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NGALSO
Path to Enlightenment

Self-Healing 1 & 2 Summer Course – Reading and Reflections part 7
Lama Caroline

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Meditation on taking refuge

namo guru bye
namo buddhaya
namo dharmaya
namo sanghaya (x3)
namo tri ratnaya

Prayer and mantra requesting the blessings of the root guru, Lama Gangchen Lobsang Thubten Trinley Yarpel

lo chok sangpoi pel gyur trashi pa
thub chen ten pe trinle yar ngo da
phel gye dro lor tsam pe dze pa chen
pal den lame shab la sol wa deb

OM AH GURU VAJRADHARA SUMATI MUNI SHASANE KARMA UHTA
VARDANAYE SHRI BADHRA VAR SAMANYA SARWA SIDDHI HUNG HUNG (x3)

Request to become one nature with the guru

pa khyo kyi ku dang dag gyi lu
pa khyo kyi sung dang dag gyi ngag
pa khyo kyi tug dang dag gyi yi
don yer me chig tu jin gyi lob

ma khyo kyi ku dang dag gyi lu
ma khyo kyi sung dang dag gyi ngag
ma khyo kyi tug dang dag gyi yi
don yer me chig tu jin gyi lob

lama khyen, lama khyen, drinchen tsawei lama khyen
lama khyen, lama khyen, lobsang thubten trinley yarpel khyen (x2)

Hello everybody, good afternoon. We're going to carry on looking at the NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing 1 teachings of Lama Gangchen Rinpoche.

Here in Albagnano it's full summer, very nice, very beautiful. If anybody who's watching would like to come here, you can come here and receive teachings, come to the pujas. If you have a car, you can go to the lake or to the forest, it's really, really nice around here. So, if you like to make a dharma holiday, you're very welcome to come and make your dharma holiday here in Albagnano. Super nice, also quite warm, so you can combine holiday and dharma.

These days, last week or so, we've been talking about Lojong mind training, which is based on the eight verses and the seven-point mind training of Geshe Langri Tangpa and Geshe Chekawa. If anybody came today and you missed that, it's recorded, you can watch on our YouTube channel. Also, Lama Michel has been talking about it as well, apparently, we've both been talking about the same thing. So, you can watch us both talking about mind training. Why? Because it's important. Because, we're very good at saying mantras which, of course, is wonderful, and doing puja, but really we need to change our minds. So, Lojong is extremely helpful to change, as Rinpoche said, the position of our mind, to make everyday life easier. Lojong is basically learning to open our hearts and put other people's needs and wishes first, rather than just considering our own situation and own needs.

So, it's a very beautiful practice, and if we wish to practise Mahayana Buddhism it's 100%, or 200%, or 1000% necessary that we do this. Otherwise just saying mantras and stuff won't be of much benefit if inside we don't change. So, Lama Gangchen Rinpoche, in Self-Healing 1 he said if really we want to know who's our friend, who's our enemy, that means our inner delusions, our negative emotions are our enemies, not other people, then we should practise Lojong. We should listen to it, think about it, and meditate on it, together with receiving the blessings of, for example, Buddha Chenrezig (om mani padme hum), Buddha Shakyamuni (om muni muni mahamuni shakyamuniye soha), and receiving the blessings from our guru, whether our guru is, dead or alive. They have a different experience from us, so a dead guru is not dead like most people, they're still alive but in a different way. They can still bless us, and we can receive their blessings and continue to grow and evolve under their guidance, even when they left the physical body.

Until now we were looking at Lojong. So, let me just look in the text where we got to. So, we were talking about the meaning, Rinpoche was saying about the meaning, of the mantra om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha. So nice! The last thing we said yesterday was Rinpoche says it wasn't necessary to be a Buddhist to recite this mantra or receive the benefits of this mantra, that it's completely open to anybody in the world if you like to try or use. Rinpoche's idea was that everything we do here, well most, not

everything, but most things are like what's on sale on the spiritual supermarket, in the sense that everybody can come, everybody can participate, and any ideas or methods that one finds useful, you're welcome to use, with a few exceptions, a few things we need some kind of more serious commitment. But most of the things here are completely open to everybody. So, that was Rinpoche's idea, and so we're continuing in the same way. Which is why we decided to stream our teachings, so that they are accessible to everybody who likes to listen. Rinpoche always said this was the idea of the historical Buddha, that the dharma should be available to everybody.

Before we start, let's sing the mantra om muni muni maha muni shakymuniye soha, the mantra of Guru Buddha Shakyamuni. So, in front of us, or above our heads, or in our hearts is our guru in the form of Shakyamuni Buddha, and as we say the mantra, we receive golden lights and nectars full of love, full of compassion, full of mental stability, full of all positive qualities and healing. Our mind, in Buddhism, is here [in the heart], and not here [in the head]. Here [head], this is the Western mind. Mainly, in Buddhism, we say the mind is here in the heart chakra. So, our mind is full of all these golden lights, and then this light radiates out through our heart and we're sharing the light of Lord Buddha, the awakened energy of enlightenment, we're sharing with everybody, and also spreading it around the environment, healing the environment. So, we'll do like this. Rinpoche says it's very important not to just listen to loads of things and then forget about them, but to link all the time with blessings, with energy. He suggests that we do this through singing, by visualisation, by singing mantras. Maria Cristina and me, and everybody who likes, you're welcome to join in.

OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNI SHAKYAMUNIYE SOHA (6x)

Guru Buddha is always with us in our heart.

So, let's continue with the book Self-Healing 1, let's see what it says. This book's much bigger than my book, it's got more pages. This must be like mark two. Hang on, one second. It seems quite different from my book this one. The one I'm reading is a little thin version like a third of this, the original one. This is a new enhanced version, probably, I imagine, that we did over the years. Maria Cristina, you're going to have to come here and read my book. Maria Cristina is very clever, she can translate simultaneously from English, so there's no problem.

