



ADVICE ON HOW TO TRANSFORM
PROBLEMS INTO OPPORTUNITIES
FROM MASTER SHANTIDEVA'S
GUIDE TO THE BODHISATTVA'S WAY OF LIFE

**No Problems
No Worries
No Dramas**

Stepping into a Stress-Free Life

**WITH VENERABLE SUMATI MARUT
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NO PROBLEMS: GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT LIFE, JOYFULLY

I. Transforming “Problems” into Teachings

परचोदनदक्षणागमनधीष्टोपकारिणाम् ।
प्रतीच्छेच्छिरसा वाक्यं सर्वशिष्यः सदा भवेत् ॥
paracodanadakṣāṇāmanadhīṣṭopakāriṇām |
pratichecchirasā vākyaṁ sarvaśiṣyaḥ sadā bhavet ||

Deferentially, I should accept unsolicited but beneficial words of proper reproach from others. I should always be the student of everyone. (5.74)

यो हि येन विना नास्ति यस्मिंश्च सति विद्यते ।
स एव कारणं तस्य स कथं विघ्न उच्यते ॥
yo hi yena vinā nāsti yasmimśca sati vidyate |
sa eva kāraṇaṁ tasya sa kathaṁ vighna ucyate ||

When one thing doesn't occur without the presence of another thing, and does occur when that other thing is present, then that other thing is its cause. How can you call it an obstacle? (6.104)

II. Waking Up to the Realities of Life

आरोग्यं दिवसं चेदं सभक्तं निरुपद्रवम् ।
आयुःक्षणं विसंवादि कायोपाचितकोपमः ॥
ārogyaṁ divasaṁ cedaṁ sabhaktaṁ nirupadravam |
āyuhkṣaṇaṁ visamvādi kāyopācitakopamaḥ ||

Today there may be health, enjoyment, and no problems, but life is fleeting and deceptive and the body is just on loan. (4.16)

कथंचिल्लभ्यते सौख्यं दुःखं स्थितमयत्नतः ।

दुःखेनैव च निःसारः चेतस्तस्माद्दृढी भव ॥

kathamcillabhyate saukhyaṁ duḥkhaṁ sthitamayatnataḥ ।
duḥkhenaiva ca niḥsāraḥ cetastasmād dṛḍhībhava । ।

Happiness is obtained only occasionally and with difficulty, while suffering occurs regularly and without effort. But it's only because of suffering that there is renunciation. So be strong-minded! (6.12)

III. Focusing on What Really Matters

लब्धापि च बहूलाभान् चिरं भुक्त्वा सुखान्यपि ।

रिक्तहस्तश्च नग्नश्च यास्यामि मुषितो यथा ॥

labdhāpi ca bahūllābhān ciram bhuktvā sukhānyapi ।
riktahastaśca nagnaśca yāsyāmi muṣito yathā । ।

While I might obtain many things and enjoy happiness for a long time, when I leave this life it will be empty-handed and naked, as if stripped bare. (6.59)

लाभा नश्यन्तु मे कामं सत्कारः कायजीवितम् ।

नश्यत्वन्यच्च कुशलं मा तु चित्तं कदाचन ॥

lābhā naśyantū me kāmaṁ satkāraḥ kāyajīvitam ।
naśyatvanyacca kuśalam mā tu cittaṁ kadācana । ।

Let my possessions disappear -- my pleasures, honor, body, and livelihood – and any other thing. But may my virtuous mind never be lost. (5.22)

IV. You Don't Know Where the Buttons are Until They're Pushed

मुक्तयर्थिनश्चायुक्तं मे लाभसत्कारबन्धनम् ।

ये मोचयन्ति मां बन्धाद् द्वेषस्तेषु कथं मम ॥

muktyarthinaścāyuktaṁ me lābhasatkārabandhanam ।
ye mocayanti mām bandhāddveṣasteṣu kathaṁ mama ।।

Obtaining honor is a bond which is uncondusive for my longing for liberation. How could I be angry with those who are are liberating me from my chains? (6.100)

दुःखं प्रवेष्टुकामस्य ये कपाटत्वमागताः ।

बुद्धाधिष्ठानत इव द्वेषस्तेषु कथं मम ॥

duḥkhaṁ praveṣṭukāmasya ye kapāṭatvamāgatāḥ ।
buddhādhiṣṭhānata iva dveṣasteṣu kathaṁ mama ।।

