

Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche speaking to the LME Workshop Participants

Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche was unable to attend the LME Curriculum Design Workshop but he kept in touch before, during, and after. He sent a recorded message to participants. We uploaded the Video and below is the (slightly edited) transcript. Enjoy!

Influence is very powerful. Influence is what rules us human beings. What we do, what we value, how we think, how we plan, what we aspire to, all has a lot to do with how we have been influenced; in our school, by our family, by our culture, tradition, by our leaders and therefore by our educators. So, education has become a very important infrastructure for influence.

[01:16] Everything - the reason why we value gold or diamonds - is because we have been taught, we have been educated that way. The reason why we don't value fresh water as much as, I don't know, iPhones or cars, is because we have not been educated that fresh water and clean air is so important. We know very well how we have been influenced up to now, and it has kind of worked, so it's served its purpose...kind of. I will not say it has been good 100%, in fact many of our education systems—I'm not only talking about Bhutan but I'm talking generally in the world—may be very short-sighted. And, if we look at it un-biasedly, it is because how we have been educated, what we have been taught to value, that we are destroying the world, we are destroying our human dignity, we are destroying our human values.

[03:11] If we have hopes and aspirations to make our individual lives better, our family, village, nation, the whole world better—and we must, we must think this way because we have no choice—then it is very important that we think a different way when it comes to how we educate our young people.

[04:18] At the moment in Bhutan, big people—like me and the ministers, whoever, big people—we feel embarrassed to walk from our home to our office because we have been influenced to think that driving in your SUV is the trendy thing to do. But it's not good for one's own health, it's not healthy for the nation, for the environment, it's not even economically wise. So, this is just one example. Using this as an example I think it's high time to think radically how we educate our young people. And who else but the teachers? We can wait for a government to endorse an enlightening plan, but we can only hope, we only aspire, then our government implementing, I mean, we still hope, but chances of them implementing right away, like tomorrow, is almost non-existent. So, it is better that we take the matters in our hands, especially the teachers, the influencers. In a strange way, I myself also fall into this category. We have the job to influence people. So, I hope during this gathering all of you will be brave. All of you will be brave in having a bird's eye's view about our future.

[07:11] Be brave in being radical, don't get bogged down by useless habit, especially destructive habits, you know, like only thinking about one's own position, self-interest. If that happens then our children will have not pleasant consequences and we will be responsible for this, partially. OK!