Rinpoche says, for example, if we experience some difficulty in making a decision, which is often, we can recite this mantra a little and see what happens is a result. So, this is for many of us who are Rinpoche followers or were Rinpoche followers, this is actually a big issue, isn't it? Because until very recently many of us when we wanted to make a decision, we would just ask Rinpoche, we would phone Rinpoche, or we'd meet him on the road, and we would ask him, *what shall I do?* Now Rinpoche is in the rainbow body and he's going towards the next life. So, what are we going to do? Rinpoche actually is telling us what we should do. Rinpoche says many, many times we don't know what to do. It's true. Big and small decisions in our everyday life like: where shall I go, what house insurance shall I get, what doctor shall I see, we have all kinds of questions, don't we? Which flight company? We are full of questions, full of doubts actually. So, when we have some doubt not just, of course, about our dharma practice but also in daily life Rinpoche suggests we say the mantra om muni muni maha muni shakymuniye soha, and this energy is filling

our mind. Actually, then our mind's coming more in the natural state, isn't it, more clear. Then maybe through the blessing, through the mind-calming down, to becoming less conceptual through reciting the mantra, hopefully, we will make the right decision. Rinpoche used to say, I remember, it's not written here, but he used to say: *first mind is the best mind*, didn't he? Of course, it depends on what you're thinking about [laughing]. I think he means the first mind after you've done the dharma practice, not just for any first mind. I'm sure his first mind was always positive, but for us, first we need to do some practice, link with the holy energy of the Guru Buddhas, and then that first mind is the right one. This is something we can try, because this is an issue, isn't it, you know: *what am I going to do now?* Because many of us we had for so many years a very close relationship with Rinpoche, but now we need to take our own decisions. So, like I say, Rinpoche has actually left us all the instructions of what to do, so don't worry. In case of doubt, say om muni muni maha muni shakjamuniye soha. Say some mantras, let's say 21 or 100 times but without being anxious, just in a relaxed way, and then just see what happens, what comes to the mind. Hopefully, the first mind then will be the right mind, and we'll go in the right path, the right way because we have Buddha nature. So, when we link to our profound inner purity and wisdom, we do have that, if we just give it a chance to manifest, then we should make the right decision. So, this we can make an experiment and try, can't we? Because people do all kinds of things don't they, for example they do things like apps, or they open books, or they swing pendulums, they do all kinds of ways to make a decision. We could try what Rinpoche says, say the mantra of Shakyamuni Buddha and then see what arises in our mind. So that's a very good advice, very useful.

Then the next advice Rinpoche gives us is that if we're sick, sometimes we're sick, the human condition is this. So if we have headaches or some sickness, and we eat medicine, now that could be any kind of medicine, from aspirin to paracetamol to natural medicine, whatever, we eat some kind of medicine. If we eat the medicine and say the mantra om muni muni maha muni shakjamuniye soha, he says there will be a great benefit. So we saw, we were talking about this maybe last week, that Roy, he has this Healing Centre in England, and many, many years ago, I think about 25 years ago, Rinpoche went there, and we were checking the effect of natural medicine on people. Of course it has some effect, and we checked the result of natural medicine plus om muni muni and the Four Limitless Meditation. Those who said om muni and the Four Limitless Meditation were getting better quicker. So, this we can also try. Why we should try? Because it's free, we have nothing to lose, do we? If somebody gives you something nice and it's free, why not use?

Then Rinpoche said: *sometimes we may chant this mantra and not realise its effects. Yet it is acting, already acting inwardly even if we don't realise that it is.* Mantra, or *nag* in Tibetan. Mantra is a Sanskrit word, *nag* is Tibetan. So, what does mantra mean? We always hear this word mantra, mantra all the time, but probably most of you have no idea what it is. This is a very relevant subject if you're a Tibetan Buddhist, you need to know what a mantra is properly. So, *man* in Sanskrit means the mind. *Tra* means like a tool or an instrument in Sanskrit. So, it's a tool or instrument to change our mind, obviously in the positive sense, to improve ourselves. That's the actual etymology of the word mantra from the Sanskrit. Then the Tibetan lamas they explain the word mantra like this, they say it's a way for us to keep far away from the ordinary appearance and the ordinary conception, so, to protect our mind from those things.

So, what are ordinary thoughts and ordinary appearance? Generally, we say that we're in samsara. Samsara is again and again we suffer, we create endless suffering, endless *casino* [mess]. The root of that is our karma, our actions and our own delusions. We're doing it to ourselves, nobody else is responsible but us. This is what we call the sutra explanation, the one for everybody. Sutra means like public discourse, so everybody in the world could hear that kind of thing. But then we have something called the tantra teachings that only some kind of people, certain kinds of people with a certain kind of mentality were able to accept and to listen to. This is in historical Buddha's time.

So, according to the tantric teachings the cause of our samsara, our personal samsara, is what we call ordinary conception and ordinary appearance. That means thinking in an ordinary way and looking in an ordinary way. This is what we do every single day, left to our own devices. Everything we project, you know, we have these kind of thoughts like: *I'm not good enough, I'm this age, I can't do this*. We have all these limitations in our mind, like I can never eat Swiss cheese because I'm English, we have all these ridiculous thoughts. Really, like all these limitations, I can never wear a pink shirt because I'm a man. All these ridiculous things that I can and I can't do, that we've learnt over the course of our lives, all kinds of ordinary thoughts, limiting thoughts. We see ourselves in a very ordinary, boring, limited way. Of course, we then project our world in an ordinary, limited, and boring way, and we are ordinary, limited, and boring. That's how it works, no? Everything comes from the side of the mind and if you can only imagine your world like that, then that's what you get, isn't it? A small mind makes a small world. And that's the ordinary mind, isn't it?

In tantra we do the opposite, we have something called divine pride and clear appearance. That means we identify as, let's say, a higher self, as a Buddha, a Guru Buddha, and we see our world as everything beautiful, everything wonderful. In tantra we do the opposite. For example, normally we think my house is not good enough, I need to go to Ikea, or if I've got lots of money I need to go to Brera and buy some new things for my house, depending on my budget. We're always thinking I need to change something and then I'll be happy. That's what people do, again and again, redecorate the house and then it's not good enough, and then they need to get another house, and it goes like this. Then the partner, they're okay but... they were okay but now I'm bored with them and I need another one, and then, and so on, and so on. Over the course of our life usually we have many because we're always looking for the perfect one, but we can never find them because the perfect one will never appear. That's the sad story of our relationships, isn't it? You were wonderful but now I'm bored with you, goodbye. It's called our ex-husbands and wives, isn't it? [Laughing] Our mind's going like this. The ordinary mind is like this: *my house is not good enough, I'm not good enough, my partner is not good enough, and I'm always feeling miserable and dissatisfied*. So, tantra is the opposite: *I'm wonderful, my partner is beautiful, my house is the best*, so, this kind of mind, everything is wonderful. People tend to think: *oh yeah, but that's just a fantasy*. But sorry, according to Buddhism, the other one is just as much a fantasy as this, so both are equally fantasy. *Everybody's horrible, my partner's not good enough, I can't do this and this*, this is a fantasy. So, Buddha said why not, seeing as everything comes from the side of the mind, choose to see everything in a beautiful way? Why not choose to overcome your limitations? Why not choose to think you're a great person and are able to help many beings? That's better than

