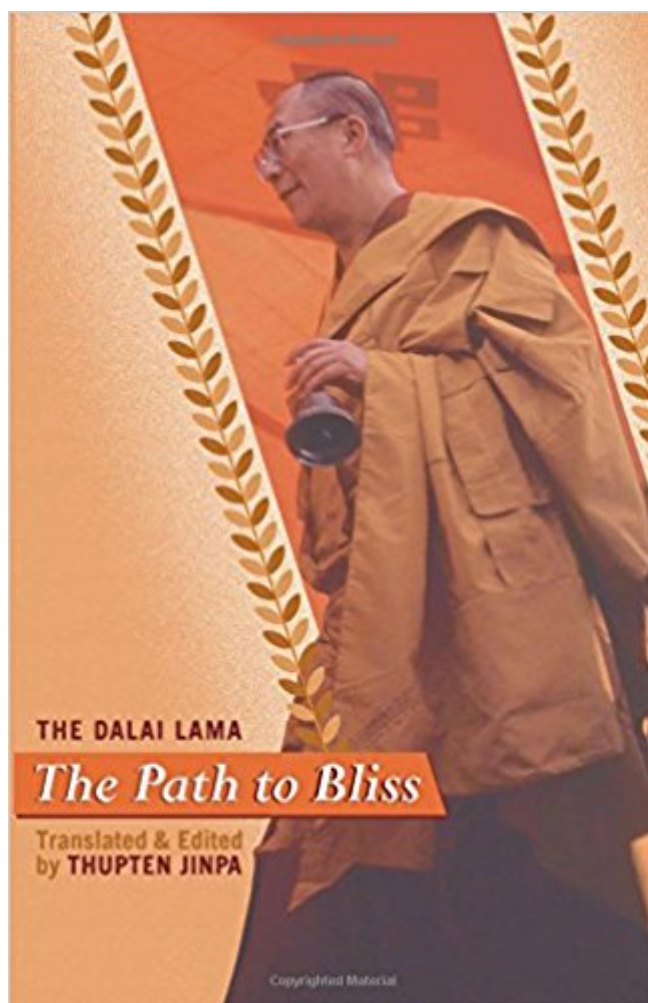


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The Path To Bliss: A Practical Guide To Stages Of Meditation



Synopsis

Clear, eloquent, simple, and profound, His Holiness's teachings are easily accessible to beginning practitioners yet richly nourishing to those more advanced in practice. In *The Path to Bliss*, the Dalai Lama shows how visualization, reason, and contemplation can be systematically crafted to enhance personal development. Beginning with practices designed to create an effective mental outlook, His Holiness skillfully guides the student to more advanced techniques for developing the mind's deepest potential and happiness. An impeccable attention to the correctness of detail, yet manages at the same time to convey a sense of playfulness, a balance of specific technical guidance, and delightful asides. It exemplifies the sophistication and elegance of Tibetan Buddhist methods for spiritual development.

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Customer Reviews

This book is a translation, based on an oral teaching of H. H. the Dalai Lama, of the First Panchen Lama's (Lobsang Choekyi Gyaltsen) *Lamrim* (Stages of the Path) text entitled "Path to Bliss Leading to Omniscience." *Lamrim* originates with Atisha, the Indian teacher who came to Tibet and brought together the "vast" and "profound" teachings of Maitreya and Manjushri (respectively) into what became the Kadampa school, which Lama Tsongkhapa later reformed into the Gelugpa school, to which H.H. the Dalai Lama belongs. Thus, *Lamrim* teachings are especially important to Gelugpas. *Lamrim* -- which means 'stages of the path' -- is basically a gradualistic approach to enlightenment. One begins by examining one's current situation with meditations on death and

impermanence, karma, rebirth in lower realms, etc. This leads one to wish to seek a positive rebirth. This is the initial capacity. After realizing this, however, one then meditates on the defects of samsara (cyclic existence) in general. One comes to desire liberation from all suffering -- becoming an arhat or liberated being. This is the middle capacity. However, then it is important to generate the mind of a bodhisattva -- the intention to help all beings be liberated from suffering. This is the greater capacity, and here one enters the Mahayana path. Thus one engages in Tonglen meditation and other forms of Lojong (mind training) meditations in order to generate extremely powerful compassion and motivation. This propels one forward along the path to buddhahood and the ability to help all beings. For those not very familiar with the basic points of Lamrim, this will be a very helpful text -- it includes all the points of the path as well as good explanations on Tonglen and the 7-limb cause and effect method for generating bodhicitta (altruistic intention of a bodhisattva). It is important that every Gelugpa practitioner understand these basics. That being said, this text is most suitable to accompany teachings, since reading it on its own will not answer all your questions. It should be accompanied by a qualified teacher, who will guide you through the specific meditations. There is not enough material here to use for doing the meditations on your own, nor would this be very beneficial, in my opinion. This is not, however, an introductory book to Tibetan Buddhism! Some background is required. For example, it presumes you are already doing guru yoga. Good luck!

This book is derived from talks given by the Dalai Lama at the Tibetan Buddhist temple in Dharamsala, India in 1998. The focal point is on the Lamrim (or meditative stages of the path to enlightenment) started in the 11th century by Atisha. His Holiness clarifies the introductory practices, like creating a favorable environment and training the mind, and then gives the primary meditations of the Lamrim on confidence in a spiritual trainer and appreciating human aptitude. He unravels the many layered practices for beginners of all sorts of capacity. As stated by the Dalai Lama here, a gentle heart and compassion for all beings are the genuine foundations for peace and bliss. Working for all beings brings internal riches that are incalculable. In one of the more concise portions, he elucidates the Six Perfections and the Four Ripening Factors. What's communicated here are the psychological insights of Tibetan Buddhism's appreciation of morality and right action. These teachings on training the mind and the path of selflessness are delicate and appealing. Many of the views expressed in this text are very esoteric and may take some preliminary understanding of Tibetan Buddhism in order to truly grasp. With that said, The Dalai Lama did a wonderful job of trying to explain these rough concepts to precisely that crowd of people (those unfamiliar with it all). So it's a good book for beginners and adepts alike. Enjoy!

Crowley, Vivianne. "Review: 'The Path to Bliss: A Practical Guide to Stages of Meditation' by H.H. The Dalai Lama, Thupten Jinpa trans., Christine Cox ed." *The Middle Way: Journal of the Buddhist Society* 78, no. 2 (October 2003): 119-120. The Dalai Lama's *The Path to Bliss* is a welcome practical guide to stages of meditation and is easily accessible to beginners. It describes the Lamrim Tibetan meditation system developed in the eleventh century. It is based on oral teaching given in 1988 by The Dalai Lama at Dharamsala on Panchen Lobsang Choeyki Gyaltsen's Lamrim system as set out in his book *Path to Bliss* leading to Omniscience. The first part of the book introduces the spiritual path of a Buddhist practitioner and the origins of the Lamrim instructions. The second part deals with preliminary practices, and the third part explains the main Lamrim meditations by topic. The bodhisattva vows and precepts are discussed in the appendices. For those wishing to study the original Panchen Lobsang Choeyki Gyaltsen text, a translation is given. This is a book that is at once simple to read and understand, but deeply rooted in tradition. It is an ideal book for new Tibetan practitioners and those wishing to explore Tibetan teachings further.

mind-boggling wisdom combined with the utmost concern for the state of the world and its inhabitants with some of the most practical ways of applying the most profound and vast practices of Buddhism into one's life in order to be of more benefit to the world. thank you all involved.

Great study for any theologian. Well written and edited for easy comprehension. Many tips to help the individual's personal meditation path.

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