

## **Amitayus Long-life Practice Lama Caroline**

*This text is a lightly edited transcription of a teaching given by Lama Caroline at Albagnano Healing Meditation Centre, Italy on April 4, 2020.*

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namo gurubhye  
namo buddhaya  
namo dharmaya  
namo sanghaya (x3)  
namo tri ratnaya

lo chog zangpö päl gyur trashipa  
thub chen tänpe trinle yar ngö da  
phäl je dro lor tsampe dze pa chän  
päldän lame shab la sölwa deb

om ah guru vajradhara sumati muni shasane karma uhta vardanaye shri  
badhra var samaniya sarwa siddhi hung hung (x3)

pha khyö kyi ku dang dag gi lü  
pha khyö kyi sung dang dag gi ngag  
pha khyö kyi thug dang dag gi yi  
dön yerme chig tu jingyi lob

ma khyö kyi ku dang dag gi lü  
ma khyö kyi sung dang dag gi ngag  
ma khyö kyi thug dang dag gi yi  
dön yerme chig tu jin gyi lob

om muni muni maha muni shakjamuniye soha (x3)

om maitreya maitreya maha maitreya arya maitreya soha (x3)  
om ah hum karuna karuna maha karuna arya karunaye soha (x3)

Hello everybody. Welcome to the Albagnano 2020 Easter course. Every year here in Albagnano we've had an Easter course – usually with many friends coming from all over the world, but this time we're meeting together virtually. To the best of our ability we are trying to continue with our normal programme as much as we can. Because that's the best thing to do. I'm sat here in my office and Carmen, who's doing the streaming, is in the gompa because we're also doing the mantra marathon of long-life mantras. We're trying our best to follow the advice of the Italian government of social distancing. That's why we're doing like this. So thank you all for tuning into NgalSo free TV.

Today we're going to talk about the third long-life practice that Lama Gangchen suggests that we do – Guru Buddha Amitayus. Today I'd like to explain to you how to do this practice for those of you who would like to join in the enlightenment marathon – which I hope you will - then you can do it in the best way, get the most benefit for yourself and for others. That's why we're explaining the practices these days. Before I start: these days, I explained the Parnashawari practice and now I'm explaining the 3 long-life buddhas: Ushnishavijaya, White Tara, and Amitayus.

Tomorrow on Easter Sunday, I will talk a little bit about karma and astrology and I'd like to do a guided meditation on the five different principal meditations of Parnashawari so that we can dedicate, collectively, our energy to all those who are sick, who are suffering because of the pandemic that we're all experiencing now. So tomorrow we'll do like that. Then in two days time, on Tuesday, we're going to do the explanation of Black Manjushri – how to recite the mantras and how to the visualisations. These are all the core essential practices that Lama Gangchen recommended we do during this time during the pandemic. After this, I will have explained a lot of practices, a lot of different things, so I was thinking: honestly, it's better we all settle down and try and practice. Not just all the time receive more and more instructions and not use them. So from next week onwards, what I'd like to do is: every few days to continue to meet with you all, whoever wants to, on live-stream. I will start to read some of Lama Gangchen's books; for example, we could start with *Peace Words*, words of peace. Because I think it's very nice, it's Rinpoche's actual ideas about peace. You can download *Peace Words* from the ngalso.org site, in the transcript section. It's freely available if you want it. I'll start to read it like an audiobook. Recently, I've been listening to a lot of audiobooks during this lockdown. It would be very nice to do some audiobook reading of Lama Gangchen's books. I'll read some of Lama Gangchen's books and then maybe give some of my own thoughts and opinions about what I have heard on the subject. We can do these kind of things. Who knows how long we've got? Nobody knows, so we'll see how long we go on for. Then I might start to read Lama Gangchen's medicine book *A Rainbow of Healing Nectars*. I'm just telling you my thoughts about what we could do in the week(s) ahead: mainly to practice together and then every afternoon, I will read you some Dharma teachings, some of Rinpoche's teachings and give some short explanations and thoughts. And we will continue like that.

Regarding the lockdown, I think honestly it's best we just stop worrying about when it will finish because this is causing anxiety, it's causing stress. Maybe we'll just try, like they say

in Buddhism to *be here now* and settle into this experience, try to make the best of it, spend this time like a retreat, spend our time doing dharma practice, meditating, sending positive energy to others who are in need. This is the best thing to do at the moment. So thank you – that was just my thoughts on what I'd like to share with you.

So, Guru Buddha Amitayus. In Indo-Tibetan Buddhism we have a trinity of long-life buddhas, who are Ushnishavijaya, White Tara and Guru Buddha Amitayus. Again, most of you have received the initiation many times, but in case there's anybody who has not, I will give an emergency transmission of the mantras so that at least you can recite the mantra and participate in the enlightenment marathon – the marathon of doing long-life mantras for the benefit of our mother, our father, our Guru, our family, our friends, our sangha, our town, our country, the world; for the elements, for the environment, for all those who are sick and suffering, so many different ways in this moment. So we'll do like this.

I'm going to read you a little bit of the Amitayus sadhana that's available from Lama Gangchen Peace Publications. If you want a copy, please contact the virtual shop of Peace Publications and maybe they can send you one electronically. We have a PayPal system I think.

*NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing Practice of Buddha Amitayus – Method to increase lifespan wisdom and method, by Lama Gangchen Rinpoche, edited by Lama Caroline. First edition, September 2015.*

*The healing techniques used in this practice are not intended to replace treatment from a qualified medical practitioner. They can however be used to aid both physical and mental healing.*

### **Dedication by Lama Gangchen Rinpoche:**

*May the lifespan, wisdom and merit of anybody who completes the mantra recitation and practice of Guru Buddha Amitabha increase. May tasting the nectar of long life heal all the causes of samsaric body, speech and mind. May Buddha Amitayus, the coral-red deity of long life help us to overcome the suffering and fear of ordinary life and the fear of death and to achieve the siddhi the realisation, of immortality. May all living beings enjoy inner and world peace now and forever, by the attention of all human beings and by the blessing of all the holy beings.*

So that's the dedication by Lama Gangchen Rinpoche.

### **Introduction**

Amitayus is a Sanskrit name. *Ayus* means life in Sanskrit and *amrita* means deathless, immortal, so Amitayus literally means immortal life.

*Amitayus is a long life emanation of Supreme Healer Amitabha.*



As you all know, in our NgalSo Buddhism, we have a very big interest in the Five Supreme Healer Buddhas: Vairochana, Amitabha, Akshobya, Ratnasambhava and Amoghasiddhi. Amitabha is the Buddha who is particularly related to the throat chakra and who is about transforming our emotions and our unlimited desire. This transformation is into what we call *discriminating wisdom*. It's personified by the red Buddha, Supreme Healer Amitabha, Limitless Light. Amitayus is considered an emanation, a manifestation of Supreme Healer Amitabha. In tantric Buddhism we have "families of buddhas". We have hundreds of different meditation practices but they are grouped into these five families, so they have a predominant energy. So all the buddhas of the Amitabha family – for example, Chenrezig and Amitayus have a similar kind of vibration actually: of love, empathy and compassion, one special vibration.

Back to the introduction:

*The particular qualities of Amitayus are to heal the outer and inner obstacles to our long life, such as: physical sickness, exhaustion and disease, as well as our fears, our anger, our desire, our ignorance and self-destructiveness. These negative emotions are the main cause for us to be locked within the cycle of birth and death, which we call in Buddhism, samsara.*

Samsara means again and again the same thing. We're very repetitive, very habitual and generally not in a good way.

