

On Honesty—A Teaching For The New Year

Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche

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Everybody try to be honest. I am not asking you to make some big deal or do some big thing. Just try to be honest. Don't be sweet to people, trying to get something from them. That is poison, like being a poisonous snake. That is to have no compassion, just to have poison for everybody. If you have compassion, you will be honest, not sneaky. Honesty will benefit others, whomever you meet, and it will benefit you, too, both in this life and in the next life. Try, okay?

You don't need to be a great scholar. You don't need to be an accomplished practitioner. You just need to be honest and patient.

Watch yourself carefully. Be like an old lady. An old lady, 90 years old, will be so patient with her grandchildren! If they scratch her or whatever they do, it doesn't bother her. Try to learn that kind of patience. Your "I love you!" which changes after just a few seconds, that isn't patience. Don't have patience like the baby who tries to kick or bite its mother when it's done nursing and its stomach is full. That isn't patience, either. That is our tradition, and enough's enough of that, okay? Try not to bring shame on yourself that way. Try to have real, solid patience, little by little, stage by stage, each day, each second. That is what you need.

You don't need to be a famous scholar or a mahasiddha practitioner. You don't need to fly in the sky or be able to travel under the ocean or under the earth. Just go into your five poisons instead, go and look around at them, see what you really have. Take care of your five poisons—what you need to clean up, clean it up. What you see that is poison, get rid of that. Your poisons are what you don't need. Everyone thinks that the five elements are very important, to have mastery of them and control them. We think that is the most magical, wonderful thing, to be able to fly in the sky or under the water. Bullshit. What we need to master is our own five poisons. What we need to control is our own negativity. That is the real magic. That is really wonderful. Try to do that, okay? Try to focus on what is important, not just on "Wow! I want to fly in the sky!"

Be honest. Don't cheat yourself by trying to make a big deal of yourself. Don't try to cheat the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha by pretending you are important. You think you are smart? I don't think so. No matter how much learning you have had, if you think that it makes you some kind of scholar, or teacher, or something really special, then you are just cheating yourself. Sure, that makes you some kind of teacher—a teacher of what? A teacher of how to make yourself foolish, how to embarrass yourself, how to screw yourself up.

We do that—it's so stupid! We don't even see it. We think we are something wonderful, and all we are doing is screwing ourselves up. All you are doing is chasing an empty, stupid, material name. It's just superficial. Right now you have a precious human body. That is something very meaningful. That can be very powerful, very beneficial. You have the opportunity right now to use that precious human body—that is not superficial! You can develop wisdom, you can have faith in the buddhadharma—you have that precious chance at this moment. You are intelligent, you can see how important these are, both for yourself and to benefit others. But maybe you don't care about that, you just care about your name, your fame, if other people are jealous of you. Or you are jealous of them. You just care about that shadow, that echo. That is really shallow. Please don't go that way. Please practice sincerely, instead. That is my hope for you, that you try sincerely.

And everybody take care of the centers, okay? They are for everybody's benefit and they are everybody's responsibility. They are here so that we can learn and practice the Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana. They are to benefit you and benefit everybody, for many generations. We need to take care of them—they exist through the kindness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who started everything. We don't want to waste his blessing. So many high lamas have come and blessed them by giving teachings and transmissions. We don't want to waste their time and blessing and compassion, either! We need to take care of the centers and treat them carefully, seeing how they are precious, recognizing that we can benefit ourselves and others through them.

So please, try, everybody. We need to have faith and patience, humbly, we need to be honest and have compassion. We need to study and practice, take care of the centers and keep harmony with each other. Try not to cheat yourself. Try not to bring shame on your lineage, your lamas, your dharma. Please be like a real human being, okay? Be honest. Be honest with yourself, most importantly. Everybody try.

Tashi delek!

-Gyatral