

ON A QUEST TO LEARN:  
A series on the evolving nature of one's learning journey

# THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

*with Venerable Geshe Lhakdor*

18<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Webinar Report



RITINJALI



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## INTRODUCTION

On 18th February 2024, Ritinjali, in association with Pallavan Learning Systems & Centre for Escalation of Peace, organised an insightful conversation between Geshe Lhakdor and the students and educators of Second Chance School and Ritinjali learning centres.

The aspiring learners of Second Chance School and Ritinjali learning centres, spanning diverse backgrounds across India, delved into the profound theme of 'The Purpose of Life'. This interaction aimed to foster a dynamic platform for active participation, encouraging learners to engage meaningfully with Geshe Lhakdor, a renowned Buddhist philosopher as they explored the interplay between knowledge and personal growth, paving the way for wholistic development in their unique life journeys. The event seamlessly blended physical presence at the PLS office with a vibrant online audience.

## ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Venerable Geshe Lhakdor is a distinguished Buddhist scholar who served as the English translator for His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, from 1989-2005. He studied Buddhist philosophy extensively, earning master's degrees from the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics and Delhi University.



Geshe Lhakdor has co-authored several books with the Dalai Lama. He holds honorary professorships at the University of British Columbia and the University of Delhi's Department of Psychology.

As the Director of the [Library of Tibetan Works and Archives](#), Geshe Lhakdor facilitates the Science for Monks programme and shares his scholarly expertise. He also directs the Central Archive of His Holiness, serves on the Advisory Board of the Institute of Tibetan Classics, and is Chairman of the Education Commission of the Central Tibetan Administration.



## WEBINAR SESSION

### Overview

Various topics were touched upon in the discussion, including education, love, support, coping with adverse circumstances, improving the current education system, navigating work life, self-reliance, relationships, healthy living, concepts of success and happiness, societal change, addressing discrimination, global struggles, and the impact of pollution on the planet.



### The Importance of Happiness and Resilience

Geshe Lhakdor began by encouraging the students from Ritinjali's Second Chance school and learning centres to ask him questions and engage in an interaction. He emphasised the importance of happiness and resilience, suggesting that challenges in life should be faced with optimism. He also stressed the importance of focus and understanding, suggesting that seeking help is acceptable when something isn't understood.

### Philosophical Discussion on the Importance of Life

Various topics were discussed in the discussion, including education, love, support, and the importance of coping with adverse circumstances. Philosophical topics were touched upon, such as the meaning of life, fear of death and what happens after it, and the importance of facing challenges.

### Improving the Education System: Challenges and Opportunities

The need for improvement in the current education system was a focal point of the discussion. Students expressed their concerns about the rigidity of the system and the difficulties in bringing about change. Geshe, in response, emphasised the importance of getting the best out of the current system, seeing it not just as a recruitment process.



### Balanced Mindset and Self-Reliance

Further discussions were diverse, encompassing topics such as self-reliance, education, relationships, and healthy living. The importance of maintaining a balanced mindset was emphasised, not solely relying on external factors. Participants were encouraged to be content with what they have and to maintain a compatible perspective in their thoughts and actions. The discussion also touched upon the role of religion and the importance of a good work-life balance.

### Success, Happiness, and Societal Challenges

Other concepts of success and happiness, the role of friends, and the importance of asking questions were discussed. Participants addressed the need to change society and address discrimination, cope with life's challenges, and value diverse thinking. An overarching theme was the need to avoid recurring issues and confront difficulties. The discussion ended with a question about what would emerge from their current situation.

### Balance, Greed, Pollution, Struggle, Internal Change, Responsibility

Geshe discussed the importance of balance in life, the dangers of greed, and various topics, such as the impact of pollution on the planet. Students also talked about global struggles. The discussion emphasised the need for internal change and personal development. Participants were tasked with thinking about and acting on issues that influence their society and the world.

### Conclusion:

The discussions covered a wide array of topics, ranging from personal resilience to societal challenges and global concerns. The students actively engaged in philosophical and practical dialogues, emphasising the importance of maintaining a balanced mindset, seeking happiness, and addressing pressing issues like



discrimination and pollution. The discussions served as a platform for reflection and dialogue, highlighting the need for continuous self-improvement and collective action towards a better future. Moving forward, students were encouraged to apply the insights gained from the discussion to effect positive change in their lives and communities, fostering a more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable society.



## SUMMARY

On February 18th, 2024, Pallavan Learning Systems hosted its 14th webinar, centred around the theme of 'The Purpose of Life' in association with Ritinjali and Centre for Escalation of Peace. The webinar unfolded as a captivating exchange between Geshe Lhakdor and the vibrant community of students and educators from Second Chance School and Ritinjali learning centres. The event seamlessly blended physical presence at Ritinjali's Second Chance School with a vibrant online audience, featuring Geshe Lhakdor, a renowned Buddhist philosopher, as the focal point of a spirited dialogue.

The webinar led by Geshe Lhakdor was an interactive session where students engaged in thoughtful dialogue, seeking guidance on leading happy and harmonious lives. Encouraging active participation, Geshe emphasised the importance of gratitude for life's opportunities and the significance of happiness in all endeavours, urging students to approach tasks with understanding and enthusiasm.

