

On Being Human

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It is complicated being a human being!

In one way, wonderful! If you have merit, if in many past lifetimes you've practiced, then maybe it can be wonderful. Without that, then maybe you just do things in animal style, and then you make animal karma. Animal karma is the karma of confusion and ignorance. Once you have confusion, then all the poisons are there—desire, aversion, pride, arrogance, everything. If confusion is the karma you make, then that is what you will get. If you have a baby, it will be a confusion baby, too. Whatever you do, it will all be confusion activity. That kind of activity will take you where? That confusion activity will take you into the animal realm, and then into all the six realms of samsara.

That means here! Here, positivity is just like the tip of a single hair, while the three poisons are powerful everywhere, even up into the sky, it looks like. That positivity can do nothing much. Look at animals—they are overwhelmed by their confusion. Look at human beings—they are overwhelmed by their attachment and aversion. You can see these days with your own eyes how everyone is focused on their own poisons, their own attachment, aversion, and ignorance. Then their actions come from that.

What are those attachment actions, aversion actions, and ignorance actions going to create? Only further afflictions and poisons, again and again. What will afflictions and poisons do? They will bring their own results. Even if you are born a human, you will have to experience those attachment, aversion, and confusion results within this realm. Then, acting again from those, you will create the causes for rebirth as an animal, for example. Or maybe worse—maybe you will be born as a hell being or a hungry spirit. In any case, that's it! Your whole thing is ruined.

You guys, you have the best karma. It's amazing what you have—lots of positive things, actually, one way, but most precious is your interest in dharma. We complain lots but actually if we could see, we would say "Wow!" about that—our own quality, our own good fortune. If we could understand the dharma a little bit, then more than when seeing someone rich or handsome, when we saw someone with genuine faith we would think, "That person is really lucky, an amazing way lucky! Nobody has what that funky man or woman has!" People think a million dollars is a big deal. When they see someone who has a million dollars, they think, "That person is so rich, they are so lucky!" Actually more than a hundred million billion is your own human body.

These days it is hard to trust anybody. People are nothing much trustable and lots are not just untrustable but really trying to cheat you, or cheat their own mothers, even. It is hard to trust the lamas, too. You have to check carefully because many are not honest. More than having a

big name, it is important for a lama to be honest, and humble, and compassionate. That way they won't screw up their students or themselves, even if they are not a great scholar or Holiness or anything special. Anyway, these days lots of lamas just waste the dharma and waste themselves.

And if the lamas are acting this way, then of course for ordinary people like you and me, forget it! It is easy for us to do the same. This comes from not being honest. We are not honest, and also we don't value our human life, our human body. We don't really protect and take care of our human body—meaning to use it for virtue and protect it from creating non-virtue. And then also we make such a big deal of our three poisons. We make such a big deal of our desire, for example! We think our desire will make something wonderful.

We think our partner is wonderful. Our desire says those things. Actually, we don't know. We don't even know ourselves, our own karma. Of course we don't know theirs, either! Maybe our partner has very heavy negative karma they will have to undergo. Maybe they are a very unfortunate being and will screw you up, too.

Or we think we must have a baby, that it would be so wonderful. Actually, we don't know. From the moment a baby is conceived, how much difficulty and what obstacles they make for the mother! When it is being born, again how much the mother suffers, and maybe is even killed. Then once it is born, maybe it is blind or sick or has some other problems, or maybe something is mentally wrong. Even if everything is perfect, though, still what the parents have to go through, taking care of it twenty-four hours a day! And then when the child grows up, again you don't know your own baby's karma, either. Could be a good person or bad person or strange one. Maybe it harms its own parents or destroys its family. When we ask, why does my son or daughter have to do such terrible things? Karma. And then that karma goes again and again, getting bigger and bigger. We don't know! If our partner is really wonderful or not, if our children will be wonderful or not—the bottom line, we don't know their karma. Even our own karma we don't really know. Therefore we don't know what one we can really trust. Even we can't trust ourselves—are you going to trust your own desire? Your own aversion? Your own ignorance?