I want to enter a house of suffering and, like blessings from the Buddhas, there are those who are barring the door. How could I be angry with them? (6.101)

अश्रमोपार्जितस्तस्माद् गृहे निधिरिवोत्थितः ।

बोधिचर्यासहायत्वात् स्पृहणीयो मया ॥

aśramopārajitastasmādgṛhe nidhirivotthitaḥ ।
bodhicaryāśahāyatvāt sprhaṇīyo ripurmama ।।

Like a pot of gold effortlessly stumbled upon in the house, one should appreciate an enemy who assists you live the life of a bodhisattva. (6.107)

V. The Upside to Suffering

गुणोऽपरश्च दुःखस्य यत्संवेगान्मदच्युतिः ।

संसारिषु च कारुण्यं पापाद् भीतिजिने स्पृहा ॥

guṇo'paraśca duḥkhasya yatsaṁvegānmadacyutiḥ ।
saṁsāriṣu ca kāruṇyaṁ pāpādbhītirjine sprhā । ।

And besides, there are good things about suffering: because of it, I lose my pride; it brings compassion for those in the cycle of suffering, fear of doing bad things, and a longing to be a Conqueror. (6.21)

VI. Getting Serious about “No Problems”

अत्र ग्रही भविष्यामि बद्धवैरश्च विग्रही ।

अन्यत्र तद्विधात्क्लेशघातानुबन्धिनः ॥

atra grahī bhaviṣyāmi baddhavairaśca vighrahī ।
anyatra tadvidhātkleśātkleśaghātānubandhinaḥ ॥

I will be tenacious and, intent on revenge, I will wage war against my mental afflictions – except for the kind that are designed to obliterate mental afflictions. (4.43)

गलन्त्वन्त्राणि मे कामं शिरः पततु नाम मे ।

न त्वेवावनतिं यामि सर्वथा क्लेशवैरिणाम् ॥

galantvantrāṇi me kāmam śiraḥ patatu nāma me ।
na tvevāvanatiṁ yāmi sarvathā kleśavairiṇām ॥

Let my guts ooze out and my head fall off – whatever! But I will never, no matter what, bow before my enemy, the mental afflictions. (4.44)

न किञ्चिदसति तद्वस्तु यदभ्यासस्य दुष्करम् ।

तस्मान्मृदुव्यथाभ्यासात् सोढव्यापि महाव्यथा ॥

na kimcidasti tadvastu yadabhyāsasya duṣkaram ।
tasmānṁṛduvyathābhyāsāt soḍhavyāpi mahāvyathā ॥ 14 ॥

There is nothing whatsoever that remains difficult if one practices discipline. So through practicing with small difficulties, even great ones become endurable. (6.14)

NO WORRIES: REALIZING TRUE EQUALITY AND COMPASSION

I. “Killing Anger” Toward Others

यदि स्वभावो बालानां परोपद्रवकारिता ।

तेषु कोपो न युक्तो मे यथाग्नौ दहनात्मके ॥

yadi svabhāvo bālānām paropadravakāritā ।
teṣu kopo na yukto me yathāgnau dahanātmake ।।

If it is the nature of children to do violence to others, being angry with them is not right, anymore than being angry with fire for burning. (6.39)

अथ दोषोऽयमागन्तुः सत्त्वाः प्रकृतिपेशलाः ।

तथाप्ययुक्तस्तत्कोपः कटुधूमे यथाम्बरे ॥

atha doṣo'yamāgantuh sattvāḥ prakṛtipeśalāḥ ।
tathāpyayuktastatkopaḥ kaṭudhūme yathāmbare ।।

And if it is natural for living beings to be tender, then their faults are adventitious, and being angry with them is not right, any more than being angry at pungent smoke in the sky. (6.40)

मोहादेकेऽपराध्यन्ति कुप्यन्त्यन्ये विमोहिताः ।

ब्रूमः कमेषु निरोदोषं कं वा ब्रूमोऽपराधिनम् ॥

mohādeke'parādhyanti kupyantyanye vimohitāḥ ।
brūmaḥ kameṣu nirdoṣaṁ kaṁ vā brūmo'parādhinam ।।

Some people, because of delusion, do wrong. And others, deluded, get angry at them. How can we say that either of them is without fault or is guilty? (6.67)

