

Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma

Bodaisatta shishōbō

Eihei Dogen Zenji

The 28th Chapter of Shobogenzo: Bodaisatta-Shishobo

The Bodhisattva's Four Embracing Actions

Draft Translation

By Shohaku Okumura and Alan Senauke

First is Giving or dana. Second is Loving-Speech. Third is Beneficial-Action. Fourth is Identity-Action.

Offering

Giving or Offering means not being greedy. Not to be greedy means not to covet. Not to covet commonly means not to flatter. Even if we rule the four continents, in order to offer teachings of the true Way we must simply and unfailingly not be greedy. It is like offering treasures we are about to discard to those we do not know. We give flowers blooming on the distant mountains to the Tathagata, and offer treasures accumulated in past lives to living beings. Whether our gifts are Dharma or material objects, each gift is truly endowed with the virtue of Offering or dana. Even if this gift is not our personal possession, our practice of offering is not hindered. No gift is too small, but our effort should be genuine. When the Way is entrusted to the Way, we attain the Way. When we attain the Way, the Way unfailingly continues to be entrusted to the Way. When material treasures remain as treasures, these treasures actually become dana. We offer

ourselves to
ourselves, and we offer others to others. The karma of giving pervades
the heavens
above and our human world alike. It even reaches the realm of those
sages who have
attained the fruits of realization. Whether we give or receive, we
connect ourselves
with all beings throughout the world.
The Buddha said, "When a person who practices dana comes into an
assembly, other
people watch that person with admiration." We should know that the
mind of such a
person quietly reaches others. Even if we offer just one word or a
verse of Dharma,
it will become a seed of goodness in this lifetime and other lives to
come. Even if we
give something humble—a single penny or a stalk of grass—it will
plant a root of
goodness in this and other ages. Dharma can be a material treasure,
and a material
treasure can be Dharma. This depends entirely upon the giver's vow
and wish.
Offering his beard, a Chinese emperor harmonized his minister's mind.
Offering
sand, a child gained the throne. These people did not covet rewards
from others. They
simply shared what they had according to their ability. To launch a
boat or build a
bridge is the practice of dana paramita. When we understand the
meaning of dana,
receiving a body and giving up a body are both offerings. Earning a
livelihood and
managing a business are nothing other than giving. Trusting flowers to
the wind, and
trusting birds to the season may also be the meritorious action of
dana. When we give
and when we receive, we should study this principle: Great King
Ashoka's offering of
half a mango to hundreds of monks was a boundless offering. Not only
should we urge

ourselves to make offerings, but we must not overlook any opportunity to practice

dana. Because we are blessed with the virtue of offering, we have received our present lives.

The Buddha said, "One may offer and use one's own gift; even more, one can pass it to one's parents, wife, and children." Therefore we should know that giving to

ourselves is a kind of offering. To give to parents, wife, and children is also offering.

Whenever we can give up even one speck of dust for the practice of dana we should

quietly rejoice in it. This is because we have already correctly transmitted a virtue of

the buddhas, and because we practice one dharma of a bodhisattva for the first time.

The mind of a sentient being is difficult to change. We begin to transform the mind of

living beings by offering material things, and we resolve to continue to transform them

until they attain the Way. From the beginning we should make use of offering. This is

the reason why the first of the six paramitas is dana-paramita. The vastness or

narrowness of mind can not be measured, and the greatness or smallness of material

things can not be weighed. But there are times when our mind turns things, and there

is offering, in which things turn our mind.

Loving-Speech

Loving-Speech means, first of all, to arouse compassionate mind when meeting with

living beings, and to offer caring and loving words. In general, we should not use any

violent or harmful words. In society, there is a courtesy of asking others if they are

well. In the buddha way, we have the words "Please treasure yourself," and there is a

disciple's filial duty to ask their teachers "How are you?" To speak with a mind that "compassionately cares for living beings as if they were our own babies" is Loving-Speech. We should praise those with virtue and we should pity those without virtue. From the moment we begin to delight in Loving-Speech, Loving-Speech is nurtured little by little. When we practice like this, Loving-Speech, which is usually not known or seen, will manifest itself. In our present life we should practice Loving-Speech without fail, and continue this practice through many lives. Whether subduing a deadly enemy or making peace, Loving-Speech is fundamental. When a person hears loving-speech directly that person's face brightens and their mind becomes joyful. When a person hears of a someone else's Loving-Speech, that person inscribes it in their heart and soul. We should know that Loving-Speech arises from a loving mind, and that the seed of a loving mind is compassionate heart. We should study how Loving-Speech has power to transform the world. It is not merely praising someone's ability.

Beneficial-Action

Beneficial-Action means creating skillful means to benefit living beings, whether they are noble or humble. For example, we care for the near and distant future of others, and use skillful means to benefit them. We should take pity on a cornered tortoise and care for a sick sparrow. When we see this tortoise or sparrow, we try to help them without expecting any reward. We are motivated solely by beneficial action itself. Ignorant people may think that if we benefit others too much, our own

benefit will be excluded. This is not the case. Beneficial-Action is the whole of Dharma; it benefits both self and others widely. In an ancient era, a man who tied up his hair three times while he took a bath, and who stopped eating three times in the space of one meal solely intended to benefit others. He never withheld instructions from people of other countries. Therefore, we should equally benefit friends and foes alike; we should benefit self and others alike. Because beneficial actions never regress, if we attain such a mind we can perform Beneficial-Action even for grass, trees, wind, and water. We should solely strive to help ignorant beings.

Identity-Action

Identity-Action means not to be different—neither different from self nor from others. For example, it is how, in the human world, the Tathagata identifies himself with human beings. Because he identifies himself in the human world, we know that he must be the same in other worlds. When we realize Identity-Action, self and others are one suchness. Harps, poetry, and wine make friends with people, with heavenly beings, and with spirits. People befriend harps, poetry, and wine. There is a principle that harps, poetry, and wine befriend harps, poetry, and wine; that people make friends with people; that heavenly beings befriend heavenly beings, and that spirits befriend spirits. This is how we study identity-action. For example, “action” means form, dignity, and attitude. After letting others identify with our “self,” there may be a principle of letting our “self” identify with others.

