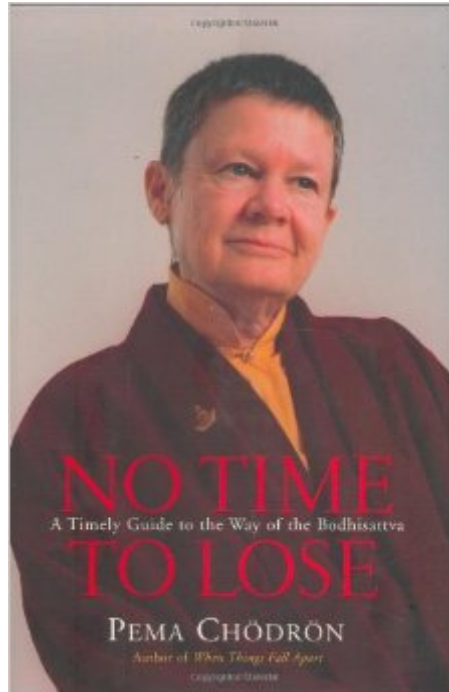


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No Time To Lose: A Timely Guide To The Way Of The Bodhisattva



Synopsis

Over the years, Pema Chodron's books have offered readers an exciting new way of living: developing fearlessness, generosity, and compassion in all aspects of their lives. In this new book, she invites readers to venture further along the path of the "bodhisattva warrior," explaining in depth how we can awaken the softness of our hearts and develop true confidence amid the challenges of daily living. In *No Time to Lose* Chodron reveals the traditional Buddhist teachings that guide her own life: those of *The Way of the Bodhisattva* (*Bodhicharyavatara*), a text written by the eighth-century sage Shantideva. This treasured Buddhist work is remarkably relevant for our times, describing the steps we can take to cultivate courage, caring, and joyâ "the key to healing ourselves and our troubled world. Chodron offers us a highly practical and engaging commentary on this essential text, explaining how its profound teachings can be applied to our daily lives. Full of illuminating stories and practical exercises, this fresh and accessible guide shows us that the path of the bodhisattva is open to each and every one of us. Pema Chodron urges us to embark on this transformative path today, writing, "There is no time to loseâ "but not to worry, we can do it."

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Customer Reviews

The title of this book may intimidate a little. But believe me, this book is a treasure. This is the best of all of Pema Chodron's wonderful books. It is the most practical and helpful of her guides on the Buddhist spiritual path. She doesn't presume we already are Bodhisattvas (saints) -- but this book can remind us of the steps toward that end, no matter who we are. And with her characteristic humor and friendliness Pema reminds us not to despair when we mess up, which we will. She

makes it clear that we simply renew our resolve and begin again because there is always hope! Pema Chodron calls upon the great wisdom of the ancient sage Shantideva, whose spiritual poetry is quoted throughout this book, as a resource to draw upon as we attempt to become Bodhisattvas. We are encouraged to tame our anger through patience, to uncover our own Buddha-nature by sitting mindfully, and, generally, to practicing the Dharma. This is a lovely work, lyrically written, playful while erudite, and absolutely uplifting. If you want to be happy, do yourself an enormous favor and get yourself this book.

Pema Chodron is a great teacher because she always positions herself firmly in place as a learner. This book of hers is no exception, and ends up rewarding both her message and her readers with simplicity, clarity, and profound usefulness. Pema's commentary on Shantideva's mystical poem *The Way of the Bodhisattva* is measured and fulfilling, and her visceral understanding of the majesty of bodhichitta is alive and free on every page. Leave it to a teacher of this depth and understanding to make an 8th century mystical treatise address with intense awareness the commonplace realities of daily life. There is so much wealth for the serious practitioner contained in this book, it's tough to single out individual segments for praise; but the long middle section on Patience is especially attentive, and often piercing to the point of sublime beauty, and the segments *Using Our Intelligence* and *Taming the Mind* are wisdom overflowing. Reading this book, one easily discerns the joy of sitting at the feet of this master at Gampo Abbey and finding oneself whole time and again. "May the blind receive their sight, and the deaf begin to hear ... May the naked now be clothed, and the hungry eat their fill." Thank you, Pema, for revealing to us the path of fearlessness and love. This is food for life. Supreme recommendation, no reservations. And the book has a beautiful little appendix with a study guide that turns out to be one of its most useful attributes!

Buddhism has always struck me as a fine balance between high ideals and common sense. The former gives us something to aim for, whereas the latter delivers practical advice to lead us out of our suffering. In Pema Chodron's latest book, *No Time to Lose*, the American Buddhist nun provides both by offering her commentary on *The Way of the Bodhisattva*, an eighth-century Buddhist poem by the upstart monk Shantideva, who presented it to his fellow monks before wandering away from the university. Reading Shantideva's poem, it is obvious that not much has changed for humankind in 1300 years. We are still greedy, self-absorbed and ruled by our desires and kleshas, negative emotions that distort our perception and keep us from experiencing the present moment. In our search for happiness, we repeatedly reach for and attach ourselves to things that are impermanent,

destined to disappear and die, including our ego. Death, indeed, looms large throughout the book. Leading a life full of compassion and free of attachment assures an easier passage when our end comes. "If we can't handle being told off or not getting what we want, how will we be able to handle death?" Chodron asks almost urgently. And as we have no idea when this might occur, there is no time to lose in getting our house, and more importantly, our heart in order. Using vivid imagery and written in very accessible language, the poem itself provides a systematic, if somewhat idealistic, program for achieving happiness, good karma and peace of mind throughout our lives and at the end. Chodron's interpretation, in gentle and engaging prose, shows us how Shantideva's advice and admonitions apply to our daily trials and tribulations. Of course, there is a difference between ideals and what we can realistically achieve. Meditating upon the dirtiness and eventual decay of the human body in order to quell lust, for instance, is a hard sell for both Shantideva and the wise and modern Chodron. Most of us, after all, are neither monks nor nuns. It is definitely something to ponder, however, when possessed by one of our most human and perhaps destructive kleshas. The philosophy and the teachings in *No Time to Lose* are similar to those found in other books by Chodron or other Buddhist writers: The mind causes our unhappiness, thus we must learn to apply mindfulness to all our actions and interactions; generosity is its own reward; and all hardships in life are opportunities to learn, to free ourselves from self-absorption, to practise the virtue of patience. What is different here is the logical build-up of the teachings: from developing our intention to change, to preparing the groundwork and transcending our hesitation, all the way through taming the mind and dissolving the barriers between self and other. Reading this book from beginning to end feels like walking the Bodhisattva's path. Though we may not be enlightened when we reach the final page, Shantideva and Chodron have provided us with a practical guide should we wish to embark on the real journey.

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