sitting at home thinking: *me, myself, and I, and I just want some new furniture, and a new husband or a new wife*, isn't it? Blaming everybody else which is the ordinary mind. It's true, no? Ordinary mind we know what it is, it's not so nice, it's boring, it gives unhappiness, it makes us miserable. So, Buddha said why not try a different way? One of the ways that we change our mind from the negative to the positive view, like Rinpoche says change the position of our mind, is to use mantras because it's like an infusion of positive energy. For example, when we sing om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha, here in our heart chakra we're filled with this energy of Guru Buddha. It's not just Buddha, who we don't know, but also it's the energy of our Guru, it's very powerful. Then the mind automatically, it's like we're filled up with positivity, with inner light, it's easy, it's like we're getting a transfusion of a positive mind. So, even if our mind left to itself and is going on the negative side, we can little bit go on autopilot and receive the blessings of the Guru Buddha, then the mind's automatically going on the positive. So, this is what mantras do, that's why we repeat them, not because we don't have anything else to do, or we're bored or filling up time. Actually, we have lots of other things to do but we understand the benefits of doing so.

Here Rinpoche said: *maybe you don't realise the effects, but even if you don't realise, anyway it's working on your mind*. All mantras, they mean something. Rinpoche here he explains om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha. We talked about that yesterday. So actually muni has many different meanings. Rinpoche here explains it in terms of like skill or ability. We need to develop different kinds of skilful means, different kinds of abilities. He said: *we need to develop definite emergence*, that means I want to get out of my personal samsara, it means I'm bored with me, I've had enough, I'm fed up with myself, I want a new me, a new life, so I will change. That's the first one. I will try and reach nirvana, which means everything will be peaceful and happy forever.

The second ability is we need to open our hearts, change our small selfish heart into the big open heart of compassion, and even, gradually, into the Bodhisattva mind, the mind of somebody on the path to enlightenment. And why not? It's possible.

The third ability we need to develop is to understand the nature of reality. So, we can do this in many ways. For example, we can go to science classes, we can look at nature, we can listen to classes on the dharma and Buddhist philosophy, there's many. Like Milarepa, for example, one great famous Tibetan yogi, he said: *me, I don't need any book, everything is my book, everywhere I look around it's showing the nature of reality*, which is true, isn't it? It's not just in a book, or on YouTube, or something, reality is everywhere, just we need to see it properly. Everything is changing, everything is impermanent, everything is interconnected, when we search for an essence of things, mysteriously they seem to be less there than we thought. Like with science, we said yesterday, if we got an electron microscope and we analyse anything here around us, finally what we see is space and some energy particles moving around, isn't it? We've been educated to give a name to things, haven't we? Somebody says this is a fan, somebody told me when I was like 10 years old, or three, or something, this is a fan. Otherwise, I might think it's an ornament, if I didn't know what it was, if I didn't know it was a fan and I have to plug it in. We have to be taught what things are, what they're for, that's what our parents do when we're children, they teach us what's the name of things and what's their function. The way reality is explained in Buddhism is not something like esoteric, it's actually like scientific.

Rinpoche was always interested in this because modern scientists, like physicists and astrophysicists and this kind of people, the more they look at reality, the closer they're coming to the ancient Buddhist view of reality. Especially this thing actually of the mind being involved subjectively in the creation of reality, which is what physicists have discovered in the last hundred years. Very interesting. But, of course, we could have asked Buddha, Buddha would have told us. But, anyway, every generation we need to reinvent the wheel, don't we? So, from our side, our culture, we had to work it out as well, so now we feel convinced that it's true.

Anyway, mantra has incredible benefits. There are many mantras like, for example om mani padme hum, very powerful mantra, the mantra of Buddha Chenrezig, the mantra of compassion. You can say that without being a Buddhist. The point is it's opening our heart and so we become nicer to people, we develop more empathy and, actually, more wisdom. But first, we develop love, we develop more empathy, which we very, very much need these days.

All mantras mean something. We're not saying om coca-cola soha or whatever. Everything actually means something, they're Sanskrit phrases. But the fact that people have been repeating them for many hundreds of generations, they're empowered with a lot of concentration and holy energy. So, this is why even though we know what they mean, we continue to repeat them in Sanskrit. There's a special vibration, I don't know how to say, maybe the collective unconscious or something. Mantras touch our mind in a very different way from just saying for example: *om capacity capacity great capacity sage of the Shakyas so be it*. That's the translation of the Buddha Shakyamuni mantra. Or if we say in Italian, or Portuguese, or whatever language you like. In Sanskrit it's much more powerful. This is, by the way, why here in Albagnano, Lama Gangchen Rinpoche insists that we continue to do these rituals in Tibetan. Why? Because they're many hundreds of years, like for example, our Guru Puja. Lama Michel is talking about this in the morning, isn't he? Our Guru Puja it's like 450 years ago that Panchen Losang Chokyi Gyaltsan wrote it. For 450 or 500 years or something, people have been repeating this. So, there's a very, very powerful vibration, let's say blessing, related to it, and also making all those tunes and stuff. So, even though maybe when you first come you think: *oh I can't understand*, it doesn't matter, we have time, we don't need to get stressed. Anyway, it's more powerful. Then, of course, sometimes we can do in English or your own language, to understand the meaning. Rinpoche was very much interested in energy, how to change the mind through energy, through blessing. Therefore he said mantras are important, singing mantras, reciting them. Here mainly we do Guru Puja. Then, of course, we have many, many other pujas, but the everyday one we do is actually NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing, and Guru Puja here in Albagnano. If anybody like to join, welcome.