II. No Worries and the Eight Worldly Thoughts

यदि प्रीतिसुखं प्राप्तमन्यैः स्तुत्वा गुणोर्जितम् ।

मनस्त्वमपि तं स्तुत्वा कस्मादेवं न हृष्यसि ॥

yadi prītisukhaṁ prāptamanyaiḥ stutvā guṇorjitam ।
manastvamapi taṁ stutvā kasmādevaṁ na hṛṣyasi ।।

If joy and happiness can be obtained from praising the good qualities of others, why, my mind, do you not join in the praising and rejoice in this way too? (6.76)

स्वगुणे कीर्त्यमाने च परसौख्यमपीच्छसि ।

कीर्त्यमाने परगुणे स्वसौख्यमपि नेच्छसि ॥

svaguṇe kīrtyamāne ca parasaukhyamapīcchasi ।
kīrtyamāne paraguṇe svasaukhyamapi necchasi ।।

When people sing the praises of your own good qualities, you want want others to join in too. But when the good qualities of others are being celebrated, you don't want anyone, including yourself, to be happy about it! (6.79)

बोधिचित्तं समुत्पाद्य सर्वसत्त्वसुखेच्छया ।

स्वयं लब्धसुकेष्वद्य कस्मात्सत्त्वेषु कुप्यसि ॥

bodhicittaṁ samutpādya sarvasattvasukhecchayā ।
svayaṁ labdhasukheṣvadya kasmātsattveṣu kupyasi ।।

When the mind of awakening arises out of the wish for the happiness of all living beings, why are you now angry that those living beings have found happiness on their own? (6.80)

III. The “Highest” Secret: Exchanging Self For Others

आत्मानं चापरांश्चैव यः शीघ्रं त्रातुमिच्छति ।

स चरेत्परमं गुह्यं परात्मपरिवर्तनम् ॥

ātmānaṁ cāparāṁścaiva yaḥ śīghraṁ trātumicchati ।
sa caretparamaṁ guhyaṁ parātmaparivartanam । ।

Whoever wishes to quickly protect oneself as well as others should practice this highest secret:
the exchanging of self for others. (8.120)

यदि दास्यामि किं भोक्ष्ये इत्यात्मार्थे पिशाचता ।

यदि भोक्ष्ये किं ददामीति परार्थे देवराजता ॥

yadi dāsyāmi kiṁ bhokṣye ityātmārthe piśācatā ।
yadi bhokṣye kiṁ dadāmīti parārthe devarājatā । ।

“If I give it, what will I have to consume?” – this is the selfish thinking of demons. “If I
consume it, what will I have to give?” – this is the altruistic thinking of the gods. (8.125)

दुर्गतिर्नीचता मौर्ख्यं ययैवात्मोन्नतीच्छया ।

तामेवान्यत्र संक्राम्य सुगतिः सत्कृतिर्मतिः ॥

durgatirnīcatā maurkhyāṁ yayaivātmonnatīcchayā ।
tāmevānyatra saṁkrāmya sugatiḥ satkṛtirmatiḥ । ।

The desire for self-aggrandizement brings about a lower rebirth, a bad reputation, and
stupidity. By transferring that same desire to others, one obtains a higher rebirth, honor, and
intelligence. (8.127)

ये केचिद् दुःखिता लोके सर्वे ते स्वसुखेच्छया ।

ये केचित् सुखिता लोके सर्वे तेऽन्यसुखेच्छया ॥

ye kecid duhkhitā loke sarve te svasukhecchayā |
ye kecit sukhitā loke sarve te'nyasukheccayā ||

All the unhappiness in the world has come from wishing for one's own happiness. All the happiness in the world has come from wishing for the happiness of others. (8.129)

IV. Advanced Yoga: Exercises for a Worry-Free Heart

अन्येनापि कृतं दोषं पातयास्यैव मस्तके ।

अल्पमप्यस्य दोषं च प्रकाशय महामुनेः ॥

anyenāpi kṛtaṁ doṣaṁ pātayāsyaiḥ mastake |
alpamapyasya doṣaṁ ca prakāśaya mahāmuneḥ | |

Let the bad deeds done by others fall on your own head, and confess even your small faults to the Great Sage. (8.162)

