the meaning of the Sanskrit *pāramitā*, which means lit. "gone to the far shore." See Book 1, Glossary.

9. Leaving owls to hoot at night, cocks to crow in the morning, et cetera.

10. 菴羅 (ANRA) represents the sound of the Sanskrit *āmra*, which means mango.

11. Alludes to a story in chap. 5 of the *Aiku-o-kyo*. King Aśoka is said to have become the ruler of a vast Indian empire 218 years after the Buddha's death, and to have reigned from 269 to 232 B.C., converting many peoples to Buddhism. He had edicts in local languages carved on rocks and specially-erected pillars throughout his empire. King Aśoka also sponsored the Third Council held in Patna in 235 B.C., during which the abidharma (commentaries) were added to the existing Theravada Canon of vinaya (precepts) and sūtra (discourses).

and to give to parents, wives, and children may also be free giving. When we can give up even one speck of dust for free giving, though it is our own act we will quietly rejoice in it, because we will have already received the authentic transmission of one of the virtues of the buddhas, and because for the first time we will be practicing one of the methods of a bodhisattva. What is hard to change is the mind of living beings.¹² By starting with a gift we begin to change the mental state of living beings, after which we resolve to change them until they attain the truth. At the outset we should always make use of free giving. This is why the first of the six pāramitās is the dāna-pāramitā.¹³ The bigness or smallness of mind is beyond measurement, and the bigness or smallness of things is also beyond measurement, but there are times when mind changes things, and there is free giving in which things change mind.

[78] "Kind speech"¹⁴ means, when meeting living beings, first of all to feel compassion for them and to offer caring and loving words. Broadly, it is there being no rude or bad words. In secular societies there are polite customs of asking others if they are well. In Buddhism there are the words "Take good care of yourself!"¹⁵ and there is the disciple's greeting "How are you?"¹⁶ Speaking with the feeling of *compassion for living beings as if they were babies*¹⁷ is kind speech. We should praise those who have virtue and should pity those who lack virtue. Through love of kind speech, kind speech is gradually nurtured. Thus, kind speech which is ordinarily neither recognized nor experienced manifests itself before us. While the present body and life exist we should enjoy kind speech, and we will not regress or deviate through many ages and many lives. Whether in defeating adversaries or in promoting harmony among gentlefolk, kind speech is fundamental. To hear kind speech spoken to us directly makes the face happy and the mind joyful. To hear kind speech indirectly etches an impression in the heart¹⁸ and in the soul. Remember, kind speech arises from a loving mind,¹⁹ and the seed of a loving mind is compassion. We should learn that kind speech has the power to turn around the heavens; it is not merely the praise of ability.

12. Cf. "That without constancy is the Buddha-nature. That which has constancy is the mind that divides all dharmas into good and bad." (Master Daikan Eno, quoted in chap. 24, *Bussho*.)

13. The six pāramitās are dāna-pāramitā (giving freely), śīla-pāramitā (observance of precepts), kṣānti-pāramitā (forbearance), vīrya-pāramitā (diligence), dhyāna-pāramitā (the balanced state of Zazen), and prajñā-pāramitā (wisdom).

14. 愛語 (AIGO), lit. "loving words," from the Sanskrit *priya-ākhyāna*.

15. 珍重 (CHINCHO), lit. "value [yourself] highly." This expression is used, for example, in chap. 30, *Gyōji*, para. [241], by Master Fuyo Dokai when finishing his talk and taking his leave.

16. 不審の孝行あり (FUSHIN no KOKO ari), lit. "there is the act of filial piety of 'it is not totally clear.'" The expression 不審 (FUSHIN), "everything is not totally clear," or "I do not know everything in detail," appears at the beginning of a disciple's question to a master in many of the stories in *Shobogenzo*. See, for example, chap. 22, *Bussho*, para. [89]: "I wonder..." Master Dogen himself uses the expression rhetorically in chap. 21, *Kankin*, para. [188]. It is a kind of polite formula, and at the same time, a polite greeting from student to teacher.

17. Quotation from a Chinese text; source untraced.

18. 肝 (*kimo*) lit. means "the liver."

19. 心 (*SHIN, kokoro*) means not only "mind" but also "heart." In fact the Chinese character 心 is originally a pictograph of a heart. In this translation of *Shobogenzo*, 心 has almost always been translated as "mind," but the intended meaning is the subjective side of the whole human state, not only intellectual consciousness.

[80] "Helpful conduct"²⁰ means utilizing skillful means²¹ to benefit living beings, high or low; for example, by looking into the distant and near future and employing expedient methods²² to benefit them. People have taken pity on stricken turtles and taken care of sick sparrows.²³ When they saw the stricken turtle and the sick sparrow, they did not seek any reward from the turtle and the sparrow; they were motivated solely by helpful conduct itself. Stupid people think that if we put the benefit of others first, our own benefit will be eliminated. This is not true. Helpful conduct is the whole Dharma. It universally benefits self and others. The man of the past who bound his hair three times in the course of one bath, and who spat out his food three times in the course of one meal,²⁴ solely had a mind to help others. There was never a question that he might not teach them just because they were the people of a foreign land. So we should benefit friends and foes equally, and we should benefit ourselves and others alike. If we realize this state of mind, the truth that helpful conduct naturally neither regresses nor deviates will be helpfully enacted even in grass, trees, wind, and water. We should solely endeavor to save the foolish.