Then what else did Rinpoche say? Let's have a look. He says: *to achieve enlightenment, to become a completely realised being, it's necessary to have absolute faith in this wish*. Ok, so when we talk about enlightenment in the west, we want to become a buddha, *sang gye*. In Sanskrit, the word buddha means, it comes from the verb *bud*, which means to awaken. So, a buddha is somebody who's completely awakened from the sleep of illusion, of ignorance. So, a buddha can be a man or a woman, they can be any nationality, it doesn't matter, it's not just like an Indian guy from 2000 years ago. All of us have the capacity to awaken, that's the very nice thing of Buddhism, that everybody can do it if we follow the

correct information and put it into practise. In Tibetan, buddha, the translation is *sangye*. *San* means completely pure mind, and *gye* means completely open mind, open heart, so completely pure, completely open. They didn't translate it literally, they translated a meaning. To become a buddha or a *sangye*, an awakened one, Rinpoche says we have to have faith in this wish. I was saying yesterday, that, for example, if you want to get a degree in let's say Chemistry or Home Economics. When you apply to university, you have to feel absolutely convinced if you do the course, and if you do everything correctly in the end you will get a degree in Chemistry or in Home Economics. Otherwise, why would you bother? And you also have to feel that your degree will be of some value. So, it's the same with the spiritual path, we have to be convinced that practising it is worthwhile. So, how we become convinced is by seeing the living example of great beings. For example, right here until recently we had the great example of Lama Gangchen Rinpoche, our wonderful guru, if not, there are many other holy beings in this world, for example, Pabongkha Rinpoche, Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche, we have loads of them, Domo Geshe Rinpoche, many, there's a whole list of great enlightened beings, fortunately. Actually there's loads of them we can use as examples. What it shows is it's possible to evolve, it's not just like some fantasy in a book or something. There are many people who really have evolved into extremely high levels by following the practices that we're doing. Therefore we can have confidence that if we do them, we will also achieve the same results. So, that's really important, if we're going to invest our time and our effort in something. We need to know that we'll get the result by doing so, isn't it?

Then Rinpoche says: *to achieve self-healing, it's very important not to lose hope*. Maybe he was referring to what we call the hopeless cases. When Rinpoche first came to the west in the early 80s, he said: *I don't want to come to the west as a teacher. Why? Because there are already many great lamas in the west teaching. There's no need. I want to come to the west as a healer. I want to come, and I want to show that the dharma is true, Buddhism is true, and show the power of the dharma*. So, then he went around as a healer, and he went to Greece, and Italy, and Brazil, and many places like this. He said: *please send me all the hopeless cases that you can't cure in the west*. These days Claudio and some other people, actually this is not on the streaming, but I was speaking with Tsetan Gyurme, who was Rinpoche's *jindala* [sponsor] and when Rinpoche came to the west his assistant and translator. So, Claudio and Tsetan, they were saying really this is true. When Rinpoche came to the west doctors and other people used to send all the people there was no chance for western medicine or any kind of medicine to help. Then Rinpoche would do his thing, and they would get better. So, maybe that's why Rinpoche, this is, remember, at the beginning, after 10 years of being a healer, says: *to achieve self-healing it's very important not to lose hope*. Also, you know, many people, they have like low self-esteem, don't they? So, they feel: *oh for me it's not possible to change*, all these kinds of things. But, actually, it's not true according to Buddhism, everybody can change. There's nobody in the whole universe that cannot change. So, why should we be any different? But, anyway, people sometimes feel like this. Even if in the beginning it's a little difficult for us to change our habitual patterns, never lose hope.

When Rinpoche talked about self-healing, this has many, many different levels. The very easy level was actually to improve the health, like to feel better physically and mentally. And many, many people came to Rinpoche, like hundreds and thousands of people came

to Rinpoche for this reason, because they were not feeling well. He helped them to feel better. But Rinpoche then explained that actually when he's talked about self-healing, he meant we have to overcome our self-grasping and self-cherishing, our egotism and our selfishness, this was the actual meaning of self-healing. So, then it's actually much deeper, isn't it? For this reason Rinpoche made this song. So, please, Maria Cristina, let's have the song again. Rinpoche made, in the last few years, this song called Ego friendly, Ego cut, and yesterday Maria Cristina and Nunnei were singing the self-healing song.

Ego, ego, friendly, friendly,
Ego friendly, ego friendly, ego cut
dhi dhi dhi....

Ego, ego, friendly, friendly
Ego friendly, ego friendly, ego cut
om mani padme hum (4x)

Ego ego friendly friendly
Ego friendly, ego friendly, ego cut
dhi dhi dhi....

Ego, ego, amico del ego
Ego, amico del ego, ego, friendly
dhi dhi dhi....

Tagliare l'ego, tagliare l'ego
Ego amico
Tagliare l'ego con amicizia, tagliare l'ego soha
dhi dhi dhi...

So, these kinds of songs are good in daily life. Maybe we're on the bus or something, going to work, or in the car, we're usually singing like Eros Ramazzotti or something, no? So, we might as well sing ego friendly. Usually, some kind of song is going through our minds, no? So, at least some song with a positive message is better and useful in daily life. Rinpoche said there are many levels of self-healing. And never give up hope because this is a lifetime project, getting rid of our ego and our self-cherishing, and being a better person, being kinder, being more peaceful. So, we should wish for enlightenment but not hope for results, otherwise maybe we get a little frustrated. Like me, for example, when I

was 20, when I started Buddhism, I thought okay in three years I'm going to achieve something. I was really trying and stuff, but, of course, three years is nothing to change lifetimes of habits, or even one lifetime of habit. We have to be a little bit patient with ourselves. Basically, as long as we're not going backwards, it's okay, we're improving. It's like a hobby. Anyway, practising Buddhism, practising meditation, we feel better, we have a much better quality of life. And at least we're less horrible than we used to be, so, we're doing society a favour, no? We've removed one horrible person from society by practising the dharma. So, this is a benefit to everybody else, isn't it, because we became better. So, slowly, slowly, quickly, quickly, we will improve. But we should think: *okay, the rest of my life I will be trying to improve myself*. And one thing very nice is, for example, we luckily, have many friends who are like Tibetan lamas, Tibetan monks, Tibetan geshe, also western ones. The old Tibetan monks are very, very nice, for many reasons, but one thing very nice is even if they're 80 or 90 years old, they still go to the dharma teachings, they still try and meditate, they still try and improve themselves. Most people in the west, would think: *what for? Too old. Why not just sit in the sun, have a Baccardi and Coke, why bother?* But the Tibetan monks, even to the last moment, they carry on trying to improve themselves, because they feel this is a project, not just for this lifetime, for many lifetimes. Even until the last moments of their lives, they're carrying on like this, meditating, practising, also listening to teachings. That's a great example for us. So, we definitely should not think like Rinpoche says in Self-Healing 1: *yes, yes, I know*. I've seen many older monks and nuns, 80 and 90 years old, and still they're sat, they're going to the teachings. So, it's not like: *yes, yes, I know*, because they're still going there and listening because each time we understand something differently. Enlightenment is called the path of no more learning, so, when we become a buddha, we know everything directly through our own experience, and until then we don't. So, that's something to think about, ok?

