



# Foundations of Mahayana Buddhism

The Mahayana spiritual model is the *bodhisattva*, which is motivated by *bodhicitta*.

Define the following:

- *Bodhisattva*
- *Bodhicitta*

## Five Bodhisattva Paths

Complete the tale below:

Path	Description
Accumulation	stage at which a special effort is made to gather the accumulation of_____. A strong desire to overcome suffering and renounce a worldly_____.
Joining (Preparation)	practising of _____and developing analytical knowledge of_____.
Seeing	developing a _____meditative concentration on the _____of reality and realising the emptiness of_____.
Meditation	_____of self and accumulation of_____.
No-more-learning	_____purification of wisdom is reached.

COMPLETE  
MERIT  
REALITY

EMPTINESS  
NATURE  
WISDOM

LIFE  
PROFOUND

MEDITATION  
PURIFICATION

To follow the above paths a person must cultivate six perfections. List these perfections.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_



In Mahayana Buddhism, one of the primary qualities that a practitioner should cultivate for progressing along the bodhisattva path is *Karuna*.

- Define *Karuna*

Mahayana Buddhism says that there are three aspects of Buddhahood, which it describes by regarding Buddha as having three bodies (trikaya):

<i>Trikaya</i>	Description
<i>Dharmakaya</i>	
<i>Sambhogakaya</i>	
<i>Nirmanakaya</i>	

In Mahayana all practitioners (both laity and monks) are encouraged to follow the Bodhisattva path whereas in Theravada it is considered a path of the monks (Sangha).

*Sunyata*, meaning \_\_\_\_\_, is the profound meaning of the Mahayana Teaching.

*“is the reality of all worldly existences (s. dharma). It is the realisation of Bodhi — Prajna. From the standpoint of liberation, sunyata is the skilful means that disentangle oneself from defilement and unsatisfactoriness. The realisation of sunyata leads one to no attachment and clinging. It is the skilful means towards enlightenment and also the fruit of enlightenment.”*

[Sunyata \(Emptiness\) in the Mahayana Context \(buddhanet.net\)](http://buddhanet.net)



## Solutions to Worksheet OR-B556 Foundations of Mahayana Buddhism

*Bodhisattva* - a person who is able to reach nirvana but delays doing so through compassion for suffering beings. One who strives to liberate all beings from the cycle of birth and death.

### *Bodhicitta*

"the desire to realize enlightenment for the sake of others." It is also described as the state of mind of a *bodhisattva*, usually, an enlightened being who has vowed to remain in the world until all beings are enlightened.

### The Five Bodhisattva Paths

Path of:

- Accumulation- stage at which a special effort is made to gather the accumulation of merit. A strong desire to overcome suffering and renounce a worldly life.
- Joining (Preparation) – practising of meditation and developing analytical knowledge of emptiness.
- Seeing – developing a profound meditative concentration on the nature of reality and realising the emptiness of reality.
- Meditation – purification of self and accumulation of wisdom.
- no-more-learning – complete purification of wisdom is reached.

### Six perfections

giving
morality
patience
diligence
concentration
wisdom

Karuna – compassion is one of the primary qualities that a practitioner should cultivate. This, along with wisdom, is a necessary requirement for progressing along the bodhisattva path, which seeks to liberate all sentient beings.

Three bodies of Buddha	Description
<i>Dharmakaya</i>	is the body of absolute truth.
<i>Sambhogakaya</i>	is the body that experiences the bliss of enlightenment.
<i>Nirmanakaya</i>	Buddha's earthly body - just like any other human being's body.

*Sunyata*, meaning emptiness, is the profound meaning of the Mahayana Teaching.