*By eliminating these causes through the practice and the blessings of Guru Buddha Amitayus, we can achieve first health and wellbeing and as a result we have more time to do positive things. And finally we can achieve the siddhi of immortality.*

In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, and also in the Indo-Tibetan medical tradition and in Ayurveda, we say one of the fruits of medicine is the realisation of long-life. Why should we want a long life? Obviously, we want a long life so that we can do positive things. In the Buddhist tradition we want a long-life because we need a lot of time in order to grow, to evolve. We have this special opportunity; we've met special conditions for evolution, for spiritual practice. So we'd like to continue with those as as long as possible.

Regardless of the fact that we Buddhists believe in reincarnation, we still want this present life, this present special condition we have, in which we've met with the complete teachings of the Buddha, where we've met special high lamas and gurus; we have so many good conditions to practise NgalSo and we'd like this to continue for as long as possible. Therefore, we would like good health and long-life. And of course, as Lama Gangchen says in many of his books, whatever we want to do in life – whether we want to be a Buddha, whether we want to be a millionaire, whether we just want to have a happy life – we need good health don't we? We need good health and strong elements. So these kind of things we can recover and increase through the practice of Guru Buddha Amitayus.

*As a fully enlightened Buddha Amitabha also grants us wisdom, compassion, generosity and all the qualities of a bodhisattva.*

A bodhisattva is somebody who's on the path to awakening, somebody who's evolving.

*This practice was transmitted to Tibet by the female Mahasiddha, Drupe Gyälmo, the Queen of Realisations. She gave this precious teaching to Jetsun Milarepa, who was a*

*very famous Tibetan yogi, and then it was passed to Rechungpa and through the lineage of Tibetan masters and founder of our Gelugpa tradition, Lama Tsongkhapa, in the 14th century. He included it in the collection of very important meditations that should be done by Gelugpa practitioners.*

Next section: *The benefits of the practice of Amitayus according to the Amitayus Sutra.*

There are actually many Amitayus sutras of this practice. Generally speaking, Amitabha has always been very popular in Buddhism – there are many Mahayana sutras related to Amitabha and also to Amitayus. Why? Because life is a fundamental concern of everybody – everybody would like to have as long a life as possible, a healthy a life as possible. None of us know how long we've got, but however long our life will be, we want it to have as much quality as possible. So let me read you the benefits of the practice of Amitayus according to the Amitabha Sutra:

*People these days have short lives, living only 100 years, and untimely death often befalls us.*

Actually around here, in Albagnano, in Verbania, we have some of the longest living people in the world. There was one lady in Intra, she passed away last year, and I think she was 116 years old and at the time she was the oldest person in the world. But generally in the Ayurveda they say that one hundred years should be the natural lifespan; but in the past, people had the potential to live longer.

*However those who write out or repeat the text called the “Treasury of the virtues and excellence of the Tathagata Aparamitaya”, or have it written out or just hear the name or, who having obtained a copy of the book keep it in their house and venerate it with flowers, incense, perfume and garlands will be able to live up to 100 years.*

Also these days you can hear it on YouTube, there are many ways you can hear it on the internet. So not only should we keep these instructions but also we should strongly put them into practice.

*Living beings who hear and remember the 108 syllables of the dharani of this Tathagata, the arhat, the fully awakened Buddha of Unlimited Life and Wisdom, the Excellent Shining King, will also lengthen their lifetime. At the time of death they will be reborn in Sukhaviti, the Pure Land of Bliss, the Buddha realm of the Tathagata Aparamita; and they will have endless life dwelling in the world called Immeasurable Accumulation of Virtue. At the time of death 99 kotis [– that's a billion billion –] of Buddhas will appear to them and a thousand Buddhas will stretch out their hands to them. They will wander from Buddhaland to Buddhaland and they will not experience doubt, ignorance or ambiguous speech. They will be well received, venerated, being greeted and venerated by all the Tathagatas in all the Buddhlands of the ten directions. They will never be born in hell; they will never be born as an animal or in the world of Yama. They will not be caused death or injury by the god of death – Mara, or by those gods belonging to the clan of death, by the yakshas, the rakshasas at any inauspicious moment. The four great kings will protect, defend, guard and follow them. Even animals, birds and ghosts, when they come to this place where Amitayus is practised, it is entirely inevitable that they shall be awakened to the unexcelled enlightenment.*

*Those who do the Amitayus practice will become completely free of the five actions of immediate retribution. They will never again suffer oppression or, if they are women [or men as well] – they will never experience sexual violence from men they will never again live in poverty. Wherever they are born, in each birth they will remember all their previous births. They will be able to differentiate and establish as many as 84,000 Dharma teachings. They will realise the six perfections and progress on the Bodhisattva path. Although it may be possible to measure the extent of the merits of giving one of the seven precious substances each to the Tathagatas – Vishpashin, Shikin, Vishvabu, Krakuchanda, Kanakamuni, Kashyapa and Sakyasimba – or the merit of giving precious substances equal in extent to the King of Mountains, Mount Meru, and although it may be possible to count each and every drop of water that fills the great oceans, it is not possible to measure the merits of the Aparamita Sutra, the practice of Guru Buddha Amitayus.*

So this is an extract from the Amitayus Sutra. There are several of them. I will upload them on our site. If you'd like to download and read them all in depth, they are very interesting and inspiring, these ancient Mahayana sutras that talk about the practice of Guru Buddha Amitayus.

Lama Gangchen asked me to explain these practices in a short way, in a condensed way, because now he'd like us to do the mantras. So I won't explain to you all the different stages of the practice. Actually, there are many different ways to practice Amitayus. There are many beautiful meditations to practice Amitayus long-life Buddha. There's a lower tantra way and there's a highest-yoga tantra way with many powerful and beautiful completion stage meditations. But because we're doing the long life marathon I'll explain to you one or two long life meditations that everybody can do. Personally, I've received this initiation several times from many high lamas; I'm very lucky. I've also done this retreat two times so far. I'll probably end up doing it again but I've done it two times in my life so I know a little bit about this practice. I also helped to prepare this sadhana with Rinpoche some years ago.

When we do long-life practices, we're trying to recover our life energy. And there are different ways we can lose our life energy. I've been talking about this over the last couple of days, the last couple of sessions. I've been saying that when we are born we have a certain amount of life energy that comes with us from our former life (if you believe in such things). We have a certain large number of breaths. And when we have breathed all these breaths, our life is finished and we will die; that's the general idea. But actually the life energy, which is in our heart chakra in what's called the indestructible drop, can be recharged. That's what most people don't know. You can extend your life energy. You can become younger, healthier. This is true – I have actually seen people this has happened to. It's really possible to become younger, more healthy, to recover from sickness by doing these practices.

There are three different ways we can exhaust our life energy. Firstly, they say in the explanations of the long-life practices that we can exhaust one's life naturally just because we are born, then from moment to moment we're ageing, our life is gradually going away every day as we breathe in and breathe out. That's why they say we shouldn't get too excited: if we start breathing very strongly and start panting our life energy is used up

more quickly. So keep calm and carry on! as they say in Britain. Breathe slower and you will live longer. Many of the ideas of *pranayama* are based on this idea that we can extend our breath, our breathing, be calm and live longer. So if we're excitable and stressed and very anxious and nervous, our life, our energy is going away more quickly. So the first reason is the natural exhaustion of one's life. The second is we can exhaust our life energy due to our actions. And the third way we can exhaust our life energy is by running out of positive energy. So the three basic ideas are: First, we naturally exhaust our life energy by it running out, because it's used up. Second, we can do some positive actions to change our karma. Third, we can accumulate *punya* - merit - to accumulate more positive energy.