But we do have a human body, we know that. Our human body is our opportunity and we don't need to lose that. That one we can trust. That is like our jewel. It can be! What is a jewel? It is the most precious thing. Why is it precious? Because with it you can get whatever you need. You can benefit yourself and others with that. So you have this jewel of a human body, and now you can pray for yourself and others so you can truly be of benefit. This precious human body isn't just a body. You have a jewel body, jewel speech, and jewel mind. Jewel means wish-fulfilling. Whatever you want, you can get with those. Not your body only, just a chunk of something smelly.

Actually, we are stuck in our body. Being in this body is like being in jail. But one way it looks like this one is a good jail. Stuck in this jail, we can do many things. If we use this body just to increase our five poisons, then it is a real jail, keeping us in the jail of samsara. If you think, "I

am smart! I am pretty! I am the okay one! My daddy is good! My mommy is good! My relatives are good! My partner is good! My children are the best!" then you are not only in jail but you put on your own handcuffs. Your "I am smart" ruins the beginning; your "I am pretty" or "I am handsome" ruins the middle; your "I am rich" ruins the end. That way your whole life is wasted. That's worse than being in jail.

We think our poisons are so important and our precious human jewel body chance is like shit, or just nothing much. Don't be upside down like that. Don't trust your poisons and ignore your human chance. I'm not saying to be proud, either. Don't be proud. But also don't be too low — that means you don't value your chance. Take care of your jewel body, don't just throw it away. It is more than diamonds or money. Don't be naughty. Don't do stupid things that make yourself sick. Don't be crazy and harm yourself. You think you can waste this precious body and it's no big deal? Actually wasting a million dollars would be no big deal; wasting this one would be terrible.

This body is more than a diamond body with a price of a hundred million dollars, so we don't need to waste that. You have this treasure, so don't be stingy. Don't be stingy toward yourself, but use your more-than-diamonds body to benefit yourself. Don't be stingy toward others, but use it to benefit them, too. Recognize your property, what you have. One way your property is like public property, for others! You have a precious body, and not only that, you have interest in the dharma, you can study and practice. So pray for sentient beings! Make useful! More than just making more pride, and jealousy, and hatred, and all the five poisons.

You need to know what kind of container you have and what is inside, too. What kind of container is this human form? And what can it contain? What do you want to fill your container with, precious things or ordinary things or dirty things? You need to think about these things and know yourself. Do you want to fill your container with practice things, with dharma things, piece by piece? Then practice! Nobody is stopping you! When you practice, don't practice a dumb way, rough or uptight, but be open and flexible. Actually, always we need to be like that. Just be smooth and calm—body calm, speech smooth and gentle, mind open and peaceful. You don't need to be wild and screw yourself up, lose your chance. You don't need to buzz up. Just calm down.

You have eight freedoms and ten endowments. You need to know what those are, what this body means. You need to know your good fortune. But just knowing is not enough. You need to value it! Then you won't waste it.

When you see what you have, then you will be more careful with it. If you saw you had a jewel, you would be so careful with it! I am not talking about a jewel, though—I am talking about your buddhanature. This human body is the container for that. Whoa! More than any jewel. A jewel is nothing! Among all the jewels, your buddhanature is the real jewel. You can't lose this jewel, but becoming obscured, then it seems to be lost. This is your jewel but it doesn't belong to you. It is all buddhas' jewel. It is all bodhisattvas' jewel. It is the jewel that benefits all sentient beings. It is the jewel of wisdom mind. It belongs to everybody. If you realize it, then the

container of this human body is containing that—even the funkiest of the funky becoming above the above all!

Anyway, that is just my blah. I wasted my human chance, so don't follow me. Myself, I am not a real human being. Just a human reflection, sort of...and then nothing. And my mouth sometimes is nasty like a demon. Therefore I won't waste more of your time. Your precious time. I won't waste it but more importantly, you don't waste it either, okay? Just try!

Tashi Delek!

-Gyatral