

The Twenty-One Supreme Aspects of the Path

by *Ārya Atiśa*

Khutön Tsöndrū Yungdrung, Ngok Lekpé Sherab, and Dromtön Gyalwé Jungné asked Ārya Atiśa:

What are the best aspects of the path?

Ārya Atiśa responded:

1. The best knowledge is the realization of selflessness.
2. The best virtue is a tamed mind.
3. The best quality is to have great altruistic concern.
4. The best instruction is always to observe one's mind.
5. The best antidote is the knowledge that nothing truly exists.
6. The best conduct is nonconformity with worldly concerns.
7. The best accomplishment is a reduction of negative emotions.
8. The best sign of accomplishment is a lessening of desire.
9. The best form of generosity is non-attachment.
10. The best discipline is pacifying one's mind.
11. The best form of patience is humility.
12. The best diligence is the giving up of action.
13. The best meditation is an uncontrived mind.
14. The best wisdom is to let go of the ego.
15. The best teacher is one who attacks your hidden faults.
16. The best instructions are the ones that target those faults.
17. The best friends are mindfulness and awareness.
18. The best encouragement are enemies, obstacles, diseases, and suffering.
19. The best method is not to alter or fabricate anything.
20. The best help to give is introducing someone to the Dharma.
21. The best help to receive is the turning of one's mind toward the Dharma.

| Samye Translations, 2024 (trans. Stefan Mang and Lowell Cook).

Bibliography

Tibetan Edition

lce sgom shes rab rdo rje (ed.). “khu rngog 'brom gsum gyis jo bo la lam gyi chos thams cad kyi mchog gang lags zhus pa.” In *bka' gdams gsung thor*, pp. 3–4 (BDRC W23746). Zhol par khang: New Delhi, 1983.