In the Tibetan Buddhist texts they explain that if one's life is exhausted –through old age or something, then this can be cured by what's called *tsedrub*, by long-life rituals. I've actually seen happen. For example, with one of Rinpoche's sponsors Tsetan-la in Katmandu, his mother Ama Drolkar-la was apparently supposed to die at a certain age, I'm not quite sure why. But Rinpoche did these prolonging life rituals for her and now she is around 90 years old, having lived many more years than was predicted. Every two years Rinpoche would repeat this ritual and she really is still alive and well. I've seen that actually several times, this is really possible.

If one's karma is exhausted, the Tibetan Buddhist texts explain what is called a *ransom ritual*, where we can exchange the person's life for something else – like paying a ransom. If somebody is kidnapped or held hostage we can pay a ransom, in this case with a ritual and get back the person's life energy. We have these kinds of rituals.

If one's *punya*, one's positive energy or merit is exhausted, we can increase our *punya* by giving offerings. We have many ways to accumulate merit. These are important things to know. I'm telling you these things now because we're spending a few days talking about long-life practices.

If somebody becomes sick, for example, then it's recommended that the person makes a donation to charitable causes, for example, for trees, orphans, religious organisations... to give to charity, OK? There are many people who are in need of help, so you should do something for others. One way is you could give some material gift. Another way is to save the life of others. You might think: *Oh I'm not a fireman or a doctor– how am I going to save the life of others?* One thing we can do, for example, is to eat a more plant-based diet; that's helpful if you wish to increase your life energy. Let's say I have one family member who is not feeling well and I would like them to have more life energy; so for this reason I reduce my consumption of meat for a while, maybe I only eat meat and fish once a week. Then we're dedicating the energy of saving those animals' lives. In Asia they have this idea of saving animals' lives by buying them, like lobsters or birds from the live animals market and releasing them. That's OK if you can take care of them and ensure that they will have a better life afterwards. Here in Albagnano we used to have *Tsering* the long-life cow. Once, one of our Sangha members offered a cow to Rinpoche for his birthday. We thought: *Oh! OK, but now we have to look after it.* So they offered the cow but then kindly also offered to take care of it themselves because it was a little difficult for us to take care of it in the centre. So that's one possibility. In Asia they do a lot of this releasing animals. But if you buy fish or lobsters or something, you can't just put them in the sea or in water unless they will be in better conditions otherwise you might be harming

them. This is one of the reasons why Buddhist centres have vegetarian menus. We're not saying we're all vegetarian but as a rule of our centres we try to do this to accumulate merit for the centre. So that's one idea.

In the long-life text it explains that we can shorten our life by fighting. It says: *broken vows, distracted mind, quarrel and panic, emotional disturbance, being incited to fierce anger, breaking one's vow of body, speech and mind, dwelling in evil places. These are when life decays.*

There are many ways that we can shorten our life energy. This is a traditional text but, for example, we can also reduce our life energy by not keeping our promises. This is obviously in the Buddhist context, but even in the normal context Lama Gangchen often says that these days nobody trusts anybody, we don't have faith anymore in anything, even ourselves. So at least we need to have faith in ourselves, to be able to trust ourselves. That means, for example, that when we make a commitment to do something, make a promise to do something, we should do it. If not, we become very weak-minded. For example, every New Year we say things like: *I promise this year I will give up smoking, I will give up drinking, I will go to the gym, I will go on a diet.* Then probably by the third week of January we have completely forgotten about it. So then what happens? Actually, we feel deeply that we can't believe even in ourselves. Whatever we commit to do, somehow we should feel that at least I can trust myself and I will do it. So we have this emotional strength and confidence. That's one very important thing. Another thing is distraction. We can lose a lot of energy life energy by being distracted; one of the faults of the modern time is total distraction. Maybe we need a digital detox. That would help to have a less distracted mind.

I was saying the other day that fighting and anger is a very big way to destroy our life energy. I gave the example that if I get angry, personally I feel it here in my heart; I get very very tired. This is because our life energy is concentrated in the chest and the heart chakra, so one very good reason for not fighting (if we can't think of any other reason) is that this is too expensive because this will make me tired, this will make me weak and sick. So this is a very good reason to say 'Yes' to our partners and dear ones. Now we're locked up up with our friends, our family. It's a very important moment to say, 'Yes'. This is our new mantra! Maybe normally we would fight, we would have a big discussion but really, now it's not worth it because there's nowhere else to go. As much as possible we need to reduce quarrelling and be quiet and peaceful and positive. It says also that panic is a big way to reduce life energy. Rinpoche suggests that we have a peaceful and positive mind. *Don't panic, don't be afraid...* that's why I keep on saying this these days. In the media there are all kinds of negative information. If you read that you just become tired, depressed, anxious, you can't sleep. Instead, it would be better to try not to panic, not to be fearful, to try to increase our inner peace, to try and put our mind into a positive place.

So here's a long text on the subject. I will not read it all to you – no need. I'm just telling you some information on the subject of long-life, seeing as we're thinking about these things these days. So how are we going to do the practice of Amitayus? In our long-life marathon, we're just repeating two mantras.



The long mantra of Amitayus is:

om namo bhagawate aparimita ayur jñana sumbini tsita tejo rajaya tathagataya / arhate samyak sambuddhaya / tayatha / om punye punye maha punye aparimita punye aparimita ayur punye jñana sambha ropachite / om sarwa samskara parishudha dharmate gagana samugate / sobhawa bishuddhe maha naya pariware svaha /

This is what we call a *dharani*, a long mantra recitation. If any of you have not received the initiation but would like to receive it, because you would like to recite the mantra, then let's say - in an emergency way - I'll repeat it three times; you repeat it after me and in this way you can enter our 'choose life' mantra recitation marathon. Then when it's possible, later, we don't know when, please go to a Dharma centre – either ours or another one – and receive the full initiation from a qualified lama, not just one mantra like this today. But for now, just one mantra transmission is OK. Maybe first you repeat after me those who would like to be able to recite this long mantra. We're going to repeat it three times together and then you will have the permission to recite this mantra as much as you like. So please, if you would like, repeat after me:

om namo bhagawate aparimita ayur jñana sumbini tsita tejo rajaya tathagataya / arhate samyak sambuddhaya / tayatha / om punye punye maha punye aparimita punye aparimita ayur punye jñana sambha ropachite / om sarwa samskara parishudha dharmate gagana samugate / sobhawa bishuddhe maha naya pariware svaha / x3

Now you have the permission to recite the long mantra of Amitayus. Now, please whoever likes, repeat the short mantra after me to have permission to recite the short mantra:

om amarani jivanteye svaha x3

In this way you have the permission to recite this mantra, in an emergency way. Later on, we will do in a more complete way.

This Amitayus practice is a highest yoga Tantra practice, so it's not enough just to recite the mantra but for now it's better than nothing. Why we do all these rituals in the traditional way of initiation - taking refuge, bodhisattva and tantric vows and all of this - is because there is deep meaning behind it. It's important that, when we can, we follow the correct way of practising. For now we do what's possible. So now we can all recite the mantras together. That's the most important thing.