Relations between self and others vary infinitely depending on time and condition.

Guanzi says, "The ocean does not refuse water; therefore it is able to achieve vastness.

Mountains do not refuse earth; therefore they are able to become tall.

Wise rulers do

not weary of people, therefore they form a large nation."

That the ocean does not refuse water is Identity-Action. We should also know that the

virtue of water does not refuse the ocean. This is why water is able to form an ocean

and earth is able to form mountains. We should know in ourselves that because the

ocean does not refuse to be the ocean, it can be the ocean and achieve greatness.

Because mountains do not refuse to be mountains, they can be mountains and reach

great heights. Because wise rulers do not weary of their people they attract many

people. "Many people" means a nation. "A wise ruler" may mean an emperor.

Emperors do not weary of their people. This does not mean that they fail to offer

rewards and punishments, but that they never tire of their people. In ancient times,

when people were gentle and honest, there were no rewards and punishments in the

country. The idea of reward and punishment in those days was different. Even these

days, there must be some people who seek the Way with no expectation of reward.

This is beyond the thought of ignorant people. Because wise rulers are clear, they do

not weary of their people. Although people always desire to form a nation and to find

a wise ruler, few of them fully understand the reason why a wise ruler is wise.

Therefore, they are simply glad to be embraced by the wise ruler.

They don't realize

that they themselves are embracing a wise ruler. Thus the principle of

Identity-Action

exists both in the wise ruler and ignorant people. This is why identity-action is the practice and vow of a bodhisattva. We should simply face all beings with a gentle expression.

Because each these Four Embracing Dharmas include all the Four Embracing Dharmas, there are Sixteen Embracing Dharmas.

Written on the 5th day of the 5th lunar month in the 4th year of Ninji (1243)

By Monk Dogen who went to Sung China and transmitted the Dharma.

Bodhisattva's Four Methods of Guidance

BODAISATTA SHISHŌ-HŌ

Translated by Lew Richmond and Kazuaki Tanahashi

The Bodhisattva's four methods of guidance are giving, kind speech, beneficial action, and identity-action.

1

"Giving" means nongreed. Nongreed means not to covet. Not to covet means not to curry favor. Even if you govern the Four Continents, you should always convey the correct teaching with nongreed. It is to give away unneeded belongings to someone you don't know, to offer flowers blooming on a distant mountain to the Tathāgata, or, again, to offer treasures you had in your former life to sentient beings. Whether it is of teaching or of material, each gift has its value and is worth giving. Even if the gift is not your own,

there is no reason to keep from giving. The question is not whether the gift is valuable, but whether there is merit.

When you leave the way to the way, you attain the way. At the time of attaining the way, the way is always left to the way. When treasure is left just as treasure, treasure becomes giving. You give yourself to yourself and others to others. The power of the causal relations+ of giving reaches to devas, human beings, and even enlightened sages. When giving becomes actual, such causal relations are immediately formed.

Buddha said, "When a person who practices giving goes to an assembly, people take notice." You should know that the mind of such a person communicates subtly with others. Therefore, give even a phrase or verse of the truth; it will be a wholesome seed for this and other lifetimes. Give your valuables, even a penny or a blade of grass; it will be a wholesome root for this and other lifetimes. The truth can turn into valuables; valuables can turn into the truth. This is all because the giver is willing.

A king gave his beard as medicine to cure his retainer's disease; a child offered sand to Buddha and became King Ashoka in a later birth. They were not greedy for reward but only shared what they could. To launch a boat or build a bridge is an act of giving. If you study giving closely, you see that to accept a body and to give up the body are both giving. Making a living and producing things can be nothing other than giving. To leave flowers to the wind, to leave birds to the seasons, are also acts of giving.

King Ashoka was able to offer enough food for hundreds of monks with half a mango. People who practice giving should understand that King Ashoka thus proved the greatness of giving. Not only should you make an effort to give, but also be mindful of every opportunity to give. You are born into this present life because of the merit of giving in the past.

Buddha said, "If you are to practice giving to yourself, how much more so to your parents, wife, and children." Therefore you should know that to give to yourself is a part of giving. To give to your family is also giving. Even when you give a particle of dust, you should rejoice in your own act, because you correctly transmit the merit of all buddhas, and for the first time practice an act of a bodhisattva. The mind of a sentient being is difficult to change. You should keep on changing the minds of sentient beings, from the first moment that they have one particle, to the moment that they attain the way. This should be started by giving. For this reason giving is the first of the six paramitas.

Mind is beyond measure. Things given are beyond measure. Moreover, in giving, mind transforms the gift and the gift transforms mind.

2

"Kind speech" means that when you see sentient beings you arouse the mind of compassion and offer words of loving care. It is contrary to cruel or violent speech.

In the secular world, there is the custom of asking after someone's health. In Buddhism

there is the phrase "Please treasure yourself" and the respectful address to seniors, "May I ask how you are?" It is kind speech to speak to sentient beings as you would to a baby.

Praise those with virtue; pity those without it. If kind speech is offered, little by little virtue will grow. Thus even kind speech which is not ordinarily known or seen comes into being. You should be willing to practice it for this entire present life; do not give up, world after world, life after life. Kind speech is the basis for reconciling rulers and subduing enemies. Those who hear kind speech from you have a delighted expression and a joyful mind. Those who hear of your kind speech will be deeply touched-they will never forget it.

You should know that kind speech arises from kind mind, and kind mind from the seed of compassionate mind. You should ponder the fact that kind speech is not just praising the merit of others; it has the power to turn the destiny of the nation.

3

"Beneficial action" is skillfully to benefit all classes of sentient beings, that is, to care about their distant and near future, and to help them by using skillful means. In ancient times, someone helped a caged tortoise; another took care of an injured sparrow. They did not expect a reward; they were moved to do so only for the sake of beneficial action.

