INROMATION FOR TEACHERS

DIDACTIC REFERENCES – SECONDARY LEVEL I

OBJECTIVES

The students will be able to . . .

1. reflect on whether and to what extent acting for the benefit of others can be beneficial.
2. explain the Buddhist understanding of the terms "compassion" and "wisdom".
3. explore the balance between "compassion" and "wisdom" in the Buddhist understanding of the terms by means of exemplary cases.

NOTES

"Honesty doesn't pay", as the saying goes. It seems as if the egoist, the assertive person, gets ahead in terms of personal gain and achieves the generally accepted external social goals: recognition, a full bank account, status and professional success. But there are people who are successful and at the same time have the well-being of others in mind.

From a Buddhist perspective, these external characteristics of success are secondary in the long term, even beyond this life. The Buddhist Bodhisattva attitude is expressed as follows: to do meaningful things for as many people as possible for as long as possible, while gathering so many good impressions in the mind that the future, even beyond this life, becomes ever more powerful and joyful. A Bodhisattva acts with compassion and wisdom for the benefit of all beings.

INTRODUCTION

With the thought-provoking song lyrics on **Worksheet 1**, the students reflect on the supposed benefits of selfish actions and assertiveness. The students deal with the question in individual work. The **Answers for WS 1** give suggestions. The class discussion begins only after the impulse from the following worksheet.

EXERCISE 1

With the parable in **Worksheet 2** it is shown that the attitude for the good of all can be the smartest solution, in which everyone is happy. With the help of the tasks in individual and group work, the students come to the conclusion that the egoist is not necessarily the smart one and the one who prudently includes others is not the stupid one. The **Answers to WS 2** offer suggestions.

Now the Buddhist view can be introduced in a next step. In Buddhism the attitude of consciously doing something for others is called enlightened mind or Bodhisattva attitude. A Bodhisattva is someone who develops compassion and wisdom for the good of all.

EXERCISE 2

After discussing the core statement of **Worksheet 2**, the step to understanding the Buddhist concepts of compassion and wisdom is done via **Worksheet 3** and **Material 1**.

In individual work, the students read the text on **Worksheet 3** and gain an understanding of the core concepts of compassion and wisdom and answer the question. Using the illustration on **Material 1**, the students then explain in plenary that one needs compassion and wisdom in order to act in the best possible way.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

A general or personal variation is available for selection, both steps can also be performed consecutively.

General Variation

Finally, the students receive **Worksheet 4** with assignments for group work (**A, B, C**). They weigh the balance of compassion and wisdom in everyday situations. They record the lack of compassion or wisdom or their imbalance. The students are sensitized to recognize the coldness and hardness of too much wisdom or the sweetness and softness of too much compassion. The **Answers for WS 4** offer suggestions.

Personal Variation

Worksheet 5 gives the students an impulse to reflect on their own behavior in concrete life situations. In this way, the Buddhist concept of compassion and wisdom is applied as a practical recommendation for life. The teacher decides whether an exchange takes place in class; it is important to leave the students the freedom to make their own assessment. **Answers to WS 5** offer suggestions.