Then Rinpoche says: *maybe we don't have total faith in our healing, but it's much more important we don't lose hope. We can use this mantra om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha in any situation*. That's a good advice, isn't it? Never lose hope. Especially relevant at this moment because if we look at the news, it's always bad news, negative news about everything, you just read the papers and feel miserable. But we should never lose hope that things can change. Everything is interdependent, we're responsible, personally, for our own experience, many of us together doing the right thing collectively, we're changing things, aren't we? So, never lose hope. However, sometimes our mind is going a little bit down, for example if we read about the environment, about the suffering in the world, and this kind of things. So, then we use these mantras like om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha to affirm our inner goodness, our inner purity, and also send that energy to everybody who needs. So, here in Self-Healing 1, Rinpoche recommends we use om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha and om mani padme hum. He said that could be even enough for most people, if we actually put that into practise. Here is Self-Healing 1, Autoguarigione 1, Rinpoche's book, on the front is Open Eye Chenrezig Buddha. This is a message meaning we should do this om mani padme hum, and we should start to look at people in a gentle way, in a soft way, with eyes of love, eyes of peace. He talks about Chenrezig Buddha and about Buddha Shakyamuni a lot in this book, in these teachings.

Here in Albagnano and in our NgalSo tradition, we have hundreds of different meditations. Why? Because we have hundreds of different people coming to our centres. It's like a pharmacy, because people need different medicines for different problems. Just like if you go to Bée the pharmacy is full of different things, different medicines, because we have all kinds of different health conditions, we have all kinds of different mental problems, so we have all kinds of different sadhanas, different healing methods. So, what you need to do is find one or two that's fitting for you, you don't need to do all of them. Unless you want to dedicate your life to it full time and learn them all. If you like, you're extremely welcome, but if not, one or two is enough to bring you great benefit, and healing, and well-being, and happiness. Also free. Rinpoche always said: *I'm selling, please buy*, except it's free, he was joking [laughing].

Rinpoche said: *for example, if we want to help somebody who is crazy, even though he or she does not understand the meaning of the words, they will benefit from this prayer, this mantra*. It's true, Rinpoche was a great healing master, and actually many people who were mentally unwell gathered around him because they felt much, much better in his presence. They always said he was like an emanation of Buddha Vajrapani. Buddha Vajrapani is the one who has the very stable mind. Many people whose mind was, let's say, not so stable, they felt very, very stable and comfortable around Rinpoche. Now Rinpoche is in the Dakini Land, in the rainbow land, we need to practise the healing methods of Vajrapani, of NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing and this kind of thing. Many people in their lives they have some mental disturbance. I read that apparently one in five women in their life has some kind of mental problem. Men I don't know how many, I need to check if it's the same, maybe more, maybe less, but I read one article maybe it's more [laughing], I'm going to find out. Anyway, I read like this. Let's say it's normal that many of us because of stress, of grief, of many reasons, at some time in our lives suffer from extreme stress, or anxiety, depression, different mental problems. This is like any sickness, it's nothing to be ashamed of, it happens and it's very important that we get treatment for our mental imbalance. Rinpoche suggests that we should do the practice. However, we should also get conventional medical treatment from a psychotherapist, and also have a doctor who follows us, and gives us some kind of psycho-pharmacy, this kind of thing. Then, together with the mantra, it's perfect. That's how it should be. Nowadays, for most people, just saying a mantra is not enough because times are very difficult. So, please, if you have some kind of mental imbalance, very welcome to say our mantras, but please also continue your treatment with your doctor and seek therapy. And, then, of course, sing as many of our mantras as you like as well. According to Buddha, we're all mentally ill, until we realise, until we become aryas, until we understand the nature of reality directly, we're all deluded, we're all crazy. So, it's all just a matter of degrees.

Then Rinpoche said: *in this century*, actually now he meant the last century, but, anyway, in modern times, *people are very curious and want to know and get an explanation about everything, even if it's only superficial. After a short explanation is given to them, they're already satisfied. But, on the other hand, if our curiosity is true and profound, it's much more interesting*. It's true, no? So, like with the dharma teachings, like for example me, I've been listening to them for 35 years, and each time I still find it very interesting, now I'm finding Self-Healing 1 very interesting. Why? Because each time you see with new eyes, and you have a little different experience, and each time you go a little deeper in

your thoughts, you evolve. It's all about us and we like so much everything about us. We're self-obsessed, aren't we? So, it's all about us and it's endlessly fascinating the dharma, about human nature. It's true, no? So, Rinpoche said we shouldn't be like: *yes, yes, I know*. He said, we read many books and then throw them away, we don't really absorb the meaning. So, he said: *please in these next few years, please let's all try and go more deeply, more slowly and more deeply into the meaning of the dharma*. So, we have a big homework to do, like a really big one, So, we'll continue to evolve like this. Rinpoche left us all the message, all the advice, all the ABC is there up to Z, all we need to do is integrate it with our everyday life, and then everything will be okay.