Let me explain to you what these mantras mean. The long mantra, which we just repeated, the *dharani*, is:

om namo bhagawate aparimita ayur jñana sumbini tsita tejo rajaya tathagataya / arhate samyak sambuddhaya / tayatha / om punye punye maha punye aparimita punye aparimita ayur punye jñana sambha ropachite / om sarwa samskara parishudha dharmate gagana samugate / sobhawa bishuddhe maha naya pariware svaha /

What were actually saying is:

*om Homage to the Transcendent Fully Endowed Destroyer; Boundless Life, Transcendent Wisdom, Totally Certain, King of Light, Gone to Suchness, Arhat, Perfectly Enlightened Buddha. Thus it is said. om Fortune, Fortune, Great Fortune, Boundless Fortune, Boundless Fortune, Transcendent Wisdom, om Increase of Collection, Compositional factors, Thoroughly Pure. Completely Pure, Surrounded by great leaders. So be it.*

This is what we're saying in Sanskrit when we repeat the *dharani*. It has a very beautiful meaning. When we say **bhagavan** or **chomden**, it means “The One who has Overcome”, who has destroyed their own inner delusions like pride, anger and jealousy. So this is a title of the Buddha, of an awakened person. **Arhat** means somebody who has reached inner peace. Whatever happens, whether they've won the lottery or they get sick ... their mind is stable, their mind is peaceful; they never lose their inner peace. So we have all these titles of the Buddha. Also one of the names of Amitayus is ‘King of Light’. And he's Totally Certain – that's what we need: we need total certainty because now our mind is shaking. *Gone to Suchness* means he understands the nature of reality. Suchness means, It's like that. It's like Eureka! It's understanding the nature of reality. **Arhat**, Perfectly Enlightened Buddha. Then it says **om punye punye maha punye**. Here it's translated as **om Fortune, Fortune, Great Fortune, Boundless Fortune, Boundless Fortune. So punya** in Sanskrit means fortune, merit, positive energy. This is what we need to develop. When we have positive energy, when we have merit we accumulate *punya*. We accumulate this positive energy by doing selfless but positive things. Selflessly, without thinking of any reward for ourselves; for example, like helping an old lady across the road, getting someone's shopping or doing something for somebody else without thinking: *what do I get in return?* If we act like this we accumulate *punya*. In our present situation we have many ways we can accumulate *punya*. Just think, how can we take care of others? At the very least, we can say mantras. If not, there are many initiatives we can do to practically help others, so please find something and do something because, emotionally, you'll feel so much better. If you have no other way to take care of others, then at least you can do the amitayus practice. *Fortune, Fortune, Great Fortune, Boundless Fortune, Boundless Fortune, Transcendent Wisdom*. Transcendent wisdom is a *paramita*, one of the Six Perfections. When we do these long-life practices of White Tara, Ushnishavijaya and Amitayus we develop long-life energy, *punya* (merit) but also wisdom. These long-life practices have very special qualities. It's not like simply eating some kind of superfood or something; there are many more benefits to doing long-life practices. Then it says: *Increase the Collection of all Compositional factors, Thoroughly Pure*. Compositional factors mean your personality. It means your personality becomes completely pure. *Reality is space arisen from the nature, Completely Pure*. It means that everything arises from peace space, from emptiness; everything is completely pure by nature. This is like a sentence that is compressed, without the grammar. Because Sanskrit grammar is complicated, when Buddhism came from India to Tibet they made it short, light – without all the grammatical particles. Then it says: *Surrounded by great leaders*. Also we will become a great leader, a great leader of men, of women. **Svaha**. *So be it*. So that's what we're saying. This is the meaning of the *dharani*.

I have been sent a question

### **What does it mean to have the siddhi of immortality?**

Siddhi means attainment. In ancient times there were many Buddhists and Taoist masters – and also people in the Bible – that lived an extremely long time. So, for example, in the Christian Bible and in the Torah, the Jewish religious texts, they have Methuselah (I think he's called) who lived over six hundred years. Also Noah lived for hundreds of years. And not just in the Bible or in the Torah: it's the same story in Hinduism and in Buddhism, Nagarjuna lived over 600 years. So apparently, in ancient times there were people – like saints and meditators and yogis and arhats and Taoist masters – who had the potential for a very long-life. It is said that, even nowadays, even in these degenerate times, there are still a few of these people around, although not so many these days. Mostly, they're living in retreat, in secluded high mountains. Lama Gangchen told me that in Swayambhunath in Katmandu, there's one immortal who lives there. Rinpoche said if you go very early in the morning you can see him around. I always thought maybe it was the young guy who lights the candles – because if you're immortal, you would look very young, I guess. But I was always too lazy myself to get up at the right time to go and see. So that was just my theory – that maybe it's the young one that lights the candles. Anyway, in ancient times in all traditions they were immortal people or, let's say, very long-lived people. Nowadays, it's a little difficult to be an immortal but at least we can have a long life, have full power, full energy. Also some meditators, yogis – can die and be reborn with clear consciousness. This is a kind of immortality isn't it? Your body wears out but your subtle mind doesn't wear out. Then you can continue your dedication to help others from life to life. We can say that so many of the great incarnate lamas are immortal in this sense, not just in the sense of their present physical body lasting a long time. There are many ways to understand immortality.

In our case, immortality would be living to be one hundred years old. That would be great, if possible. But at least, for whatever time we have left, we don't want to be completely tired or sick. You can have a long life, but if you're very tired, very weak, then it's not so useful. None of us know how much time in life we have left. So let's try and have full energy, full life and so on. In the Buddhist tantra we do have many practices to increase and regenerate our inner vitality. Of which NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing is one, by the way, which is our main practice in our NgalSo tradition. If you don't live to be 1000... never mind! At least we can do our best; at least you can recover and have a longer and healthier life, a more vital life. That's what we want. That's our siddhi of immortality.

Let me continue with the short mantra of Amitayus in the sadhana:

om amarani zewanteye svaha [lineage pronunciation]

That's on our paper for the mantra marathon, isn't it? *A* means no; *mara* means death, so it means no death, no obstacle, no interference. *Zewanteye* is the Tibetan way of pronouncing *jīvantaye*. *Jiva* means life in Sanskrit. So it means *om, deathless life, may life be increased, svaha*. Something like this. It's written om amarani jīvantiye svāhā in Sanskrit but in our oral tradition we pronounce it *om amarani zewanteye soha*, with the Tibetan pronunciation.

What are we going to visualise when we do these mantras? If you have previously received this empowerment you imagine:

om sobhawa shuddha sarva dharma sobhawa shuddho hang

All things dissolve into emptiness, into peace space.

*Then out of emptiness arises a peacock throne (a beautiful throne like Lama Gangchen's throne, but it's not supported on lions, it's supported on peacocks). On top is a thousand-petalled lotus and in the centre is a very cool, very peaceful moon mandala – like a full moon. In the middle of the moon is the red Sanskrit sound, hrih. From these, light rays go out invoking all the healing energy, all the long-life energy of all the enlightened beings. Then the light comes back. Again the light goes out*

It alleviates the suffering of all those who are sick, who are suffering, who are tired, who are weak ... all those who are tired are touched by this red light and become reenergised; all those who are fearful become peaceful; all those who don't have food receive food; all those who don't have water receive water; all those who don't have medicine receive medicine; all those who are sick are healed; all those who who are near death come back.

*All the light comes back and then, in one instant, (if we received initiation) we appear as Guru Buddha Supreme Healer Amitayus. We have a red coloured body like a coral mountain, one face, two hands in the meditation mudra and a very peaceful smiling face. In my hands I hold a precious long-life vase brimming with the nectar of immortality; on top is a wish-granting tree – a tree of life. I'm a beautiful sixteen-year-old youth adorned with jewelled ornaments and silken garments. My complete enjoyment body is adorned with all the signs and marks of an enlightened person but has no true inherent existence. I sit with my legs in the vajra position – in the cross-legged position – in the centre of a mass of brilliant rainbow light. On a lotus and a moon on my crown chakra stands Guru Amitayus with a red coloured body, one face and two hands holding a vase filled with the nectar of immortality.*

Amitayus is surrounded by a rainbow, he's holding a long-life vase above our head. Basically we visualise like this if we've received the empowerment. If not, we imagine Amitayus either in front of us or above our crown.