Foolish people think that if they help others first, their own benefit will be lost; but this

is not so. Beneficial action is an act of oneness, benefiting self and others together.

To greet petitioners, a lord of old three times stopped in the middle of his bath and arranged his hair, and three times left his dinner table. He did this solely with the intention of benefiting others. He did not mind instructing even subjects of other lords. Thus you should benefit friend and enemy equally. You should benefit self and others alike. If you have this mind, even beneficial action for the sake of grasses, trees, wind, and water is spontaneous and unremitting. This being so, make a wholehearted effort to help the ignorant.

4

"Identity-action" means nondifference. It is nondifference from self, nondifference from others. For example, in the human world the Tathāgata took the form of a human being. From this we know that he did the same in other realms. When we know identityaction, others and self are one. Lute, song, and wine are one with human being, deva, and spirit being. Human being is one with lute, song, and wine. Lute, song, and wine are one with lute, song, and wine. Human being is one with human being; deva is one with deva; spirit being is one with spirit being. To understand this is to understand identity-action.

"Action" means right form, dignity, correct manner. This means that you cause yourself to be in identity with others after causing others to be in identity with you. However, the relationship of self and others varies limitlessly with circumstances.

The *Guanzi* says, "The ocean does not exclude water; that is why it is large. Mountain does not exclude earth; that is why it is high. A wise lord does not exclude people; that is why he has many subjects."

That the ocean does not exclude water is identity-action. Water does not exclude the ocean either. This being so, water comes together to form the ocean. Earth piles up to form mountains. My understanding is that because the ocean itself does not exclude the ocean, it is the ocean, and it is large. Because mountains do not exclude mountains, they are mountains and they are high. Because a wise lord does not weary of people, his subjects assemble. "Subjects" means nation. "Wise lord" means ruler of the nation. A ruler is not supposed to weary of people. "Not to weary of people" does not mean to give no reward or punishment. Although a ruler gives reward and punishment, he does not weary of people. In ancient times when people were uncomplicated, there was neither legal reward nor punishment in the country. The concept of reward and punishment was different. Even at present, there should be some people who seek the way without expecting a reward. This is beyond the understanding of ignorant people. Because a wise lord understands this, he does not weary of people.

People form a nation and seek a wise lord, but as they do not know completely the reason why a wise lord is wise, they only hope to be supported by the wise lord. They do not notice that they are the ones who support the wise lord. In this way, the principle of identity-action is applied to both a wise lord and all the people. This

being so, identityaction
is a vow of bodhisattvas.

With a gentle expression, practice identity-action for all people.

Each of these four methods of guidance includes all four. Thus, there
are sixteen
methods of guiding sentient beings.

*This was written on the fifth day, fifth month, fourth year of Ninji
(1243) by Monk
Dōgen, who transmitted dharma from China.*

Bodaisatta-shishōbō Four Elements of a Bodhisattva's Social Relations

SHŌBŌGENZŌ

THE TRUE DHARMA-EYE TREASURY

Volume III (Taishō Volume 82, Number 2582)

Translated from the Japanese by Gudo Wafu Nishijima and Chodo
Cross

Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research
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[Chapter Forty-five]

Translator's Introduction: *Bodaisatta means "bodhisattva," a person
who
is pursuing the Buddhist truth; shi means "four"; and shōbō 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 cooperation. 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 Dōgen 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 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, 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 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.

[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 "identified"²⁷ 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 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. The Kanshi³⁰ 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 inasmuch 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.

Shōbōgenzō Bodaisatta-shishōbō

Written on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month³¹ in the fourth year of Ninji³² by a monk who went into Song China and received the transmission of the Dharma, śramaṇa Dōgen.

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On the Four Exemplary Acts of a Bodhisattva *(Bodaisatta Shishōbō)*

<http://www.shastaabbey.org/pdf/shobo/046bodai.pdf>

translated by Rev. Hubert Nearman

Translator's Introduction: The four exemplary acts are also known as the four wisdoms: charity, tenderness, benevolence, and sympathy.

The first is offering alms.

The second is using kindly speech.

*The third is showing benevolence.
The fourth is manifesting sympathy.*

Offering alms means not being covetous. Not being covetous means not being greedy. Not being greedy, to put it in worldly terms, includes not currying favors by groveling or flattery. If we want to bestow the Teaching of the Genuine Way, even if it were upon someone who rules over the four continents, we must do it without wanting anything in return. Offering alms, for example, is like bestowing upon strangers wealth that we freely part with. Were we to offer to the Tathagata flowers from a far-off mountain or give to some sentient being a treasure coming from a previous life—be it Dharma or something material—in either case, the act would be endowed with the merit that accords with the offering of alms. There is the principle that even though such things are not something that we personally own, it does not hinder our offering them as alms. 1 And the humbleness of such offerings is not to be despised, for it is the sincerity of these meritorious deeds that counts.

When we leave the Way to the Way, we realize the Way. When we realize the Way, the Way will invariably continue to be left to the Way. When treasures are left to being treasures, such treasures will invariably end up as alms offerings. We bestow 'self' on ourselves, and we bestow 'other' on others. The influence of this offering of alms not only penetrates far into the realms of those in lofty positions and of those who are ordinary people, but also permeates the realms of the wise

1. This refers to the giving of something that does not have any owner, such as the Dharma, or the grains of sand on a beach which a child once offered. These types of offering are beyond the concept of 'ownership'.

and the saintly. This is because when people have become capable of accepting an offering of alms, they have therefore already formed a link with the donor.

2. During the T'ang dynasty, when an officer in the court of Emperor T'ai-tsung fell ill and needed the ashes from a beard for medicine, the emperor burnt his own beard and offered the ashes to the officer.

Once when the Buddha was on an alms round, a child who was playing in the sand put a few grains in the Buddha's alms bowl as an offering, and, due to this act, the child was later reborn as King Ashoka.

The Buddha once remarked, "When a donor comes into a monastic assembly, others admire that person right from the start. You should realize that they have tacitly understood the heart of that person." As a consequence, should we offer only one sentence or one verse of the Dharma as alms, it will become a good seed in this life and in future lives. Should we offer the gift of even a single coin or a single blade of grass as alms, it will sprout good roots in this generation and in future generations. Dharma can be wealth and wealth can be Dharma—which it is depends on our wish and our pleasure.