Then Rinpoche says: *Buddha Shakyamuni blessed this mantra, hence its powerful energy. In these degenerate times, it has an even more powerful potential. It's very difficult to transmit teachings that can help in the right way, but the mantra's blessing is a way to help and to teach. Although some people do not believe in mantras, it doesn't matter. Even if you don't have any faith or belief, you should practise because there will be some benefit, the mind will become more stable, our five elements will be more balanced, and it will become possible to overcome obstacles and suffering very easily*. Rinpoche says a lot in a short way, with simple words he says a lot. How did Buddha Shakyamuni bless this mantra? Ok, so, *jinlab* is like a wave of positive energy from the guru, from the buddhas to us. It's a wave of positivity that helps us to change our habits, to change our minds. Originally the historical Buddha said various things, and then his disciples kept on repeating them. And the Buddha was an awakened person, so, for example, the Buddha used to say things like *if it's true*, he used to use the power of truth as a blessing, which we use a lot in our pujas. There's a famous example, which actually is in Self-Healing 1 a little further on. So, one time, the Buddha was in his place with the monks and the nuns, and his cousin Devadatta was also there, and the Buddha ate some medicine for digestion. He had one doctor called Jivaka, who until this day is very famous in Asian medicine. For example, one time I remember I did a course in Thailand, I wanted to learn Thai massage because I was interested about all this *how to-do* channels and all this, and they said actually this teaching is coming from Jivaka, the Buddha's doctor. So, Jivaka is super famous till this day in Asia. Anyway, the Buddha's doctor, Jivaka, gave him this medicine, he was maybe feeling something in his stomach. So, the Buddha ate this medicine, very strong medicine, and then felt better. The Buddha had one cousin called Devadatta, who was also a prince. Remember, Siddhartha was a Shakya prince and it's not like a European royal family, there were like loads of princes, maybe 30/40 of them. So, his cousin, Prince Devadatta, was also there. Devadatta felt jealous of Siddhartha Shakyamuni and he was always like whatever he can do I can do better, like sort of family feeling, like brothers, like cousins. So, he said: *okay, give me the same medicine, I'm going to eat the same medicine*, and Jivaka said: *I really don't think that's a good idea, if you eat it, you'll get sick*. Then Devadatta said: *absolutely not, give it to me*, insisting. So, then Jivaka said: *okay if you like*. So, Devadatta ate the medicine then, of course, become completely sick because it was too strong for his body, for his constitution. Then Devadatta was lying in bed feeling really sick, and Siddhartha Shakyamuni came to see him, and he put his hand on Devadatta's head, and said: *if it's true I have completely the same love and compassion towards you, Devadatta, as I have for my own son, Rahula, may you get better*. And because Shakyamuni Siddhartha had developed many realisations, he was also, amongst other things, a *rishi*, a truth-teller. So, that means everything he said came true. So, he

touched Devadatta's head and Devadatta got better. So, this is where it comes from in our pujas like, for example, we say many times: by the power of the truth, by the power of the blessing of the tathagata buddhas, by the power of the sphere of reality, may everything positive we desire to be realised without obstruction. This is where this comes from. Most of the things that we do are actually based on the life of the historical Buddha. So, the Buddha used to bless things like that, because he was a truth-teller, because he had realisations, so what he said was true. So, that's how he blessed things. Normal speech became transformed by his holy energy. Then his disciples, through the centuries, continued to repeat it, so they kept this energy. This is why we talk about lineage, it's like one person passing a living experience from one to the other. So, until now, the living experience of transformation, of developing love and compassion like the Buddha, has been passed as living tradition through different masters, down to the present day, down to our present guru. Now it's been passed to us, so now it's up to us to develop the realisations and pass it on to the next generation, this is our challenge. And why not? We can do it too. Buddha said we're good enough to do it. So, let's try.

In these degenerate times, it's even more powerful. Why? Because we're in what's called the Kaliyuga, the age of degeneration. On one hand that's not so good, nobody can concentrate, the environment is very bad, there are many faults, but when we do something positive, when we do connect with spirituality it's more powerful because we have to make more of an effort to get to this point where we can do it. They say our spiritual actions are more powerful, like if we say one mantra of om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha, it's like saying ten times the mala 500 years ago. So, we're in some ways this is very fortunate.

Rinpoche said: *it's very difficult to transmit teachings that can help people in the right way.* Because we are like ducks, ducks have those kind of feathers where if it rains they stay in the pond, they're waterproof, so as much water as you like you can throw on a duck and the water doesn't penetrate its feathers. So, it's difficult for the dharma, the rain of the dharma, the rain of the guru's blessings, to penetrate our minds because, unfortunately, we're a bit like ducks, we're a bit waterproof to the rain of the dharma blessings. The challenge for dharma teachings is to find a way how the holy message of the Buddha can penetrate people's minds, and change, and transform people. This is why Rinpoche, Lama Gangchen, was doing all kinds of things, wasn't he? Not for his sake, but for us, to help to penetrate our minds, to link with our feeling, our culture, so we could connect, we could start to transform. For example he explains that's why he was using a lot of mantras, a lot of singing, and a lot of other things too, like travelling, going on pilgrimage, he was doing all kinds of things... Many, many things, eating croissants with us, eating pancakes, all kinds of things to penetrate our minds so that we opened our hearts, we opened our minds. And also, in many ways actually, he lived in Italy, and he was blessing the Italian culture, wasn't he? He was eating spaghetti, it was like blessing something in Italy, wasn't he? Actually, that was the idea of this. So, this place became a holy place, and he was very much interested in creating a peace culture, not by externally changing Italian culture, he didn't want to do that. He said: *Italian culture is very beautiful.* He said: *you're all very beautiful, you have beautiful eyes, you have a beautiful language,* he used to say this, didn't he? *No need to change the outside things, but inside need to change the mind, how you're thinking.* He was very much interested in this, and he

said the same thing to Spanish people, and to Brazilian people, German people, Dutch people, and French people, Chinese people, and Malaysian people, and all kinds of people. Because it's true, our cultures are all beautiful, we're all very beautiful, we all have nice eyes and beautiful languages, but we need to change something inside. Rinpoche was looking for methods where we could give a different meaning to the things that we were doing. He wanted to help us to make a peace culture. Later on, we'll look at his books, his teachings on this subject, very powerful. But now we're doing Self-Healing 1.

He says: *even though some people do not believe in mantras, this doesn't matter*. Like my father for example, he absolutely does not believe in mantras at all, and he always says things to me like: *so, you will be reborn as a mosquito or a frog, ha, ha, ha*, he does not, absolutely, does not believe in such things and makes fun of me. But, anyway, it doesn't matter, we can do mantras even for people who don't believe, it will help them. So, we can dedicate for them, send them positive energy. We all have this experience, of course, of our family members who don't believe what we're doing, but no problem. Buddhism is new in the west, no problem.