In Tibetan this practice has a special melody. There are different melodies in every lineage of Tibetan Buddhism but the Amitayus songs that I know come from the third Kyabje Trijang Dorje Chang, who was Lama Gangchen's Root Guru. This song of Amitayus is very beautiful, so maybe on another occasion, we can get the text in Tibetan and sing it together. It's a really very beautiful, very sweet sound. But for now, we will just visualise like this: we are red Amitayus Buddha and above our head is standing Guru Amitayus. We're holding a long-life vase and he's also holding a long-life vase above our head.

When we recite the mantra, there are different ways of visualising. The first way is very simple: we imagine Guru Buddha Amitayus above our crown. He is highly delighted with us, he feels very close to us and he dissolves into our heart chakra, our subtle mind.

Then in my heart [as Amitayus] is a full moon disc and in the centre is the red-letter *hrih* surrounded by the mantras. There's the long *dharani* and then there's the short mantra, om amarani zewanteye svaha. As we say the mantra we imagine that light radiates back and invokes all the power of the five elements. In our NgalSo tradition we love the elements, don't we? Space, wind, water, earth and fire. So now we imagine that all the energy of the elements – which is the essence of life – is drawn back into our heart chakra.

*The lights go out and they invoke the blessings of the holy body speech and mind, good quality and action of all the holy beings.*

Of all the Buddhas, all the meditational deities, the Three Jewels and so forth.

*The lights go out and invoke the power and life potential of everything in the universe, and the life and merit of every single living being in the six realms.*

Remember, as I said yesterday when we were doing White Tara, this doesn't mean we're taking anybody's life. The idea is that life is totally abundant, infinite. We're just tapping into the abundance of the universe, which is represented by all the life, all the planets, all the beings ... all the trees, the entire natural environment. We're tapping into that abundant energy of life.

*All that energy returns and enters through our crown in the form of lights and nectars.*

For example, you can imagine it like a rainbow.

*All the negativities or the emotional disturbance or the obstructions and obstacles so life like a sickness are completely pacified and as a result we can achieve the supreme deathless vajra body.*

Of course we can do this for other people. In fact we should do this for other people. So in our heart we can put, our Guru, our mother, our father, our relatives... those we wish to protect and send energy to so they receive this long-life energy directly as we recite these mantras. At the moment, when we're doing our enlightenment mantra marathon we can visualise like this. If there's somebody sick in the hospital or suffering in some way, we can imagine above their head is Guru Buddha Amitayus. If we can't imagine that we just imagine a rainbow of healing light of the five elements of space, wind, water, earth and fire and all the blessings of all the holy beings going through their head and into their heart, and their sickness is cured, their tiredness goes away, they become full of energy, their depression goes away, they become happy and peaceful, their fear goes away and all they recover their energy of body and mind.

We can also visualise Guru Buddha Amitayus above our crown and he is pouring infinite amounts of life energy from his vase, down through our crown chakra down to our heart where our guru or dear ones receive it directly. If we have the initiation we are Amitayus, if not we can be in our ordinary form.

There are many other meditations about Amitayus but I think for our enlightenment marathon it's enough to visualise in these way.

You can visualise red lights or you can visualise a rainbow light. But it's not like a video game – the important thing is that you really should have the special feeling of energy and also an emotional feeling that is very sweet, very soft, very beautiful as you do these kinds of long-life practices.

These practices really work, by the way. We're not mad, we're not doing them because we have nothing better to do – they really work. I'll give you one small example of something that happened to me almost 35 years ago, the first time I ever did this Amitayus retreat. I was about 21 years old and I was doing this Amitayus retreat: reciting the short mantra *om amarani* . . . Then a certain point I thought: *Oh, I've lost all feeling in my face!* I couldn't actually say the mantras anymore, it was like when you go to the dentist and have the anaesthetic and you can't feel anything; my whole face went like that! When you have the injection from the dentist, afterwards the anaesthetic goes and we think: *that's it finished!* but actually it's still there in your body. So I was doing this long-life mantra and my whole face was like rubber. All the anaesthetic from the past when I'd had a filling or something had come out, so this long-life practice is really releasing toxins from the body and things that are damaging your long-life. So that's one small experience I can share with you from the first time I did the Amitayus practice. Also I remember on that first retreat feeling that the energy was going to my organs: to my liver, to my lung, to my heart. The energy was going around my body – I could feel it. This is the same idea as acupuncture, isn't it? That these organs have elemental energy and one feeds the other. So they really really do work these practices. I'm sharing a couple of personal experiences to convince you to do this, it really does work. These practices are really true, they're really authentic. That's why we do them. For many generations, people who did these practices have had the experience that you get younger, you get healthier. Not only for yourself but also for others, which is why we're doing it now because many people are suffering, there are many people in difficulty. Rinpoche asked us to make this long-life marathon and send the energy of life to everybody, so that's what we should do.

Are there any questions about this? If not, I may read you a very long Amitayus sutra! If not, maybe we can do the practice together. At a certain point there's not that much to say, the most important thing is to do the practice. Does anybody have any questions?

### **How can we organise doing all these practices? If I do a retreat on one of these deities, how do I also concentrate on the other practices?**

Right now, Rinpoche suggests we should do Parnashawari, this long-life mantra recitation and Black Manjushri. I'll speak about Black Manjushri next Tuesday. So, me personally: when you get up in the morning – before you say anything – you do the practice of Black Manjushri. Before you have your tea, before you have your coffee, before you get your phone to read the news, you should do the practice of Black Manjushri to protect yourself energetically. Even just 21 mantras. That's what you should do. I'll explain this next Tuesday.

Right now, it's very important we do the practice of Parnishawari. Why? Because we have an epidemic. The practice of Parnishawari is to find a solution to epidemics on the personal and collective levels. Most of us have a lot of free time because we can't go to work and we're stuck at home. Maybe some of you have the pleasure of having to home-school your children – no doubt you don't have so much time. But in the main, the rest of us have more time than usual. You can't say: *I haven't got time to do my practice*, because now we do have the time to do our practice! At least for half an hour or one hour in the morning, those of you who are Buddhists could do the practice of Parnashawari. A few

days ago I explained in an extensive way how to do the Parnashawari practice; now you can download the instructions on how to do it from our website or from our YouTube channel. Tomorrow on Easter Sunday, we will go through it and we'll meditate together on the five main meditations of Parnashawari. I explained this one in more detail because obviously we need it. Hopefully, none of you will get sick and you can just do this for other people – for your friends, your family, your city, for the people in hospital in your city, for your country and so on. But if you do get sick, what should you do? We'll go through that again tomorrow in detail. So, you should do Parnashawari, in my opinion. Then you still have lots of time during the day. You can only watch Netflix for so many hours in one day! So please join in the mantra marathon for long-life and follow Lama Gangchen's suggestion. Sure you have to cook, you have things to do in your house but that still leaves you with a lot of time. Take some time in your day and do the three long-life mantras, as suggested. You have the paper and we have a 24-hour streaming of the long-life mantra marathon. Please join in with that. If you like, then we also have the Guru Puja practice with *ganachakra* recitations on live-stream every day. So we're full of things to do - if you like to do Buddhist practice, you can do it from morning to night. Just do your best. Do as much as you can.

