

LAM RIM SESSION 4 REVIEW

Meeting Summary for Demo Rinpoche - Neverending Lamp of Liberation: A Modern Lam Rim

Apr 29, 2025

Session topics

Under the value of human life
Appreciate its rarity

Summary

In this session, Demo Rinpoche focused on understanding the importance human life and appreciating the present moment, particularly in relation to Dharma.

- Rinpoche covered various aspects of human life, including the concept of leisure, morality, and the rarity of finding the right spiritual path.
- Rinpoche emphasized the significance of self-improvement, personal growth, and effective use of one's time,
- He encouraged us to make the most of our lives and opportunities for spiritual development.

Mindfulness and Dharma Practice

Demo Rinpoche discussed the practice of mindfulness and the importance of being mindful of the present moment.

- He emphasized the significance of understanding one's current life and the opportunities available.
- He also touched upon the practice of Dharma and the importance of doing it before while we still have time instead of postponing it for what we think might be the right time such as retirement.

Understanding Human Life and Seizing Opportunities

Demo discussed understanding the importance of human life and seizing its opportunities.

- He emphasized the concept of leisure, which is the availability of time to practice Dharma and virtuous activities.
- He highlighted the dangers of having a wrong view of Dharma, such as considering it as poison or meaningless mumbo-jumbo, or believing we don't have to practice it.
- He also mentioned the importance of making time to practice Dharma as our tendency is often to make time for other things.

Interpreting Heaven and Practicing Dharma

Rinpoche discussed the concept of heaven and its various interpretations.

- He mentioned that some people view heaven as a place of constant celebration and partying, while others see it as a state of complete peace and quietness.
- He shared a story about a disciple of Shariputra who was so enthusiastic about learning that he would often rush to attend teachings, even if it meant leaving his family behind, but when Shariputra went to teach him in heaven after his death, the student barely had the attention of a little child.
- Demo emphasized that even in heaven, one might not have the time to practice Dharma due to the busy lives of heavenly beings or those who only have awareness at the moments of birth and death.

Finding Time for Dharma Practice

Rinpoche discussed the importance of finding time to practice Dharma, regardless of one's materialistic success or busy life.

- He emphasized that having a life with opportunities to meditate and read spiritual texts is a blessing.
- He also shared a personal anecdote about a friend who struggled to find meaning in his simple job, highlighting the need to find purpose and fulfillment in one's life instead of trying to kill time by scrolling through an iPhone.

Dharma's Importance in Life's Purpose

Rinpoche discussed the importance of Sangha, that supports your Dharma practice to help fill one's life with purpose.

- He emphasized that without such friends, one might not discover Dharma on their own.
- He mentioned that of the three jewels—Buddha, Dharma and Sangha—Dharma is the most important for those of us since the time of Buddha. Sangha is the immediate support which can be either a great practitioner or supportive friends, in helping one practice Dharma.
- Rinpoche acknowledged the value of online Dharma, even though he personally prefers in-person practice.
- He also noted the challenges of accessing Dharma in the past, particularly in certain regions, and how this has changed over time to our advantage.

Value of Life and Dharma Practice

Demo discussed the value of human life.

- He emphasized that the practice of Dharma is still alive

- He highlighted the wealth of leisure and resources that people have in their lives, and the need to understand and utilize these resources effectively.
- Rinpoche quoted from Pabongka Rinpoche's *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*: The existence of Dharma is good. But you should have Dharma in your heart. Then you are rich.
- He concluded by stating that the current moment is the best time to practice and learn, and that it is crucial to understand the value of life.

Human Morality and Virtue Accumulation

Demo Rinpoche discussed the concept of morality and that its practice is limited for lifeforms other than human beings.

- He explained that animals, birds, and fish have limited morality as they are programmed by instinct and lack the ability to make choices.
- In contrast, human beings have the capacity to practice morality, generosity, and patience.
- He emphasized that the human life is precious because it offers the opportunity to accumulate virtue.
- Rinpoche concluded by stating that human beings have the ability to think, understand, and meditate, which allows them to make the right choices and perform right actions.

Self-Improvement and Personal Growth

Rinpoche discussed the importance of self-improvement and personal growth in life.

- He said that humans have the ability to change their mindset and overcome negative feelings through meditation and contemplation.
- He also highlighted the significance of making the most of one's life, as it is one chance to achieve spiritual growth and enlightenment.

Focusing on the Present and Positivity

Rinpoche discussed the importance of focusing on the positive aspects of life.

- He emphasized that one should not dwell on problems but instead move forward.
- If you encounter a problem, solve it. If you can't, move on.
- He also highlighted the importance of self-reflection and the need to be happy with what one has achieved.
- If you think your life is not worthwhile, you are deluded.
- Avoid the "grass is always greener on the other side of the fence" comparisons.
- Think:
 - I am human
 - I have time

- I have resources
- I have the capacity to learn and move forward
- He encouraged us to use our time and resources to practice mindfulness and compassion towards others.

Dharma's Rarity and Personal Growth

Demo Rinpoche discussed the rarity of finding the right path in life, specifically in relation to Dharma.

- He emphasized that only a small percentage of people know about Dharma, and even fewer understand and practice it.
- He also highlighted the challenges of maintaining a connection with Dharma, as many people struggle with meditation and studying.
- He clarified that true experience from meditation is not about dramatic visions or sounds, but rather about personal growth, such as becoming a better person, having a more stable mind with increased generosity and compassion.

Effective Time and Emotion Management

Rinpoche discussed the importance of managing time and emotions effectively.

- He highlighted the dangers of excessive fear and desire, which can lead to a lack of connection with one's true self and a focus on materialistic pursuits that lead to dissatisfaction,
- He encouraged us to appreciate the present moment and make the most of the time we have.
- We are capable of achievement
- Finally, he said don't worry so much.

Next steps

- Meditate daily on the preciousness and rarity of human life.
- Practice mindfulness of our current situation and opportunities.
- Reflect on how to make the best use of our current human life for Dharma practice.
- Cultivate appreciation for the ability to connect with and practice Dharma.