Then he says: *even if you don't have any faith or belief, you should practise the dharma because there will be some benefit*. So, many people, I have many friends who are catholic, for them the idea of religion, I don't know, they have some kind of aversion towards it. I don't know what kind of impression they had. But what we can do is practise Lojong. What I've been talking about these days, Lojong. It doesn't matter if you're Buddhist, or Catholic, or Hindu, or Muslim, or whatever, atheist, agnostic, this is very suitable because it's about how to deal with everyday life, how to develop empathy, how to put yourself in other people's shoes, how to have a better quality of life in the social context, how not to get angry, very important. The first thing is we need to accept that life is the nature of suffering because it is. Sorry, there's nothing to do about it, if we accept, then it doesn't hurt. That's what Rinpoche says, didn't he? What we accept doesn't hurt. So, we're getting old, nothing to do, no? Except no need to spend a lot of money on potions, and colours, and diets, and this and that. It's natural, nothing to do about it, just enjoy, enjoy life. Whatever happens to us, just accept, first thing. Then okay, of course, try to change the mind, we try and be as comfortable as possible, but to try and change things that's impossible is kind of a little bit, well, a waste of time, isn't it?

For example we have many of these projects. In Brazil we have the project in the schools, which is teaching peace education to children, who are, actually, obviously not Buddhists, they're Christians. So, we're not trying to convert people to Buddhism at all, but we're trying to share with them the ideas of non-violence and emotional education. Why not? Then there's the whole mindfulness movement which is using the Buddhist principles of developing attention and concentration, which is helping people's mental health. Why not? And anybody can use those. So, why not? Everybody can use Lojong as well. Why not? I'm sure some people, I don't know, have something that because we have rituals in Tibetan Buddhism they have some aversion, but this is based on some misinterpretation both of Tibetan Buddhism and their own Christian tradition. Rinpoche, he said many times that if you come and do Self-Healing, and then as a result, you go back and become a better Christian, that's a perfect result. We're not actually trying to convert people unless you want to. I mean, if you like to join us, welcome, but don't feel any stress, any pressure because that's not our intention. Our idea is just to make the world a better place and share

positive information. Everybody's welcome. Everybody's welcome to try. Why not? It's free. Please try.

He says if we try, for example Lojong, changing the mind's negative habits to positive habits, and like he says: *every day one less negative habit, every day one more positive habit*. That's for everybody, isn't it, it's not just for Buddhists. We have all those self-help gurus on the internet, or personal trainers who are telling us the same thing, but we have to pay them. So, every day or as much as possible, try and give up a negative habit, every day or as much as possible, try and develop a new positive habit. That's great, no? That's for everybody. If we do like this, our mind will become more stable because, gradually, we develop more faith, more confidence in ourself and what we're doing. Many times our mind's unstable because we don't know what we're doing. And then we're like: *I should do maybe this, maybe that*, always the mind is shaking, *maybe I go here, maybe I go there*, because we don't really feel conviction in what we're doing, in our choices. But, gradually, as we see the benefit of meditation, taking care of our diet, our emotions, and so on, we become very stable because we know it's right. Stable is good, stable means peaceful. It's what we want - peace. Many of us have heard the word nirvana, but we don't know what it means. Nirvana literally in Sanskrit or Pali means for suffering to be blown out, to be extinguished. But, literally, what it means is our mind is completely stable, is completely peaceful. Wouldn't that be nice? Whatever happens, good or bad, the mind is okay. I mean, sure lots of things are going to happen in our life, I mean, it's guaranteed, isn't it? We were born and now everything happens to us. But we choose how to deal with stuff, how to react to things. So, who's our friend, who's our enemy? We need to understand the one harming us is ourselves, our problems are inside ourselves, rather than always blaming the others, blaming the government, the partner, the boss, the weather, society, Covid. Always we put the problem outside, we never think: *actually I'm responsible for myself, my own experience*. But we should, because if we're responsible that means we can change our experience for the better, doesn't it? If we're not responsible, nothing to do, just need to accept, there's no chance. So, the fact that we're responsible is much better. So, it means the government's not responsible, god's not responsible, our wife's not responsible, our husband's not responsible. We are responsible for our own experience. So, if we know what to do, we can improve. If we have peace education, non-formal education, that's what like Rinpoche suggested we should do.

Also, he says if we do like this, for example: *if we say the mantra of Buddha Shakyamuni, our five elements will become more balanced*. So, what are our five elements? In the west we have 100 and something elements, we have a periodic table, don't we? I don't know how many of those we have. A hundred, hundred and ten? I don't know, anyway, lots of elements, no? From hydrogen up to, I don't know what these days, anyway, lots of elements. So, when we talk about elements, we don't mean like hydrogen and helium, and stuff like that, although of course we are made up of those elements. What we mean by elements is the Ayurvedic or Vedic elements which are space, wind, water, earth and fire. We talk about five elements, not hundred and something elements like strontium, cadmium, iron, sulphur, not those elements. However, all the elements that we now have in science, in Chemistry, are actually based on the five elements of space, wind, water, earth and fire. The ancient way of thinking is we have five elements. So, the quality of earth we know, around us there's like rocks and mountains and stuff like that, and also