### **If I do a retreat on one of these practices, how do I do the others?**

Well if you're doing the retreat, mainly you do that one. All the rest you do in a very short way. When you do a retreat you try and totally focus on that one. For example, with Parnashawari practice, you are Parnashawari, you say the mantra. You're saying it 24 hours a day, basically! You're saying the mantra in the morning, when you're having lunch, you're saying the mantra when you're lying on your bed... whatever you're doing you're saying the mantra. Then the rest of the practices you do in a short way. When you are in retreat, you are trying to get the feeling of that one practice, you get some inner experiences. That's why it's called a close-retreat – to get closer to the energy.

### **Please can you give us a guideline to practise all five mantras with their visualisation.**

Presumably that means Parnashawari, the three long-life mantras and Black Manjushri. Well, that's what I'm doing these days – I'm explaining what to do in this series of teachings. There will be a summary of exactly what you have to visualise and think. I already saw that in the Brazil WhatsApp groups: they have taken out the main points of the Parnashawari teaching and posted it. We can just do it like this, then we can produce a single paper – you not me! – with the summary of the five practices. Please somebody help with that. All the information is in these talks so please use it.

### **How can I send energy to another person? How does this work?**

In the West we have Reiki, don't we? We have this idea we can send energy to people. We believe very much in this, actually. In all spiritual traditions throughout the world, there's a belief that if we pray for other people it helps them. There have been many studies. For example, in the Christian tradition, people who receive prayers heal much faster than

people who don't. They've actually done many studies about this. I'm sure these sorts of things are available on the Internet. Over the years I've seen many studies of these things. For example in groups of people where some knew they were being prayed for and some didn't, they compared the effects. It seems that prayer and sending positive energy really does benefit people. Of course, it's not just NgalSo people that do this, fortunately; the Christians, the Jews the Hindus, the Muslims, everybody's doing it. That's wonderful isn't it? We believe this. We also believe that “more is more”. This is why we try and pray and do the same mantras and dedicate together. Any one person has a certain amount of energy. This depends on you - on your personal development. Obviously the more evolved you are, the more energy you have to share. But when lots and lots of average spiritual practitioners get together, we become a super-battery. One person is ten watts; we put many people together, it becomes thousands of watts of positive energy. This is exactly why we're doing this long-life prayer and recitation together because then we're gathering all that energy and it becomes more powerful, more concentrated. I saw on the WhatsApp groups these days that they're organising one million people to meditate and pray together to overcome the epidemic. It's good: there are people of all traditions around the world who are trying to spread positive energy. Whichever way you would like to do this, please go ahead. If you like to join in somebody else's initiative, of course, that's wonderful. We're suggesting that we get together and do these 3 long-life mantras. This is our suggestion at the moment and we will accumulate millions and millions of mantras. Rinpoche, Lama Gangchen, says this is our spiritual bank account; normally we only count the money in our normal bank account, don't we? But he says our spiritual bank account is much bigger than that, and in the enlightenment marathon we are accumulating, saving not spending! By dedicating, by sharing - strangely, that's the only way that we can truly receive it. All the time we're thinking: *I'm doing this and want to receive this energy*, but actually we cannot receive it because we're thinking in a selfish way. It's only when you are thinking in an altruistic way – sending life, sending health, sending energy to other people that you can actually benefit from it. Honestly, that's true. Basically you can't pray for yourself because it doesn't work! You have to pray for other people. That's my experience anyway. If you pray for somebody else it works, but if you think of yourself it's always blocked by your own wishes, your own ego, your own anxiety, your own fear. There's no point thinking: *Oh please please Buddha, I want to be healthy, I want to be happy, and have a long life*. When you pray for everybody then, automatically, you receive the benefits. That's how it works.

Together we are like a super battery. We all have, let's say, ten watts of that spiritual energy; when you put hundreds or thousands of us together, we're a super generator of healing energy, so that's why we meditate together. However there are super-evolved spiritual people who are like a super-generator by themselves. Some high lamas, some evolved beings, some high beings (we call them bodhisattvas) really do have the ability to dedicate just by thinking: *may that person be well, may they be happy*”. The historical Buddha Shakyamuni said many times things like: *If it's true that I'm a Buddha, if it's true that I have the same feeling towards this being as I have towards my own son Rahula, then may they be healed*. And it used to happen because he was what we call a *rishi* – his words were true.



There is a famous story of the Buddha's cousin Devadatta. Siddhartha, the historical Buddha, was an Indian prince. Not like the British Royal family – Indian princes have loads of cousins; many brothers, many sisters, many cousins. Siddhartha was a prince in a small Indian principality; his father was the monarch of a small kingdom in what today's called Nepal. The Buddha had a cousin called Devadatta and they had the same education, the same background and so on. Basically when the Buddha became enlightened, Devadatta was super-jealous of Shakyamuni-Siddhartha. They always had, not sibling rivalry, but cousin rivalry from the side of Devadatta. So in the Buddhist scriptures there are many stories of Devadatta being nasty towards Siddhartha, and trying to harm or put down the Buddha. This is what can happen in families, can't it? This kind of jealousy from brother to sister or one cousin to another. One of the many stories about Devadatta trying to hurt the Buddha was when the Buddha was slightly sick. His doctor, Jivaka, gave him a very strong medicine. The Buddha ate it and he got better. Then Devadatta thought: *If he [the Buddha] can take that strength of medicine, then so can I*; so Devadatta ate the same potency of medicine as Siddhartha had. But he couldn't digest it, so as a result he became super sick, full of pain. Siddhartha, the Buddha, went to Devadatta who was in bed, really sick. He put his hand on his head and said: *If it's true that I love my cousin Devadatta, who was always mean towards me, in the same way I love my own son, Rahula, may he get better!* And in that moment Devadatta did get better. Why? Because of the Buddha's truth power, because of the level of his spiritual evolution.

Also, by the way, as we know very well in the Christian tradition, one reason Jesus became so famous is that he could do things like revive the dead, he could heal the sick. Why? Because of the level of his spiritual development. So we Buddhists don't believe that enlightened beings exist only in our tradition; we believe that the holy beings of other traditions also have great realisations. We see them as, let's say, bodhisattvas - some kind of emanation for people of that tradition, that mentality. Jesus, for example, did incredible healing miracles. There are people like that in the world, fortunately even to this day. Whatever power or capacity we have, we use: we all get together like a super battery so that then we're more powerful. That's the idea behind us doing the enlightenment marathon. That's why we do it. Hopefully that answers that question.