Truly, bestowing one's beard on another once put someone's mind in order, and an offering of a few grains of sand once gained someone the rank of king. ² These people did not covet some reward, but simply shared what they had. Providing a ferry or building a bridge as an alms offering creates a way to the Other Shore. When we have learned well what the offering of alms means, then we can see that accepting oneself and letting go of oneself are both offerings of alms. Earning a living and doing productive work have never been anything other than an offering of alms. Leaving flowers to float upon the wind and leaving birds to sing in their season will also be meritorious training in almsgiving. Upon his deathbed, the great King Ashoka offered half of a mango to several hundred monks as alms. As persons who are capable of accepting alms, we need to explore well the principle that this great alms gift points to. Not only should we make physical efforts to give alms, but we should also not overlook opportunities to do so. Truly, because we have inherited the merit from having given alms in past lives, we have obtained the human body that we now have. "Even if you give alms to yourselves, there can be merit, and how much more so were you to give alms to your parents, spouse, or children!" As a consequence of this statement, I have realized that even giving to oneself is a part of almsgiving, and giving to one's parents, spouse, or children will be almsgiving as well. Should we let go of a single dust mote of defiling passion as an alms offering, even though it is done for our own sake, we will feel a quiet, heartfelt gratitude because we will have had one of the

3. A paramita is a practice that Buddhas and bodhisattvas employ to help sentient beings reach the Other Shore. The six are almsgiving, observance of the Precepts, patient forbearance, diligence, being well-seated in one's meditation, and wise discernment.

meritorious deeds of Buddhas genuinely Transmitted to us, and because, for the first time, we will be practicing one of the methods of bodhisattvas.

What is truly hard to turn around is the heart and mind of sentient beings. By making one offering, we begin to turn their mental state around, after which we hope to keep turning it around until they realize the Way. From this beginning, we should by all means continue to assist them by making alms offerings. This is why the first of the Six Paramitas is the Almsgiving Paramita. 3 The size of any mind is beyond measure: the size of any thing is also beyond measure. Be that as it may, there are times when the mind turns things around and there is also the practice of almsgiving, whereby things turn the mind around.



Kindly speech means that when we encounter sentient beings, we first of all give rise to feelings of genuine affection for them and offer them words that express our pleasure in knowing them. To put it more broadly, we do not use language that is harsh or rude. Even in secular society there are respectful customs for asking others how they are; in Buddhism there is the Master's phrase, "May you take good care of yourself," and there is the disciple's greeting, "I have been wondering how you've been doing." To speak with a feeling of genuine affection for sentient beings, as if they were still new-born babes, is what kindly speech is. We should praise those who have virtue and pity those who do not.

Through our having fondness for kindly speech, kindly speech gradually increases. Thus, even kindly speech that goes unrecognized or unnoticed will still manifest itself right before us. While our present life persists, we should become fond of speaking kindly, so that we do not regress or turn away from it for generation after generation and for life after life. Kindly speech is the foundation for overcoming those

who are angry and hostile, as well as for promoting harmony among others. When we hear kindly speech that is spoken directly to us, it brightens our countenance and delights our heart. When we hear of kind speech having been spoken about us in our absence, this makes a deep impression on our heart and our spirit. Keep in mind that kindly speech arises from a loving heart, and a loving heart makes compassion its seed. You should explore the idea that

4. There is a classic Chinese story in which a man rescued a trapped turtle. As the turtle swam off, it looked back over its shoulder to its benefactor, as if to acknowledge its indebtedness. Later, the man rose to a high official position, and, when the seal of his office was cast, it miraculously appeared in the form of a turtle looking over its back. No matter how many times the seal was recast to remove the form, it would nevertheless reappear on the seal. Finally, the man realized that somehow the turtle had played a part in his having received his appointment, so he kept the strange seal out of gratitude.

In another classic Chinese story, there was a boy who helped a sick sparrow recover and to whom the sparrow gave four silver rings as recompense, which ultimately led to the boy's being appointed to three high government positions.

5. A Chinese ruler once advised his son that if three guests were to come calling in succession while he was bathing, he should bind up his hair each time and go to greet them, and if three guests were to come calling in succession while he was dining, he should stop eating each time in order to greet them.

kindly speech can have the power to turn the very heavens around, and it is not merely a matter of praising someone's abilities.



Showing benevolence means working out skillful methods by which to benefit sentient beings, be they of high or low station. One may do this, for instance, by looking at someone's future prospects, both immediate and far-ranging, and then practicing skillful means to help that person. Someone once took pity on a stricken turtle and another once tended to a sick sparrow. 4 Neither of these people was seeking a reward; they simply acted from a feeling of benevolence.

Some people may foolishly think that if they were to put the welfare of others first, their own benefits would be reduced. This is not so. Benevolence is all-encompassing, universally benefiting both self and others. A person long ago bound up his hair three times during the course of his taking a single bath, and thrice spat out what he had in his mouth during the course of a single meal. And he did so solely from a heart that would benefit others. He was not reluctant to instruct his son to do so, if his son should encounter guests from a foreign land. 5 So, we should act to benefit equally both those who are hostile and those who are friendly, and act for the benefit of both self and other alike. When we attain such an attitude of mind, our showing of benevolence will neither retreat nor turn away from anything, and this benevolence will be shown even towards grass and trees, wind and water. And, in all humility, we should engage ourselves in helping those who are given to foolishness. *Shōbōgenzō: On the Four Exemplary Acts of a Bodhisattva* 575

6. A multi-volumed Chinese Taoist work.



Manifesting sympathy means not making differences, not treating yourself as different and not treating others as different. For instance, the Tathagata was a human being just like other human beings. From His being the same as those in the human world, we know that He must have been the same as those in any other world. When we really understand what manifesting sympathy means, we will see that self and other are one and the same. Music, poetry, and wine have been companions for ordinary people, companions for those in lofty positions, and companions for the hosts of celestial beings. And there is the principle that ordinary people have been companions for music, poetry, and wine. And music, poetry, and wine have been companions for music, poetry, and wine. And ordinary people have been companions for ordinary people. And those in lofty positions have been companions for those in lofty positions. And celestial beings have been companions for celestial beings. This is what studying 'manifesting sympathy' means.

