

**Excerpt from the Bodhisattva's Four Methods of Guidance, pp. 475-476**

**Treasury of the True Dharma Eye *edited by Kazuaki Tanahashi***

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 a sick 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 stopped three times in the middle of his bath to arrange 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, benefit friend and enemy equally. Benefit self and others alike. If you have this heart, even beneficial action for the sake of grass, trees, wind, and water is spontaneous and unremitting. This being so, make a wholehearted effort to help the ignorant.