So we send energy to another person. For example, if we're doing Amitayus (if we have the initiation) we are Amitayus. If they're very close to us we put them in our heart. The energy from Guru Amitayus goes through our crown into our heart and it goes into those people like our Guru, our father, our mother – close people. If we don't know them but we have heard they need help – let's say they're in hospital – then we imagine Guru Buddha Amitayus is above their head and the nectar of long life goes anyway into their heart and is revitalising them as we say the mantra. Our motivation is very important. This is not something mechanical. The better the motivation we have – which means empathy, compassion, selflessness – for that person to be well, then the better the practice works. This is why, at the beginning of Buddhist practices, there is this very important idea of developing what we call bodhichitta, the mind of enlightenment. Lama Gangchen explains in the following way: all of us have a circle of caring, for example, our mother, our father, our brother, our sister, our cat, our dog, our parrot. Our friends. We have people we care about. We all have about 150 people apparently, that are our close friends and we wish them well. We send them birthday cards, we send them Christmas presents... we love

them! We try to do everything we can to help them. That's great but then we try and open our heart to more people – to extend our circle of caring, so that more and more people become our friends, our family. There are many reasons why that's a good idea. Firstly, we're all connected. Right now we can see just how connected we really are: in one month, in a negative way, this sickness has spread all across the planet because we are all so connected. But we're also connected in many positive ways; none of us can live without each other. Now, for example, hopefully, we can start to see the importance of all these people called key workers. All the people who are growing our food, who are doing deliveries, the doctors, nurses and carers... normally in modern society nobody cares so much about them but now we actually see how important what they do for us is. We cannot live without them, taking care of the infrastructure, food and medicine, deliveries... Maybe we don't know them personally but indirectly all these people are so kind to us. Now, we can see in the news how these people are putting their lives on the line for us, for all of us collectively. Other people are so kind to us. Of course, a small number of people are always going to be doing something negative but generally, there are many more people working together doing something positive. For example, we're all sitting at home. Why? Because we wish to save the lives of others. That's why we're not going outside even though it's a beautiful day. We might prefer to be outside but we're all sitting inside because of our collective wish to care for others. So, we are all connected. The Buddhist idea is we should open up our heart. In England, also in Italy and in Spain, in many places people are clapping every evening from their houses and balconies to say thank you, to all the doctors, nurses, and the people taking care of everybody else. So we are clapping and singing to say thank you to them.

Hopefully, at the very least, one positive side effect of this bad situation we're in is to think more about how we're all connected and appreciate how other people are kind to us. Lama Gangchen says we need to change our small selfish heart – *just me and my family* – into the big open heart of compassion. More and more people become our friends, our family. It doesn't mean we need to give them all Christmas presents or birthday cards but that we have a warm human feeling towards them. If we actually develop empathy towards other people, then automatically we think: *what can I do to help them?* We have many different capacities. Whatever capacity we have to help others we should use.

This is the idea of bodhichitta – that I would like to develop more capacity as an individual to be better equipped to help more people. I'd like to be more intelligent, I'd like to be kinder, I'd like to have a more open heart, I'd like to have more capacity, more wisdom and more knowledge and many qualities in many ways so that I can help and influence many people positively. This is where the idea of bodhichitta is coming from. A Buddha is an awakened person, a Buddha is not an alien or a god or angel or something. A Buddha is a person like you or me but who has completely evolved as a human being; who has completely opened their mind emotionally towards others; who has completely purified their own mind of fear and doubt and anxiety and jealousy and all these negative emotions. Their minds are completely pure and completely open, that's what a Buddha actually is. Fortunately, there's not just one Buddha who lived 2,000 years or so ago; there are many people - throughout history and even today - who are either enlightened or on the way to getting enlightened.

We wish: *may I become a Buddha for and benefit of all beings*; may I evolve ten percent more than I am now; twenty percent, thirty percent. May I grow and become a better person. We don't wish: may I be happy, may I be peaceful, but may everybody be happy, may everybody be peaceful, may everybody be healthy. We start with this kind of motivation when we make this enlightenment marathon because then it's much more powerful. When we have a big mind, a big motivation, the energetic result is much more powerful. Somebody was asking earlier: *how do I send energy to another person?* If we start with this motivation of: *may everybody be healthy, may everybody be peaceful*, then the energy flows much more. Of course, we could just say in a very small way – myself and my family; but we're doing the mantras so better we do them in a big way, then the energy flows much more powerfully, and is, as Rinpoche says, a better investment.

### **What is the difference in doing the three long-life deities?**

They are all for long-life but with special differences. We have three long-life deities: Ushnishavijaya, White Tara and Amitayus. The best thing I can suggest to you is that you do the practices, honestly, because then you feel. These things you have to feel. There was one famous lama called Lama Yeshe. He was one of the first lamas who in the 1970s and 1980s brought Tibetan Buddhism to the West. When I was young I used to live in a Dharma Centre in England called Manjushri Centre, which was at the time his main centre in the West. He was a very famous lama but actually quite like our Lama Gangchen – very empathetic, very warm, very kind, staying with many people - like Rinpoche. And he used to say many beautiful things. For example, about chocolate: *It's brown, it's wrapped in a piece of paper, it's sweet; but really this doesn't mean anything. It melts in your mouth. What you need to do is get the chocolate and and put it in your mouth and eat it. Then you know the taste of chocolate.* So it's the same with all these practices. We need to do the practice, then you will know what is special. It is true there is a different feeling between White Tara, Amitayus and Ushnishavijaya, but you need to do the practice and you need to feel it for yourselves. I can explain to you what I know; for example White Tara. I first went to Milan in the early 1990s to live and study with Gangchen Rinpoche. At that time – before we started Self-Healing – we used to do White Tara every day. It's very good to cool down the mind, it's very peaceful. So it's very good if people are shaking, their minds go down; but the feeling is not just calming down, pacifying, it is a very sweet feeling, a mother feeling. White Tara is a very sweet peaceful feeling. Amitayus is sweet in a different way. It has more warmth but in a different way. Ushnishavijaya? Ushnishavijaya is especially to bring people back from death. So what I can tell you, honestly: the best thing is for you do the practice yourself and then you will feel it.

Actually this is what I was thinking for after next week. This week we're explaining lots of different practices – even too many – but it's necessary at the moment. Parnashawari, Ushnishavijaya, White Tara, Amitayus, Black Manjushri. That's five practices. That's really a lot. Next week maybe we concentrate on doing the practice together. That's why I was thinking to start to read *Peace Words* – something different. Not all this explanation about how to do these meditation practices; I'll just read about peace; from Lama Gangchen words, from his teachings in Milan in the 1990s.

So yes, there are some slight differences. I've explained to you basically the main visualisations of these three practices (of course there are more). You have these three practices and we're transcribing what I'm saying, so in a few days you will have a downloadable document that explains the meditation of Ushnishavijaya, White Tara and Amitayus. Then you can see for yourself there are some slight differences in what you visualise. The instruction is there. So try and follow but mainly try and get the feeling. Ushnishavijaya and White Tara are female Buddhas. So there's a different feeling to Amitayus who is a male Buddha. In tantric Buddhism the female energy is peace space and the male energy is love and compassion. Rinpoche always used to say that if he were judging a Miss World competition, he would give the prize to the most peaceful girl. Because he said the most peaceful one is the most beautiful one. Beauty is not external, beauty is internal. The essence of female energy is inner peace, peace space. Conversely if we were going to judge a Mr World competition (these do exist!) then the prize should be given to the kindest, most empathetic man, the man with the most loving quality because that's the actual energy expression of pure male energy. So there's also that kind of difference. Anyway, please just do the practice and you will see.

**How do we do the visualisations during the marathon – because the deities change; can you explain in a short way?**

OK, so we're doing this marathon but each mantra is one mala. The first is Amitayus so if you have the initiation: om sobhawa shuddha sarva dharma sobhawa shuddho hang. In one instant you arise as Amitayus. Then you can say the long *dharani*. And then the short one. While you're doing this you can send energy to your Guru, your mother, your father and so on in your heart. At the end you say: dümin chiwe tshänma thongwa na ..., the long life prayer and dedication, then you dissolve into emptiness. So first we arise as Amitayus. We do the *dharani*: om namo bhagawate aparimita ayur gyana sumbini tsita... and so on, one hundred times. Then we do the short mantra: om amarani zewanteye svaha. Then red lights and nectars or rainbow lights and nectars are going from from Guru Amitayus to the Guru and the beings in our heart, and they're also going out to all those who are sick in hospital.

