



Words of Advice for the New Year

An Edited Excerpt from Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's Jan. 1 Webcast

For this new year, recognize that human life is very, very precious. And if you look at your own lives, each one is very precious. In the teachings we also say that human life is very precious. Indeed, it's true. Sometimes it feels sad to see how we waste this precious life, this precious gift we have.

One strong way we waste our precious life is through worrying. It does not make any sense to worry as much as we do. Sometimes if you look with a calm mind, a more open, clear mind, you can see that of course there's no reason to worry. Worry is not some true situation that needs to be changed in reality—worry is like an addiction. If it's not topic number one, we will be worrying about topic number two. If one is more conscious about that, then I think we will begin to not waste our lives worrying.

We can also waste our precious lives by getting caught up in conflicts. Of course it's natural for human beings to get into conflicts—between nations, or within the community or in family or other personal relationships. But these conflicts are meant to be resolved quickly, rather than our getting caught up in them and going deep inside them. You can see how much energy you lose, how much energy you make others lose and how much energy we collectively lose together. All of those energies can be used to serve other human beings as well as to enhance your own life. If you're not doing anything in particular, then that time can be used just to be in peace: to feel that beautiful silence that we have access to in every moment, the deep stillness that can nourish us, the warmth we all have in our hearts and between two people. This warmth not only heals your own sickness, your own pain; it can also help heal the collective pain. Even if someone is creating conflict, you can choose not to contribute. With that warmth, you can give some opportunity to overcome that conflict by not participating.

In this new year, just see how you can avoid wasting your time, how you can avoid wasting your energy. Throughout the year, think about this precious life and what you want to do with it, how you want to generate a sense of peace within yourself. Give attention to your health and well-being, to your family and friends, to the world and the community that of you are a part of, to the kind of benefit you can bring in a collective sense. Each one of us is in a position to do

something that no one else can do. There's some specific gift that you have, that you can provide to help others and yourself. Find out what those things are, because there is no one else in the world who is in a position to do that. You are the only one. So be aware, be awake. Take some initiative to do those things for the welfare of yourself and others.

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