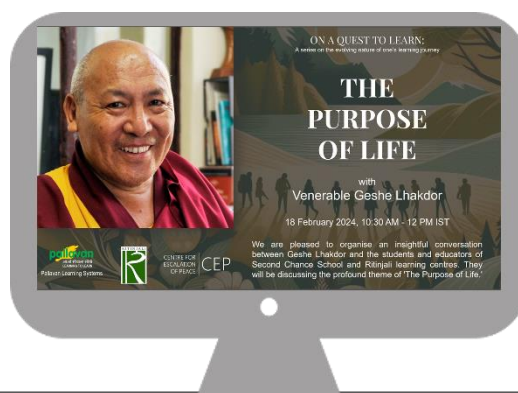
He highlighted the value of practical skills and the satisfaction they bring, stressing the importance of conscientious effort over a scattered focus. Education, he explained, should encompass not just academic learning but also the development of the head, heart, and hands, ultimately leading to fulfilment and happiness.

Geshe addressed the complexities of desire, advocating for realistic and achievable goals while cautioning against excessive attachment. He emphasised the need for societal change, stressing on equality and the responsible use of resources.

Throughout the session, he emphasised the futility of anger and the importance of maintaining positive energy, while also advising against excessive concern for others'

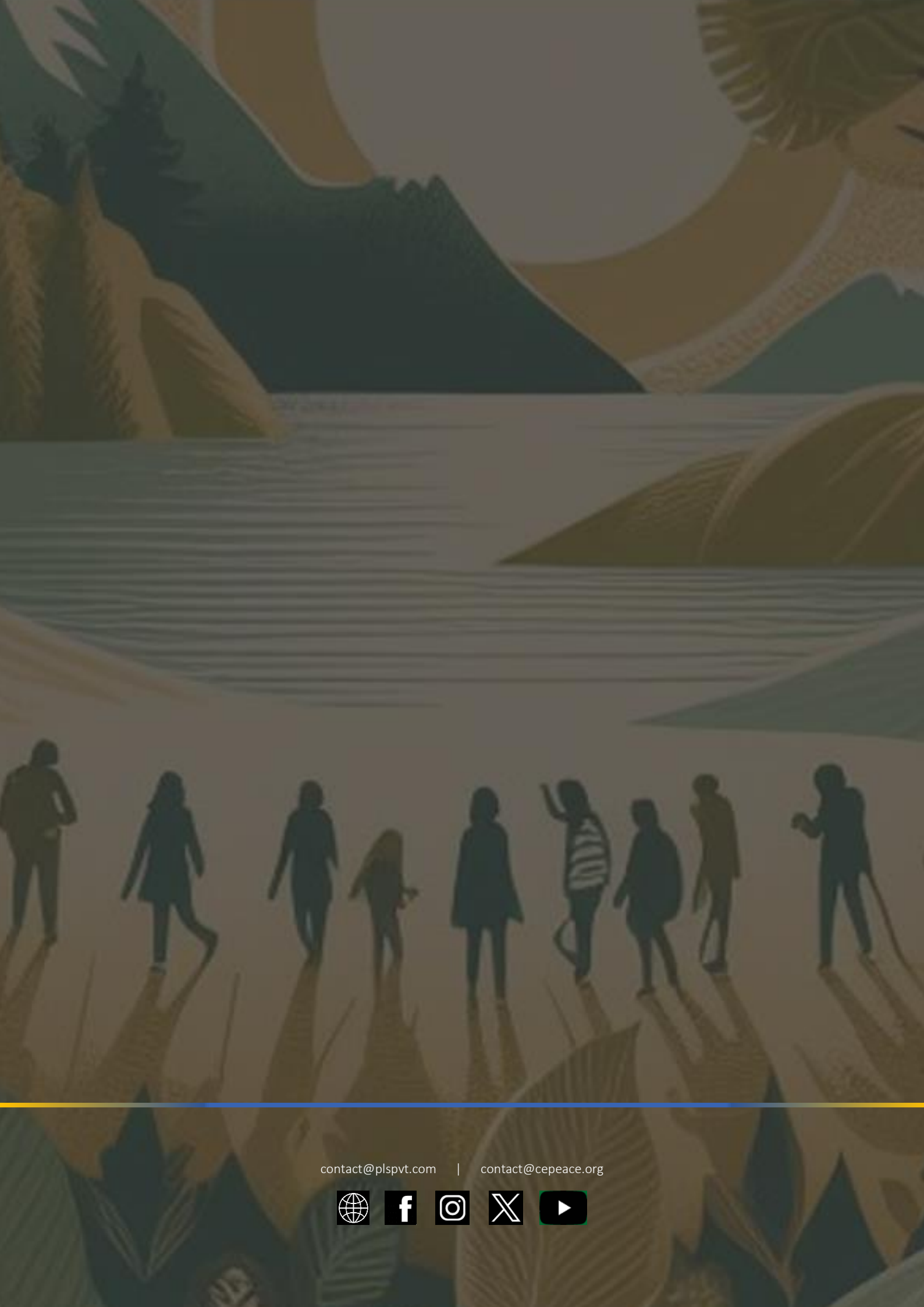
opinions. Geshe urged participants to prioritise meaningful contributions to humanity over futile busyness and endless greed.

Geshe stressed the importance of putting wisdom into practice and cultivating awareness in all aspects of life. The session provided valuable insights into living a fulfilling and purposeful existence, highlighting the importance of mindfulness, gratitude, and compassion.



To watch the Webinar Video [click here](#)

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