In particular, what the 'manifesting' in manifesting sympathy refers to is our ways of behaving, our everyday actions, and our attitudes of

mind. In this manifesting, there will be the principle of letting people identify with us and of letting ourselves identify with others. Depending on the occasion, there are no boundaries between self and other.

It says in the *Kuan-tsu*, 6 "A sea does not reject water, and therefore is able to bring about its vastness. A mountain does not reject soil, and therefore can bring about its height. An enlightened ruler does not despise ordinary people, and therefore can bring about a large populace." You need to realize that a sea's not rejecting water is its being in sympathy with water. Further, you need to realize that the water has the complete virtue of not refusing the sea. For that reason, it is possible for waters to come together and form a sea, and for earth to pile up and form a mountain. And you certainly know for yourself that because one sea does not reject another sea, it forms an ocean, which is something much bigger. And because one mountain does not reject another mountain, it forms a larger mountain, which is something much higher. And because an enlightened ruler does not despise ordinary people, he creates a large populace. A large populace means a nation. An enlightened ruler means an emperor. An emperor does not despise people. And even though he does not despise people, it does not mean that there are no rewards and punishments. And even though there are rewards and *Shōbōgenzō: On the Four Exemplary Acts of a Bodhisattva* 576

punishments, they do not come about because he despises people. Long ago, when people were submissive, nations were without rewards or punishments—at least to the extent that rewards and punishments then were not the same as those of today. Even today, there may be people who seek the Way without expecting any reward, but this is beyond what foolish people concern themselves with. Because an enlightened ruler is clear-minded, he does not despise people. Although people invariably form nations and try to seek out an enlightened leader, nevertheless those who completely understand the principle of what makes an enlightened ruler 'enlightened' are rare. As a result, even though they are happy enough about not being despised by an enlightened ruler, they do not comprehend that they mutually should not despise their enlightened ruler. As a consequence, there is the principle of manifesting sympathy which is for both enlightened rulers and unenlightened people. This is why bodhisattvas vow to

practice manifesting sympathy. And to do so, they need but face all things with a gentle demeanor.

Because each of these four exemplary acts completely encompasses all four exemplary acts, there will be, all told, sixteen exemplary acts.

Written down on the day of the Tango Festival in the fourth year of the Ninji era (May 24, 1243).

*Written by the mendicant monk Dōgen
who entered Sung China and received
the Transmission of the Dharma*

Shōbōgenzō Bodaisattva Shishōbō: four dimensions of a living bodhisattva spirit By Eihei Dōgen Zenji.

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Shobogenzo: Bodaisattva Shishobo (正法眼藏 · 菩提薩 四摂法): Four Dimensions of a Living Bodhisattva Spirit

Introduction

When first reading Eihei Dogen Zenji's Bodaisattva Shishobo, it appears that this chapter is his explication of ethics or morality. To be sure, reading the text in this way is not a mistake. However, to see it only as a text on ethics or morality means to fail to understand it as a religious text. What is the difference? Reading the Bodaisattva Shishobo as a moral treatise is to view it as a writing by a 13th century Zen Buddhist monk in Japan on how human beings should treat one another—a lovely thought. However, to read this text as a religious text means, first of all, to understand that Dogen was writing to us personally, but not as a moralist. And, that his advice was not just some ideal for human behavior in general, but rather a blueprint for how we, personally, as bodhisattvas, can act in this world to

liberate (and be more liberated), and to be more fully ourselves. While ethical or moral treatises deal with specific cultures and times, religious texts deal with universal themes that transcend local cultures or periods of time. Naturally, Dogen certainly did live in a certain period of time, the 13th century. Moreover, he lived in Japan, not Europe or America. To be sure, he lived in the context of time and culture. Nonetheless, the themes he deals with in the Shobogenzo are not applicable to 13th century Zen monks of Japan alone. Granted, there will be examples he used which do not apply to the world we live in today. That is precisely why we have to struggle to understand both the context of Dogen's writing and as well as the spirit of those statements that shine like bright lights for us 750 years later.

Abbreviations:

[ASR] Aoyama Shundo roshi

[DTW] Daitso Tom Wright

[ZGDJ] Zengaku dai jiten (Complete dictionary on Zen)

[BDJ] Bukkyo dai jiten (Complete dictionary on Buddhism)

Daitso Tom Wright
December 8th, 2005

Bodaisattva Shishobo, part one

Bodaisattva Shishobo (1): four dimensions of Bodhisattva action [Four ways for a bodhisattva to act include] unconditional giving, compassionate words, [carrying out deeds that] benefit all beings and union with [or, identity with] the action (2). Unconditional giving means to not be covetous. To be uncovetous may be more commonly understood as not currying favor. Even though we may rule over vast domains (3), to offer the Way directly and with certainty is simply not to be covetous (4). It is like offering something we are about to throw away to a person we do not know (5). An offering of flowers to the Tathagata one after another without cessation (6), or offering something of value from a former lifetime to all sentient beings, whether it be something spiritual or material, the virtuous functioning of unconditional giving is commensurate with and inherent in each individual act (7). Although there is nothing that we possess by nature, this is no obstacle to unconditional giving. We should not look lightly on something we are about to give away, even though it may

seem trivial to us, as the [inherent] virtue of that gift will surely bear fruit (8).

Notes:

1) The title Bodaisattva Shishobo refers to four aspects of bodhisattva actions—shishobo 四摂法 actions intimately connected toward being/ becoming one on the way-seeking path of a bodaisattva or bodhisattva (Japanese, bosatsu) 菩提薩多. These should not be understood as some sort of moral imperatives. Rather they should be understood as principles or truths that are already working within us, if we only open our eyes to them. In Sanskrit, catuh-samgraha-vastu. They are mentioned both in the Hoke-kyo or Lotus Sutra and the Avatamsaka or Garland Sutra. The shishobo are sometimes called shishoji 四摂事. Also, shishoshomon 四摂初門.

