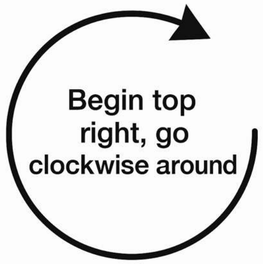
Chapter 15 Four Ways to Gather Disciples



1. Purpose & Importance

- **Completes the six perfections** by turning them outward
- **Method for ripening others** once bodhisattva has ripened self
- **Minimal staircase:** attract → inspire → engage → sustain

2. Why only four?

- Condense countless skillful means into four reliable stages
- Derived from *Ornament for the Mahāyāna Sūtras* stanza

3. The Four Ways

- **3.1 Generosity (building rapport)**
  - Meet immediate needs; create trust and friendship
  - Make disciples suitable vessels for Dharma
  - Counted as “perfection of giving”
- **3.2 Pleasant Speech (clear & kind instruction)**
  - Speak suitably and kindly, at disciple’s capacity
  - Remove ignorance about problem, goal, path
  - Motivation must be compassion, not self-promotion
- **3.3 Beneficial Conduct / Involving Others**
  - Help disciples do the practice, not just understand
  - Bridge knowing → doing
  - Counted as “generosity” (giving guidance, time, energy)
- **3.4 Acting Consistently (embodiment)**
  - Align actions with words; model the path
  - Encourages disciples to continue training
  - Linked to “perfection of ethics”

4. Functions in sequence

- **1st makes disciples suitable**
- **2nd makes them aspire**
- **3rd makes them practice**
- **4th makes them train**

5. Guardrails

- **Purity of motive (compassion)**
- **Adapt teaching to disciple’s level**
- **Embodiment is non-negotiable**

6. Integration with Six Perfections

- **First three ways express giving**
- **Fourth expresses ethics**
- **Shows perfections as other-benefiting**

7. Bodhisattva Responsibility

- Repaying kindness of “mother sentient beings”
- Like guiding a blind mother from danger
- Tireless attitude makes four ways natural