[82] "Cooperation"²⁵ means not being contrary.²⁶ It is not being contrary to oneself and not being contrary to others. For example, the human Tathāgata identified²⁷ himself with humanity. Judging from this identification with the human world we can suppose that he might identify himself with other worlds. When we know cooperation, self and others are oneness. The proverbial *harps, poems, and sake*²⁸ make friends with people, make friends with celestial gods, and make friends with earthly spirits. [At the same time,] there is a principle that people make friends with harps, poems, and sake, and that harps, poems, and sake make friends with harps, poems, and sake; that people make friends with people; that celestial gods make friends with celestial gods; and that earthly spirits make friends with earthly spirits. This is learning of cooperation. "The

20. 利行 (RIGYO), "helpful conduct" or "beneficial conduct," from the Sanskrit *artha-carya*, useful conduct. See Glossary.

21. 善巧 (ZENGYO), lit. "good skill"; short for 善巧方便 (ZENGYO-HOBEN), "skillful means," or "skillful expedients" from the Sanskrit *upāya-kauśalya*. See Book 1, Glossary.

22. 方便 (HOBEN), see note 21.

23. A Chinese chronicle called *Shinjo* (*History of the State of Shin*) says that a man called Koyu saved a turtle in distress and as a result of this good act he later became the governor of a district in the state. Another chronicle called *Taigu-nikki*, says that a nine-year-old boy called Yoho took care of an injured bird, and as a result of this good act his descendants ascended to three top positions in the Chinese government. See also chap. 30, *Gyoji*, para. [207].

24. The Chinese history *Shiki* says that when a king called Shuko appointed his son Hakukin as a district governor, Shuko told his son, "If three guests came while I was taking a bath, I would bind my hair three times to meet them, and if three guests came while I was eating, I would stop eating three times to meet them..."

25. 同事 (DOJI), lit. "identity of task," from the Sanskrit *samāna-arthatā* which lit. means "identity of purpose," or "sharing the same aim" (see Glossary)—or to use a more colloquial expression, "being in the same boat." 同 (DO) means "same" and 事 (JI) means "thing," "matter," or "task."

26. 不違 (FUI). 違 (I), "different," or "contrary," is opposed to 同 (DO), "the same," in 同事 (DOJI).

27. 同ぜる (DO zeru). The character 同 (DO) is as in 同事 (DOJI).

28. The Taoist text *Gosha-inzui* says that harps, poems, and sake are [a hermit's] three friends. Master Dogen picks up this sentence and uses it to express the principles of mutual agreement between subject and object and identity of subject and object.

task [of cooperation]"²⁹ means, for example, concrete behavior, a dignified attitude, and a real situation. There may be a principle of, after letting others identify with us, then letting ourselves identify with others. [The relations between] self and others are, depending on the occasion, without limit. *Kanshi*³⁰ says: "The sea does not refuse water; therefore it is able to realize its greatness. Mountains do not refuse earth; therefore they are able to realize their height. Enlightened rulers do not hate people; therefore they are able to realize a large following." Remember, the sea not refusing water is cooperation. Remember also that water has the virtue of not refusing the sea. For this reason it is possible for water to come together to form the sea and for the earth to pile up to form mountains. We can think to ourselves that because the sea does not refuse the sea it realizes the sea and realizes greatness, and because mountains do not refuse mountains they realize mountains and realize height. Because enlightened rulers do not hate people they realize a large following. "A large following" means a nation. "An enlightened ruler" may mean an emperor. Emperors do not hate the people. They do not hate the people, but that does not mean there is no reward and punishment. Even if there is reward and punishment, there is no hatred for the people. In ancient times, when people were unaffected, nations were without reward and punishment—at least in as much as the reward and punishment of those days were different from those of today. Even today there may be people who seek the truth with no expectation of reward, but this is beyond the thinking of stupid men. Because enlightened rulers are enlightened, they do not hate people. Although people always have the will to form a nation and to find an enlightened ruler, few completely understand the truth of an enlightened ruler being an enlightened ruler. Therefore, they are glad simply not to be hated by the enlightened ruler, while never recognizing that they themselves do not hate the enlightened ruler. Thus the truth of cooperation exists both for enlightened rulers and for ignorant people, and this is why cooperation is the conduct and the vow of a bodhisattva. We should face all things only with gentle faces.

[85] Because these four elements of sociability are each equipped with four elements of sociability, they may be sixteen elements of sociability.

Shobogenzo
Bodaisatta-shishobo

Written on the 5th day of the 5th lunar month³¹ in the 4th year of Ninji³² by a monk who went into Sung China and received the transmission of the Dharma, śramaṇa Dogen.

29. "The task [of cooperation]" is the character 事 (JI) of 同事 (DOJI). Real cooperation is not abstract but is always related to a concrete task.

30. 管子 (KANSHI) is the name of a Chinese Taoist text in 24 volumes attributed to Kanchu (Ch: Guan-tzu). Scholars suspect that there were actually several different authors.

31. 端午日 (TANGO no HI). The 5th day of the 5th lunar month was a day of celebration, referred to as 端午の日 (TANGO no HI). In Japan today, the term *tango no hi* is still sometimes used for the national holiday on May 5th (Children's Day).

32. 1243.