2) In Japanese, the four kinds of actions mentioned are fuse 布施, aigo 愛語, rigyo 利業, and douji 同事.

3) In Japanese, shi[dai]shu 四「大」洲, or the four continents. Dogen is using this expression as a metaphor for suggesting that even if we were to control the whole world ~.

4) It is interesting to note Dogen's use of offer or in Japanese, hodokosu 施す, one of the characters in the word I translated as unconditional giving or fuse 布施. In these opening sentences, Dogen translates the original two-character Chinese word into a more understandable Japanese expression for his Japanese readers, musaborazu, that is, the negative form of covetous and then, further, he defines it with the word hetsurau, that is, to curry favor with or flatter.

5) [ASR] Perhaps a concrete example of what Dogen is saying here is giving up our seat on a train to a complete stranger without particularly being conscious that we are "giving up" anything. Waiting to be thanked or being miffed at not being thanked is not the spirit of fuse or unconditional giving. An invisible but concrete example of such giving might be the wind which gives us the air and oxygen we breathe. Unconditional giving is inherent in the wind itself, but the wind is not thinking it is giving us anything. [DTW] In this and the succeeding sentence, Dogen takes the word unconditional giving or fuse out of the simply moral or charitable realm and shows the inherency or naturalness, of unconditional giving prior to our awareness of it as a conscious act. [Text note] An illustration of not

being possessive of things nor expecting thanks from the person we've given something to. This is also the practice of 'not gaining' or mushotoku 無所得.

6) [ZGDJ] The original phrase, enzan no hana 遠山の花, literally means flowers from the mountain Enzan, but in this case, implies doing something again and again without stopping. The flower is being used metaphorically for any gift that might be given. Here, Enzan is not referring so much to a particular place as it is suggesting the frequency of something, in this case, repeated action of giving. Enzan is used elsewhere in Zen to suggest enlightenment piled on enlightenment, that is, enlightenment is not a one shot thing, but rather must be experienced again and again more deeply. In our daily lives, it means that no matter how careful we are with our lives, there are still many things which we do not see and need to awaken to in order to live out our lives more fully.

7) What Dogen is emphasizing here is that unconditional giving is present before any conscious or even sub-conscious thought of our giving something arises.

8) [Text note] Do not "offer" something because you no longer need it or care for it and merely wish to throw it away. The value of the gift will be recognized by the receiver.

Bodaisattva Shishobo, part two

When the Way is entrusted to the Way, the Way has been attained. On gaining the Way, the Way has been entrusted to the Way (9). Only when a gift is entrusted to the [inherent qualities of the] gift does that treasure become an unconditional gift (10). Self is being offered to self, and other is being offered to other (11). The virtuous power of unconditional giving that is present in the conditions and characteristics of all things is transmitted to those living in the heavenly and human realms; it is felt as well by those at various levels in their practice (12). This is because the giving [inherent in the gift] serves to connect all things—the giver [actually becomes one] with the receiver. The Buddha has said that when a new entrant who is well known for having offered freely comes into the assembly, everyone greets him/her with warm anticipation (13). You should understand that such a spirit [of giving] becomes transmitted deeply and without fanfare. In that same way, one word or one verse of the Dharma teaching becomes an offering as well. Such becomes a seed for carrying out good (14) in this and other lives. A trifling sum, even a

blade of grass, should never be withheld; this, too, possesses giving, it becomes the root that functions as a power engendering good (15) in any age (16). The Teaching of the Dharma is a treasure; material treasures are also dharmas, either one depending on the fervency of our vow (17).

Notes:

9)Entrust. [ASR] Yogo Suigan roshi was abbot at Saijoji Temple, famous for being a gokito temple. Gokito are somewhat shamanistic or exorcistic prayers. He had one prayer for peace in the home, another for aborted fetuses, another for the safety of your automobile, another for a happy marriage and another for success in the university entrance exams. However, the first thing he told those who came to him was, "If you're going to pray, then don't just ask for one or two things, ask for everything!" In saying such, his "ask for everything" is the same as entrusting. Sawaki Roshi expressed it with his sweeping statement: "Take everything. Just don't select!" So, entrusting is the same as accepting everything that is on your plate and dealing with it. Uchiyama roshi called this *deau tokoro waga seimei* 出逢うところわが生命, that is, "whatever we encounter is our life".

10)"To entrust" is the key word here. I have chosen to translate it literally in accord with basically the same meaning as the Japanese word *makaseru* 「任せる」. However, to trust or *makaseru* should not be thought in any way to imply a giving up of one's personal responsibility. It is because of this implication in English or, more broadly, in Western thought, that I hesitate to use the word 'entrust' here. The sense of the passage suggests that when we set aside our ego and become one with the encounter or situation, then offering or giving, that is, *fuse* or *dana*, truly manifests or functions of itself.

[ASR] When we try to exert our own narrow way as to what is valuable or how I think a thing should be used, it is no longer an offering. I bought a calligraphy I particularly wanted to give to my teacher. When he responded that he didn't particularly care for it but would find use for it as a gift to someone else, I told him that I bought it for him and if he wasn't going to use it, I didn't want to give it to him. This was a big mistake on my part.

11)[Note in text] Self is offered to self as it is, other is offered to other as it is.

12)[BDJ] *sangen juuji* 「三賢十地」 「聖」, another way of saying 'bodhisattvas'. Readers of this text should substitute them selves and

their own practice as little bodhisattvas in this passage.

13)The Japanese word here is nozomimiru which can be written with two different characters which means to look on from a distance 「臨む」, or 「望む」 to have hope for or have expectation in regard to someone. In the context of the original text, the Zoitsu Agon-kyo, Chap. 24, it would seem to be the latter, though some scholars prefer the former sense of the word.