At the end we dissolve into emptiness after we say:

dümin chiwe tshänma thongwa na  
de yi möla **tsepa mepe** ku  
sälwar thong ne chidag pa chom te  
chime rigdzin nyurdu thobpar shog

*Tsepame* is Amitayus. The holy body of Amitayus. Then we say:

je tsün lame kutshe rab tän ching  
nam kar thrinle chog chur gyäpa dang  
lo zang tänpe drönme sa sum gyi  
drowe münsel tagtu ne gyur chig

May the Holy Teachers have a long life. May the enlightened activities be fully displayed in the ten directions and may the brightness of the teachings of Lama Tsongkhapa continuously dissipate the veil of darkness covering the beings of the three realms.

This practice is about giving long life and wisdom. We believe that sharing our spiritual energy is one of the most important kinds of generosity that we can do. Then we dissolve: om sobhawa shuddha sarva dharma sobhawa shuddho hang. Then we arise as White Tara and do the White Tara practice as I explained previously. So there are three Tara mantras: om tare tuttare ture mama ayur punye gyana pushtim kuruye svaha - **mama** means to me. Then we do: om tare tuttare ture guru ayur punye gyana pushtim kuruye svaha, **guru** means to our guru. Then we do the short Tara mantra: om tare tuttare ture svaha. So again: the Guru and our parents and so on are in our heart. With the White Tara practice we can do what they call “pavilions of element energy”, which is like a rainbow tent going around us. That's a very nice visualisation for White Tara. It's like a force field of rainbow energy of space, wind, water, earth, fire, metal, wood – all the elements. It's surrounding us and it's surrounding our mother, our father, our Guru and so on. It's a nice visualisation.

Then again we do a long-life prayer:

dümin chiwe tshänma thongwa na  
de yi möla **yishin khorlo** ku ...

**Yishin khorlo** means wish-fulfilling wheel. Then again we do the dedication for the Guru's long life and then we dissolve into emptiness. Then we appear as Ushnishavijaya. Rinpoche said: *one face, two hands, no need three heads and eight arms, not necessary.* But we're white and we have all these different implements: sometimes we can have a bow and an arrow, sometimes it's a double vajra, sometimes a lasso, sometimes a long-life vase, sometimes we can hold the Buddha in the hand. We have different things we can hold. When we do the long *dharani* of Ushnishavijaya we do this mudra which is like a vajra.



When we repeat the long mantra (which we do three or seven times):

om namo bhagavate / sarva trailokya prativishishtaya  
buddhaya te nama / tadyatha / om bhrum bhrum bhrum  
shodhaya shodhaya / vishodhaya vishodhaya and so on, we make this mudra, this gesture. Like a diamond, like a vajra – very powerful. Then with our mala we repeat the other mantras of Ushnishavijaya, one mala each: om bhrum svaha / om amrita ayur dade svaha.

When we're doing the Ushnishavijaya mantra remember we're in the centre of the universe on top of Mount Meru. There's a Tibetan stupa – which is the five elements. In the dome we are Ushnishavijaya. In our heart is a double vajra and in the centre is a blue sphere and in the centre is the letter *bhrum*. In the *tigle*, the drop of that is our Guru. Then we say: om bhrum svaha / om amrita ayur dade svaha and the other mantras. So there's our Guru, our mother, our father, our close ones. We do it like this. Then we dedicate and dissolve and we arise as Amitayus and we go on like this.

If you don't have the initiations, you can imagine all these long-life buddhas appearing above your head, then dissolving into light and then appearing above your head and dissolving into the light. You are just your normal you. But the Buddha is above your head or in front of you. As you say the mantra all this long-life nectar and energy is flowing down into yourself, into your Guru, into your father, into your mother, into your close ones, your dear ones... sending energy to all those who are sick, who are suffering. Millions! Millions of people will need this. Even more than normal. So basically that's how we do the visualisations.

As I said we're transcribing what I'm saying, we're making a slightly edited version so then we can make one document with all the short summary of all the main visualisations that I've recommended you do these days. So within a few days we'll end up with one paper called *Summary of the meditation instructions for the long-life marathon*. So then it's easy – we can have this document, we can print it out or put it on our iPad and we can remember the instruction as we're saying the mantra then it won't be so difficult – then we can just relax and these days we can continue. Next week let's try and accumulate more long life mantras please. These days we're learning how to do the practice. Next week I want to concentrate on actually doing the practice. So our number of mantras goes up. We're like a battery of spiritual energy altogether. So next week please, we make more of an effort and we spend more time doing these visualisations. We may be sitting on our sofa but we're doing something for people. Then we'll feel like: *I was locked down during the epidemic but I could do something for the others*. It's important we feel that we can do something.

### **Do the different feelings come because the visualisations are different, or does the feeling come from something within us?**

Each healing practice that we do in our NgalSo tradition, our tantric Buddhism... like I said before is like a tantric Swiss Army knife. There are many different tools. We have all these different practices because they're specific tools for healing, for a particular need. Each practice from its own side has a different energy and quality, so we might say that's because over the centuries, hundreds and thousands and maybe millions of people have been doing these practices. So expressing that in a Western way, we're tapping into the collective unconscious when we say: om bhrum svaha / om amrita ayur dade svaha or om tare tuttare ture mama ayur punye gyana pushtim kuruye svaha or om amarani zewanteye svaha

We're not the first ones to do this. Our Gurus have done this, our lineage gurus – Kyabje Zong Rinpoche, Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche, Kyabje Pabongkha Rinpoche, Yangchen Drupe Dorje, Changkya Rolpai Dorje, Lama Tsongkhapa. All these great masters and many

others have done it. In the past, hundreds and thousands of people. So if we tap into it, we are tapping into a stream of collective consciousness of healing, of long life. From one side of the actual practice, we're tapping into a stream of consciousness. It's like a river; we're tapping into the flow of a river of consciousness that has been created by many generations of people before us. And then as we do it, we also generate that feeling within us and we become part of that stream of consciousness. So actually it's from both sides. It's like two hands together shaking hands. That's all I can say on the subject.

### **Is the feeling different for each person who practises?**

I don't know. No idea! All I know is that you get a good feeling and these practices do truly work. But I have actually seen examples of people who got more energy, are healthier, look younger and have longer life through doing these practices. It's not a fairy tale – they really do work. It's very difficult to know exactly what another person's feeling is, but generally, people have a good feeling, a positive feeling. How each person interprets that, who knows? If we say that's red, we don't even know what red is for somebody else, do we? It's weird because we all assume everybody else feels the same way we do and sees the world the way we do but, in fact, they don't. Anyway, that's a discussion for another time.

I think that's enough for today. Happy Easter Saturday. Please continue today, tomorrow, these days, with your practice and your long-life mantras. Tomorrow we will do a guided meditation on Parnashawari. We'll also talk a little bit about karma and the collective karma and astrological aspects of the epidemic. And, hopefully some positive things that could arise afterwards. So that's what I'm going to do tomorrow.

Thank you all very much for listening.

Now let's dedicate for inner and world peace. Lama Gangchen says we can lose many things: *we can lose our health, we can lose our boyfriend or girlfriend, we can lose our money but these are only its small difficulties. As long as we don't lose our inner peace everything will be ok.*

nyinmo deleg tshän deleg  
nyime gung yang deleg shing  
nyintshän tagtu deleg pe  
könchog sum gyi jin gyi lob  
könchog sum gyi ngödrub tsöl  
könchog sum gyi tashi shog.

At dawn or dusk at night or midday may the Three Jewels grant us their blessings may they help us to achieve all realisations and sprinkle the path of our life with various signs for auspiciousness.

Thank you all very much for tuning in to our virtual Easter course. See you all tomorrow. Thank you all very much.