अन्याधिकयशोवदैर्यशोऽस्य मलिनीकुरु ।

निकृष्टदासवच्चैनं सत्त्वकार्येषु वाहय ॥

anyādhikayaśovādairyaśo'sya malinīkuru |
nikṛṣṭadāsavaccainam sattvakāryeṣu vāhaya | |

Let the talk of the glory of others drown out any mention of your own, and like the lowest servant take upon yourself the task of fulfilling the needs of all living beings. (8.163)

नागन्तुकगुणांशेन स्तुत्यो दोषमयो ह्ययम् ।

यथा कश्चिन्न जानीयाद्गुणमस्य तथा कुरु ॥

nāgantukaguṇāṁśena stutyo doṣamayo hyayam ।
yathā kaścinna jānīyādguṇamasya tathā kuru । ।

I, filled with faults, should not praise some incidental goodness of my own. I should act such that no one might know of my good qualities. (8.164)

नैवोत्साहोऽस्य दातव्यो येनायं मुखरो भवेत् ।

स्थाप्यो नववधूवृत्तौ हीतो भीतोऽथ संवृतः ॥

naivotsāho'sya dātavyo yenāyam mukharo bhavet ।
sthāpyo navavadhūvṛttau hrīto bhīto'tha saṁvṛtaḥ । ।

I should not be given encouragement for being a loud mouth. I should conduct myself like a blushing bride: modest, timid, and inhibited. (8.166)

NO DRAMAS: BREAKING THE CYCLE OF SUFFERING

I. No One Wants Dramas

यदि तु स्वेच्छया सिद्धिः सर्वेषामेव देहिनाम् ।

न भवेत्कस्यचिद्दुःखं न दुःखं कश्चिदिच्छति ॥

yadi tu svecchayā siddhiḥ sarveṣāmeva dehinām ।
na bhavetkasyacidduḥkhaṁ na duḥkhaṁ kaścicchatī ॥

If things occurred because we willingly chose them, then since nobody at all wishes to suffer no one at all would suffer. (6.34)

II. Why Do Dramas Happen?

ये केचिदपराधास्तु पापानि विविधानि च ।

सर्वं तत्प्रत्ययबलात् स्वतन्त्रं तु न विद्यते ॥

ye kecidaparādhāstū pāpāni vividhāni ca ।
sarvaṁ tatpratrayabalāt svatantraṁ tu na vidyate ॥

Every sort of mistake and bad deed is caused; nothing just happens on its own. (6.25)

एवं परवशं सर्वं यद्वशं सोऽपि चावशः ।

निर्माणवदचेष्टेषु भावेष्वेवं क्व कुप्यते ॥

evaṁ paravaśaṁ sarvaṁ yadvaśaṁ so'pi cāvaśaḥ ।
nirmāṇavadaceṣṭeṣu bhāveṣvevaṁ kva kupyate ॥

Every thing depends on other things, and other things in turn depend on others. So don't be upset about the way things unfold. It's just all transformation. (6.31)

तस्मादमित्रं मित्रं वा दृष्ट्वान्यायकारिणम् ।

ईदृशाः प्रत्यया अस्येत्येवं मत्वा सुखी भवेत् ॥

tasmādamitraṁ mitraṁ vā dṛṣṭvānyāyakāriṇam ।
īdṛśāḥ pratyayā asyetyevaṁ matvā sukhī bhavet । ।

When you see someone do something, whether it be friend or foe, reflect on the fact that everything happens because of causes -- and just stay happy. (6.33)

III. Taking Responsibility for Dramas

मयापि पूर्वं सत्त्वानामीदृश्येव व्यथा कृता ।

तस्मान्मे युक्तमेवैतत्सत्त्वोपद्रवकारिणः ॥

mayāpi pūrvaṁ sattvānāmīdṛśyeva vyathā kṛtā ।
tasmānme yuktamevaitatsattvopadravakāriṇaḥ । ।

Previously it was I who brought this same pain to other living beings, so it fitting that this unwanted thing is now happening to the perpetrator. (6.42)

दुःखं नेच्छामि दुःखस्य हेतुमिच्छामि बालिशः ।

स्वापराधागते दुःखे कस्मादन्यत्र कुप्यते ॥

duḥkhaṁ necchāmi duḥkhasya hetumicchāmi bāliśaḥ ।
svāparādhāgate duḥkhe kasmādanyatra kupyate । ।