14)“Seed for carrying out good (deeds)”: zenshu 「善種」.

15)To function as a power for good zengon 「善根」. Here, Dogen is using the words zenshu and zengon which are virtually the same in meaning in this context. The former literally means 'seed', while the latter means 'root'.

16)In this life and the next...in this realm and others. Here, Dogen is referring to time (in this life and the next) and place (in this realm and others).

17)Here the Chinese character for vow is 「願樂」, gangyo. The character 「樂」 has several readings. It can be read raku implying doing something with pleasure. In that case, the Japanese reading would be tanoshimu. It can also be read gaku having to do with music, either of an instrument or perhaps of a bird. Combining the character with gan, however, the reading changes to gyo and the meaning changes to vow but implies that vow, in this case, is the pleasurable pursuit of the highest truth, that is, pursuit of buddhadharma.

Bodaisattva Shishobo, part three

It is true that when it is called for, even the offering of one's beard [as medicine for healing] can bring health into another's life (18). One child's offering of sand enabled him to become king in a later generation (19). These examples show unsparing gratefulness, they were people willing to share their strength [wealth] freely, of their own will. Unconditional giving is crossing over (20); it is like providing a boat or building a bridge. We truly practice (21) giving when we use the life we have been given [for the benefit of all]. Fundamentally, there is nothing in making a livelihood or in producing various things for our daily lives that is not giving (22). Entrusting the flowers to the wind and the birds to time, the results of freely giving is the manifestation of unconditional giving (23).

King Asoka gave half a mango to several hundred monks with all his heart. To clarify the truth of his act as a great offering is something for

those who are on the receiving end of the giving should emulate through their own practice. It is not just a matter of physically exerting ourselves, we must be constantly looking out for opportunities to offer [ourselves]. Truly, it is due to inherent unconditional giving that we are who we are today.

The Buddha said, "Unconditional giving functions through oneself; of course, when such giving is directed towards one's family, that is all the better"(24). So, the functioning of unconditional giving for the benefit of oneself is the full functioning of such giving and, unconditional giving to one's family is also the totality of unconditional giving. Even when our action is one we would normally be expected to perform, if for the sake of unconditional giving, though it involves the loss of only a trifling to oneself, we should be deeply pleased at another's joy (in receiving the benefit), because it shows that one virtue of all buddhas has been directly transmitted. Moreover, it reflects the practice of one dimension of the bodhisattva spirit.

Notes:

18) [Note in Japanese text] Emperor Taiso during the Tang dynasty is said to have shaved off his beard and, after searing it, presented the ashes to his disgruntled General who secretly had despised the emperor. The ashes of an emperor were considered to be a miraculous medicine. General Li was so struck by the generosity of the emperor that he entirely forgot about his obsession with acquiring power for himself.

19) The second example refers to a child who gave sand to the Buddha when he was out on takuhatsu and became King Asoka 100 years later.

20) Originally, in Sanskrit, paramita meant crossing over. Later, during the To dynasty in China, however, it was translated as 'having arrived or having crossed over to the other shore'. That is, the perfect tense was used. It came to mean absolute or complete. Practicing the paramitas came to mean the completion of practice. Or, 'the practice of satori' or 'way of satori'. Or, 'the bodhisattva practice for arriving at satori'. All of the paramitas are practiced for the purpose of living out one's life more fully while benefitting others.

21) Practice, in Japanese gakusu 「学す」. As a Buddhist term, gakusu or manabu means to practice, not merely to learn in an intellectual sense, but rather to do or function with our bodies.

22) The Japanese expression is chishou sangyou 「治生産業」.

23) The key word 'entrusting' here means to desist in abnormally trying to control our life, but rather entrust more to the natural order of things. Rather than trying to prevent this from happening because it might make us look bad or trying to possess this or that because it might give us a foot up on our rivals, etc. There is a lot of room for misunderstanding here. Entrusting should not be interpreted as encouraging irresponsibility or a naïve leaving things to fate.

Moreover, Dogen takes fuse—unconditional giving, out of the realm of human intention. This is something we have to think about carefully. Why is the wind fuse, why is the water fuse?

24) From: the Zoagon-kyo 24 「増阿含經 2 4」 There may be times when in order to benefit those around us, we need to take care of something within our own life first. [Alternate translation: "The Buddha said, 'We ourselves constantly receive the power of unconditional giving. And that giving can be directed towards our family as well'."]

Bodaisattva Shishobo, part four

It is most difficult to change the rigid, habitual mind of sentient beings. Still, from the first, you should aspire to work with the [narrow and biased] mind like the change involved in planting a treasure seed that will grow until one has completely gained the Way. In the beginning, that seed is the seed of unconditional giving. That is why the first of the six paramitas is that of unconditional giving—fuse. Do not try to measure the magnanimity or pettiness of mind, nor endeavor to figure out whether a thing is large or a small. Sometimes, [our frame of] mind moves things; at other times, things have an influence on our [frame of] mind (25).

Aigo or compassionate words means to arouse a loving or benevolent attitude, offering words of care and concern for all beings. Surely, using rough or violent language will naturally decline. In any civil society, people inquire of each other as to how everything is going as a simple courtesy. In Buddhist circles, we part with words to the affect of taking care of the preciousness of the life we have been given (26). Inquiry as to the health of those who are older or above us is also an expression of devotion (27). Bearing in mind the words of the Lotus Sutra in which it is mentioned that taking care of sentient beings is like taking care of one's children is an example of aigo (28). Give credit to and praise those with excellent character and show compassion towards those lacking in such a virtue. From the time one first seeks to employ compassionate words, those words will gradually abound (in

one's speech). Therefore, as the days pass, in ways you will not see [yourself] and without realizing it, aigo will appear more and more through your words. While life continues to flow through your body, foster a spirit to use compassionate words at various times and in your various lives without backsliding. Compassionate words are fundamental to defeating any outrageous or malicious enemy or to reconciling with someone in high position.

