

And Happy New Year to you. 2020 had its challenges ,but as I reflect on the difficulties sufferings and tragedies that were concomitant with it, I sense that a lot of growth emerged as a result.

When I started my practice almost 30 years ago, my teacher, Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche, always talked about this Precious Human Birth ,Impermanence and Intention. Being 50 and totally ignorant about the practice , I was overwhelmed but once Rinpoche had me think about those three ideas, I eased into what became my lifestyle.

Rinpoche spoke about the, “ Precious Human Birth,” telling us that becoming a human being was as difficult as a blind turtle rising from the depths of the ocean every 100 years and putting its head through a bobbing yoke at the surface. And then beyond that awesome thought, Rinpoche talked about how Impermanence reigns and how “.... all composite phenomenon are impermanent, like bubbles in water.” Oh dear, another big eye opener that made me aware of not just being lucky to have been born as a human being with faculties but to recognize that nothing lasts forever. Once we embrace Impermanence, we recognize how precious time is and how vital it is to use our body, speech and mind in the most positive and virtuous ways. The “Intention” that Rinpoche always talked about is the altruistic motivation to help others. It is an idea that goes beyond our selfish ways into thinking how we can benefit others. Rinpoche would tell us that we don’t know how we can impact others but simple gestures or words can help people in inexplicable ways.

So, let’s welcome this year and do what we can to help others. Remember, we are lucky to have been born as human beings, but we don’t know when Impermanence will intervene. A great master said, “There is nothing that we experience that we have not done.” So reflect on that on this first day of 2021 and dedicate all your positive actions, thoughts etc. to the welfare of others.
Happy New Year