

## **Heart Advice from Kyabje Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche**

### **This Precious Human Body**

The body we have right now is called a ‘precious human body’. In this world, there are countless sentient beings and among all of them, the best one is this precious human body, which is extremely difficult to obtain. It is impossible to obtain a precious human body through demerit, non-virtue. It is only through the accumulation of merit in your past lives and the residual of incredible great positive karma that we can obtain a body like this.

Having being born as a human is like arriving on an island of jewels, but if we don’t take any of them and just keep our hands crossed and go home empty-handed then what really is the point? So how do we make this precious human birth meaningful? It is only through practicing the spiritual path that one can make this precious human body significant. Without doing that, you are just an ordinary human trapped in an ordinary human body.

And why is this human body called ‘precious’? Because it is with this body that we can listen to precious teachings when they are explained and subsequently put them into practice. But if we waste such a precious thing like this, there is truly no greater loss. If we don’t practice the dharma then we are no different than an animal. So truly and honestly we should really persevere to practice the dharma.

### **Practicing the Dharma**

To practice the dharma means having trust, diligence, and being wise or knowledgeable. Trust means having complete trust and confidence in the dharma (the Buddha’s teachings); in the one who taught the teachings (the Buddha); and also complete trust in the sangha, the ones who uphold the teachings, and therefore having a feeling of gratitude towards the sangha. We need to trust in these three, the Buddha, dharma, and sangha, who are known as the three jewels.

What about diligence? In any kind of job you do, if you begin but don’t finish then it will never be completed. So what spurs you on to complete that job is called diligence. And being wise or knowledgeable means first of all the insight and knowledge we gain from listening to teachings, from thinking about them, and then later applying them. So when you hear something, gain some trust and confidence in it, and then develop some insight as a result that is called the knowledge of learning or listening. And then when you think it over you gain the wisdom of reflection, and finally you develop the wisdom gained through meditation practice, which is having full confidence and trust in it. For that reason, it’s indispensable to have trust. If one mistrusts then that is a great defect.

If one has no compassion and trust, it is very hard to penetrate the true heart of the dharma. It is like someone who when seeing buddhas and bodhisattvas flying in the sky thinks they are just showing off and when seeing a creature lying on the floor with its intestines flowing out says, “Oh, it’s his karma. Everyone dies.”

### **Devotion and Compassion**

Compassion and devotion shouldn't just be a show and shouldn't only be of lip service. They should come from the depths of our heart. Trust towards the teachings of the Buddha should be with pure appreciation. We need to have the kind of trust which is penetrating so that tears well up in our eyes and the hairs on our body stand up, a kind of feeling difficult to bear. Simply by uttering some empty words won't suffice. When thinking of other beings, you should have the kind of compassion thinking that they are all my parents and yet they don't know what to do; they create immense pain and suffering for themselves, yet they are not aware of it. They have no idea about the ultimate truth, the true state of samadhi so they wonder from one life to the next in the endless chain of samsara. Therefore, those who are filled with overwhelming compassion for sentient beings and with unwavering devotion for the enlightened ones will without any doubt receive the blessings of all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. Just to pay lip service and superficially act as if one pities sentient beings and respects the enlightened ones is not enough to receive their blessings. It has to be with one hundred percent sincerity. So here are some signs of receiving the blessings: you will no longer have to try to feel kind and compassionate, but it will come naturally, and you'll no longer have to try to be deliberately respectful as it will come naturally as well. Those are the signs. Having natural trust in the teachings and the consequences of karma—that is the real accomplishment of dharma practice. That is the real siddhi.

### **Receiving the Blessings**

You may not have a lot of knowledge and information of the dharma, but if you have real trust in the three jewels and you have kindness towards other beings and acutely understand that in this life nothing lasts forever then you have already received the blessings of the three jewels.

Otherwise, just to know a lot of teachings can sometimes really resolve in nothing but conceit, or thinking, "I have practiced so much and so many years of shamatha and samadhi." People who have a lot of practice behind them often become more miserly and stingy. This is proof that the teachings have not taken affect. So what is the main mission at stake? It is after all about buddha-nature, which is the very identity within which the enlightened bodies, speech, mind, qualities, and activities of all the buddhas are complete. Actually the source or origin of the body, speech, and mind of any sentient being is solely the enlightened body, speech, and mind of all the awakened ones. This unchanging quality is called the vajra body, the unceasing quality the vajra speech, and the unmistakable quality the vajra mind. The indivisible unity of these three is exactly what buddha-nature means.

### **Buddha-nature**

If we don't recognize or acknowledge in our own experience the unchanging quality of this buddha-nature then it is more or less like being entrapped in the physical body of flesh and blood, and our speech being entrapped within the movement of breath to become voice, voice that appears and disappears. Likewise, our consciousness becomes fixated upon the perceiver and perceived, in other words, fixation on duality that arises and ceases from moment to moment. In other words, thoughts that come and go one after the other in an endless stream continued from beginningless time and that just goes on and on. That is how our normal state of mind is. If we don't recognize our own nature in

this very lifetime, we are then incapable of capturing our natural seat of unchanging self-occurring wakefulness. Instead, we chase after one perishable thought after the other so that samsara becomes endless, being overpowered by this involvement in thought day and night, life after life. Unless you become free of conceptual thinking, there is absolutely no way to truly awaken to enlightenment.

### **The Supreme Method**

Great peace is when conceptual thinking subsides or calms down. And there is such a way for that to happen. If when thinking you truly recognize the thoughts' natural phase or state, which is buddha-nature, at that same moment any thought vanishes by itself leaving no trace. That brings an end to samsara. So that is the supreme method. Once you know that one method, is there anything superior that you need to know? And this way is something which is already present and complete within yourself. It is not something that we need to get from someone else, by bribe, or to search for and finally find. That is not necessary at all. Just recognize your own natural state and you have already transcended the six realms of samsara. That way, that method, is what one asks for when asking a master to please give instruction on mind essence. This is the most precious thing, which one doesn't need to search for outside; it is within yourself. This is called the buddha being placed in the palm of your own hand. That is an analogy which means that at that moment, you don't need to seek for the awakened state somewhere else. If you line up all the money and wealth of the whole world in a big heap on one side and on the other side the recognition of buddha-nature, the nature of our own mind, then what is more valuable if you were to choose between the two? Obviously, you should without a doubt choose recognizing mind essence as being much more valuable. This is called the amazing buddha within.

If you have a wish-fulfilling jewel and yet don't use it then endless samsara will still be lying before you. Isn't that more trouble? This is something we really need to think about. This is the real crucial point. If we didn't have this innate buddha-nature, who could actually blame you? This buddha-nature is the identity of the three kayas of all buddhas.

And in closing:

*Although my mind is the Buddha, I failed to acknowledge it.  
Though the essence of thought is dharmakaya, I failed to recognize it.  
Though the innate natural state is uncontrived, I failed to sustain it.  
Though this naturalness is the true state, I failed to trust it.  
So Guru, please look upon me with compassion and grant your blessings  
That I may quickly turn my mind towards the dharma  
And have no obstacles on the path and quickly have diligence to practice.*