Children say, "I don't want to suffer" but then they also say, "I want the cause of suffering." If the suffering that comes to you is your own fault, then why are you upset with others? (6.45)

कस्मादेवं कृतं पूर्वं येनैवं बाध्यसे परैः ।

सर्वे कर्मपरायत्ताः कोऽहमत्रान्यथाकृतौ ॥

kasmādevaṃ kṛtaṃ pūrvam yenaivaṃ bādhyase paraiḥ ।
sarve karmaparāyattāḥ ko'hamatrānyathākṛtau ।।

Where did this come from? What deed done in the past has led to others harassing me now? If everything depends on karma, how can I now change the thing into something else? (6.68)

सुलब्धा याचका लोके कुर्लभास्त्वपकारिणः ।

यतो मेऽपराधस्य न कश्चिदपराध्यति ॥

sulabhā yācakā loke durlabhāstvapakāriṇaḥ ।
yato me'naparādhasya na kaścidadaparādhyati ।।

It's easy to find beggars in the world, but people who do me wrong are hard to find since there could never be an offender who wasn't first wronged by me. (6.106)

IV. Breaking the Drama Chain

मत्कर्मचोदिता एव जाता मय्यपकारिणः ।

येन यास्यन्ति नरकान्मयैवामी हता ननु ॥

matkarmacoditā eva jātā mayyapakāriṇaḥ ।
yena yāsyanti narakānmayaivāmī hatā nanu ।।

People who do me wrong are impelled to do so by my own karma. If doing wrong to me sends them to the hell-realms, isn't it me who has injured them? (6.47)

एतानाश्रित्य मे पापं क्षीयतेक्षमतो बहु ।

मामाश्रित्य तु यान्त्येते नरकान् दीर्घवेदनान् ॥

etānāśritya me pāpaṁ kṣīyate kṣamato bahu ।
māmāśritya tu yāntyete narakān dīrghavedanān । ।

Because of them I can gain control over my bad deeds and develop great patience. And because of me they must go to the hell-realms and endure agony for a long time. (6.48)

अहमेवापकार्येषां मयैते चोपकारिणः ।

कस्माद्विपर्ययं कृत्वा खलचेतः प्रकुप्यसि ॥

ahamevāpakāryeṣāṁ mamaite copakāriṇaḥ ।
kasmādviparyayaṁ kṛtvā khalacetaḥ prakupyasi । ।

It is I who am doing them wrong, and they who are doing me a favor. Why are you turning things around, o my mind, when you get upset with them? (6.49)

V. Putting It Into Practice: Making “No Dramas” a Reality

कुशलानां च सर्वेषां चन्दं मूलं मुनिर्जगौ ।

तस्यापि मूलं सततं विपाकफलभावना ॥

kuśalānāṁ ca sarveṣāṁ chandaṁ mūlaṁ munirjagau ।
tasyāpi mūlaṁ satataṁ vipākaphalabhāvanā । ।

The Sage observed that attraction is the root of all goodness. And, in turn, the root of that is repeatedly meditating on the effects of karma as it ripens. (7.40)

एवं विनिश्चित्य करोमि यत्नं यथोक्तशिक्षाप्रतिपत्तिहेतोः ।

वैद्योपदेशाच्चलतः कुतोऽस्ति भैषज्यसाध्यस्य निरामयत्वम् ॥

evam viniścitya karomi yatnaṁ yathoktaśikṣāpratipattihetoḥ ।
vaidyopadeśāccalataḥ kuto'sti bhaiṣajyasādhyasya nirāmayatvam । ।

Having reflected on all this, I will make an effort to put into practice the teachings as they have been taught to me. Why would someone who could be cured by taking the prescribed medicine deviate from his doctor's instructions? (4.48)

कायेनैव पठिष्यामि वाक्पाठेन तु किम् भवेत् ।

चिकित्सापाठमात्रेण रोगिनः किम् भविष्यति ॥

kāyenaiva paṭhiṣyāmi vākpāṭhena tu kiṁ bhavet ।
cikitsāpāṭhamātreṇa rogiṇaḥ kiṁ bhaviṣyati । ।

I will put these teachings into actual practice, for what's the point of just reciting words? How will those who are sick benefit by just studying medical books? (5.109)