Compassionate words directly bring joy to the hearer and great inner pleasure. To hear such words even indirectly, they become engraved on one's heart and soul. Compassionate words arise from a benevolent mind, and a benevolent mind engenders the seed of love and affection. You should realize that compassionate words have the power to change the direction of the times (29). They are not merely used to praise the emperor.

Notes:

25)How we look at the various things or people around us determines our perception of them. For example, when a third grader goes outside to play and run around on the playground, she might think how small it is. On the other hand, when the same child has go out on that same playground for cleaning up the area, she might very well imagine it to be huge! [Aoyama Roshi]

26)The Japanese expression is anpi or anpu 「安否」 which is literally an inquiry concerning another's welfare and chinchou 「珍重」 which by itself refers to something rare or precious, in this case, and in the buddhist sense, what is precious or valuable is the very life we have received.

27)The Japanese words kookoo 「孝行」 means piety or devotion and is used in such expressions as oya kookoo 「親孝行」 or filial piety. Here it could be a student inquiring about the health of his or her teacher; more broadly, any inquiry of those older or in higher position than ourselves.

28)In the Devadatta chapter of the Lotus Sutra, where Bodhisattva Wisdom Accumulated is questioning Manjushri about anyone who might have been able to attain Buddhahood quickly just by practicing the Lotus Sutra, "Manjushri replied, 'There is the daughter of the dragon king Sagara, who has just turned eight. Her wisdom has keen roots and she is good at understanding the root activities and deeds of living beings... Her eloquence knows no hindrance, and she thinks of living beings with compassion as though they were her own children.'"

The Lotus Sutra, [trans.] Burton Watson, Columbia University Press, 1993, p. 187.

29)The Japanese phrase is *kaiten no chikara aru* 「廻天のちからある」 ; the sense of the expression is used to indicate that good advice had the power to move even the emperor.

Bodaisattva Shishobo, part five

Rigyou or actions benefiting all beings means to act in a sensitive and skillful way toward all living beings; regardless of whether they're rich or poor, in high position or low; to carry out such actions in a way that will be of great worth and help to all. Concretely speaking, skillful means that benefit others is carefully considering and focusing on the enactment of such deeds for the near and distant future. Releasing a caged turtle, nourishing a sick sparrow—in both instances, there was no consideration for reward [on the part of those who carried out the deeds] (30). They simply felt moved to act in a beneficent way [by the power of rigyou]. There are some people who foolishly think that if they put benefitting others ahead of themselves, they will surely lose out; however, benefitting others is not like that. Beneficial actions are actions that include everyone and all things including oneself. There is the legendary example of an emperor who reset his hair three times before taking a bath and who vomited up his dinner on three different occasions [in order to hear those who came to him for advice]. He acted in this way in order to devote his efforts to benefiting those who brought him their entreaties. He couldn't help but try to benefit even the people of other countries in any way he could despite the inconvenience to himself. Therefore, we should try to benefit equally both those with whom we are close as well as those we may despise, as benefitting others benefits oneself. If we are able to acquire such an attitude, then naturally we will benefit without ever backsliding or turning away in the same way the grasses and trees or the wind and rivers [never turn away], and manifest the principle of beneficial action. Endeavor to help those who are foolish or mistaken. Douji refers to acting in correspondence without any difference. Identity of action never adversely affects oneself, nor does such an action [run counter to the best interests] of others. A human being as a tathagata is saying that a tathagata identifies with every human being. In the same way the tathagata identifies with the human world, there is identification with the other worlds (31) When we understand identity of action, there is no difference between self and other. Those things

which are familiar and well-known—music, poetry, spirits (32)—become companions among human beings and deities above and on earth. Likewise, human beings become intimate with music, with poetry and literature and with spirits. Music becomes intimate with music, poetry with poetry and spirits with spirits. Human beings identify with human beings, the same for heavenly and earthly deities. This is the internalization of douji—identity of action. For example, douji consists of deportment, of behavior, of attitude. Other identifies with us, and we identify with other. What is 'self' and 'other' has no boundary and is dependent on the situation. Kanshi wrote, "The sea never turns away water and for that, it can do great things. A mountain never turns away more soil and for that, it performs feats of greatness. The emperor never loathes anyone and for that, he can lead the people" (33). Know that the sea 's never refusing water is [an example of] identity of action. Neither does water turn away from the sea. Because of this, the water gathers into a sea; soil piles up to form a mountain. The sea knows itself intimately, so it does not reject itself and is able to do great things. Likewise, a mountain attains to great heights because it does not refuse itself. Precisely because the ruler does not loathe the people, he is able to govern well. The people form the country. The ruler refers to an emperor, and the emperor does not loathe the people. Though he does not loathe them it is not as though there were no reward and punishment. There is reward and punishment, but this does not derive from a loathing of the people. In ancient times when the country was at peace, there was no [need for] reward and punishment. Or if there was, it was not the same sort of reward and punishment as that of today. Even now, there are some who pursue the Way oblivious to any reward they might receive, although this is totally beyond the comprehension of the foolish. Precisely because the ruler is perfectly clear [in his ways], he does not loathe the people. And the people carry out the activities of the country willingly. Because it is highly unusual to know entirely the reasoning of a gifted ruler, people are happy just to think they are not despised by him. Because they identify with him, the people do not know that they are not disliked by him. For both the emperor and the blind, because of [this truth of] douji or identity of action, douji is one of the bodhisattva vows (34), although surely, both face all things with a softer countenance. All four of these attitudes are contained in each bodhisattva attitude thereby making sixteen.

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Notes:

30) This is a reference to two legendary tales in Chinese history, one in which a caged turtle is released into a large pond, the other is of the nurturing of an injured sparrow resulting in great rewards for the families of the those who most willingly gave of themselves without any expectation of personal reward or benefit.

31) This is a reference to either the "six worlds" rokkai 「六界」 or "ten worlds" jukkai 「十界」

32) Hakkyoi's three friends— music, poetry and sake.

33) Kanshi 管子, in Chinese, Guan-tzu.

34) Here Dogen is using the word gangyou 「願行」 interchangeably with shoubou 「攝法」.