

2. Contemplating Their Great Value

We can use this precious human life to attain

- Final goals—liberation and full enlightenment
- Temporary goals—accomplishing generosity, morality, patience, etc. and creating the causes for fortunate rebirths in future lives.

Santideva: “Having found this kind of freedom, if I do not cultivate virtue, then no deception could be greater; nothing could be more confused than that!”

3. Contemplating the Difficulty in Finding Them

- In terms of **causes**—most beings create non-virtue, the cause of lower rebirths. To obtain the freedoms and endowments, we need to create lots of virtue through practicing
 - ⊗ Pure ethics
 - ⊗ Generosity, etc.
 - ⊗ Stainless prayers
- In terms of the **result**—such a rebirth is rare compared with other rebirths.

Analogy in the Balapandita Sutta

"Suppose a man threw into the sea a yoke with one hole in it, and the east wind carried it to the west, and the west wind carried it to the east, and the north wind carried it to the south, and the south wind carried it to the north.

Suppose there were a blind turtle that came up once at the end of each century. What do you think, bhikkhus? Would that blind turtle put his neck into that yoke with one hole in it?" Bhikkhus: "He might, venerable sir, sometime or other at the end of a long period." "Bhikkhus, the blind turtle would take less time to put his neck into that yoke with a single hole in it than a fool, once gone to perdition, would take to regain the human state, I say." (MN 129)



Four Important States of Mind Regarding Dharma.... (p. 64)

...to generate a fully-qualified wish to take the essence of this precious human life:

1. I need to accomplish the Dharma
2. I am able to accomplish the Dharma
3. I need to accomplish the Dharma in this very life
4. I need to accomplish the Dharma right now

The Three Types of Persons

1. Persons of lesser capacity: those concerned about the next life, wishing to be born in higher states.
2. Persons of medium capacity: those who wish to attain liberation from samsara.
3. Persons of great capacity: those who wish to attain omniscience/enlightenment.

N.B. There are two ways to attain omniscience: Paramitayana and Mantrayana (Tantra).

So there's a difference between:

- The path of a person of lesser capacity—for example, refraining from nonvirtue merely to obtain a fortunate rebirth

and

- The stages shared with (or “in common with”) a person of lesser capacity—for example, refraining from nonvirtue to obtain good rebirths in which to continue following the path to enlightenment