within our body we have bones and the material part of our body. The solid bits like the teeth, the bones, and so on. So, this is the earth element. Water. Of course, we have like Lago Maggiore, we have seas, and oceans, and rivers. So, our water element is the fluids within our body. Fire, ok, there's the sun, the stars, there's heat, isn't there, in the outer environment. Our inner heat is our body heat, and it's like when our cells are metabolising things they develop heat, so we have inner heat. That's our inner fire. Wind is the movement within our body, like let's say, the circulation, and also, we have many like currents of... actually let's say in the western way, we have many electrical energies that circulate through our sympatic and parasympatic nervous system. We have, for example, our blood and our lymph that move around, it's circulating. The wind is the movement of energies within our body. We have outer winds and inner winds, and wind is like moving, isn't it, like here I've got a fan so I can feel something moving. Also energies circulate within my body, in my mind. Then space. We have outer spaces, no? So, in the Ayurveda, in Tibetan medicine, in the Tantric tradition, we say space is the element that gives the possibility for all the other elements to grow and to move. Space is like the fundamental element because space is where we put everything else, and all the elements can, it's nice, dance together, they move together, interact together because the space element is there holding them. So, according to the Buddhist tradition, our inner space is our mind. We also have some spaces within our body, don't we. For example, our stomach, our gallbladder, we have some inner spaces, some cavities, but principally our space is within our mind. Actually, we have a space as big as the universe inside our mind, but we don't recognise it. Why? Because it's full up of thoughts about ourself, so it's like we completely filled up all the space, inner space in the universe, with me, myself and I. It's like our computer. Well, I don't know about your computer, but I'm always filling up all the space on my computer. When it's completely full, I always have to empty off the space of my computer for it to continue to work. So, this is like our minds, this is one of the features of our Kaliyuga time, our modern times. Now our minds are completely full of stuff like, for example, where have celebrities been on their holidays, what food shall I use to eat to lose weight, all kinds of rubbish, we're completely overloaded with information. So, there's no space left for anything else. So, we need to get rid of all the, like on our computer, we need to put the garbage in the garbage bin on the computer and press delete. We do that by meditating on the nature of reality. Rinpoche used to call it the space bin. When somebody, for example in Lojong, many times somebody is annoying us, or let's say we perceive reality like that, that somebody is annoying. So, what we need to do is put those thoughts in our space garbage bin and press delete, like forget about it, think: *oh, everything actually arises from the side of my mind, they're not truly horrible, this is my fantasy, it doesn't matter, delete.* Then stop thinking about it, stop dwelling on it, forget about it. So, we need to delete all the rubbish in our minds and give space for positive thoughts, positive emotions.

According to Tibetan medicine, to be healthy our five elements need to be in balance. So, we have five elements and what's called three humors. We know what the three humors are because we know a little bit about Ayurveda. So, we have three humors called *Kapha, Pitta, and Vata*, in Sanskrit, and Tibetan they're called *Lhung, Bedkan, and Tripa* – wind, bile and phlegm. We need these three humors to be in balance and we keep the three humors in balance by our diet, by our behaviour, by keeping our emotions in balance, by behaving in the right way. For example, now in Europe it's Summer, so, for example,

outside it's hot, so if I go and sit outside in the sun without a hat on, without sunglasses, and then I eat a nice big plate of pasta with lots of chilli and lots of oil, and have some coffees, and then some wine, and then some more coffee, and some more pepperoni, and then stay out a bit longer in the sun, in two or three days what will happen? I will get a big headache, I'll feel sick and I'll get a problem in my stomach. Why? It's natural, because I'm creating the cause for it by own behaviours. To be healthy I need to keep my diet and my behaviour in balance. So, this we know, we need to follow that advice, it's normal advice. But on top also we need to keep our emotions in balance. Many of our sicknesses are coming from an emotional cause, an underlying emotional cause. So, if we say mantras, for example om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha, it's balancing our emotions, and honestly, a lot of the stuff that we were bothered about before, we start being not so bothered about. It gradually changes our emotional let's say colour, the colour of our mind, it changes it to a more positive one. So, this is balancing our mind, our emotions, and then also its balancing our body. This is a very important idea in Tibetan medicine, in Tantra, in Tibetan Buddhism, in Ayurveda, that if we take care of our emotions, our body will also become more healthy. Also, conversely, if I sit outside in the sun with no hat and no sunglasses, and have ten coffees, and some whiskey, and pasta with oil and pepperoni, what I'll do is I'll become angry and nervous. Because it's true, the environment can also affect our emotions. So, it's both ways. We're a dynamic system. So, in many ways, we need to take care, and in Rinpoche's Self-Healing teachings, he gradually explains all kinds of very nice ways of how to take care of ourselves, which are very easy to do and are free. Of course it's very good if we're really sick, to see a doctor. If we're really crazy, we need to go and see a psychotherapist. But most of the time, if we know how to take care of our diet, and our behaviour, and our emotions, basically we're okay. This is a great type of self-knowledge, the ability that I can take care of myself. Otherwise, we feel all the time weak, if in every moment something's wrong and we need to go and ask somebody else what to do. So, this is really a great, great blessing, the Self-Healing teachings, it really gives us self-empowerment. Because then it's all, as they say, in our own hands. I know how to take care of my body, my mind, my emotions, I know how to make my right decisions, I know how to live my life. It's wonderful, isn't it? These great masters like Rinpoche and other great masters, this is the quality that they have, they absolutely know what to do, there's no doubt. But we can also develop that, all we have to do is put this easy stuff into practise. It's not, as they say in the west, rocket science. It's easy, we just need to keep going with all these simple things, and then if we build up a very good foundation, gradually everything will improve.

Then Rinpoche said: *a mantra is a spiritual friend. In this century, friends always change. Every moment we have new friends, friendships become something inconsistent, and it's difficult to find true friends. The mantra is permanent, it will always help us, it's always good company, a very close friend. So, Buddha Shakyamuni taught many healing methods.* Rinpoche said this in the late 80s. At that time, most of us didn't even have a computer. We had a telephone, remember a telephone was something attached to a wall in the kitchen, and you had one between the whole family. We didn't have all this stuff that we have now, and we had our friends, and everything was okay. But now with modern technology, it's true friendships come and friendships go, but especially nowadays with social media, it's really like a false friend, having loads and loads of social media friends. Anthropologists say that most normal people have a circle of 150 people. Somebody like

Rinpoche, thousands of people. Exceptional people, they have thousands and thousands of people in their circle. But a normal person, their circle is 150 people, that includes all their family, all their school friends, all the people they know at work, the people that they socialise with, your tribe is about 150 people. That's the normal comfortable level. But now you see people and they say I have three thousand Facebook friends, or a million Instagram followers, or whatever. But it's a little bit unstable, isn't it? I mean if you're friends with somebody, you're friends and that's it, isn't it? A friend is just: *I wish you well, I want to help you, I like your company*, it's never changing. Okay, everything changes, but for many, many years it should be like this. Many people suffer a lot for this, no? Rinpoche remember was hearing all kinds of people's problems, and this thing that people don't feel like they can trust anybody, that their relationships collapse, that their friendships are not true, is a great suffering for many modern people. Perhaps this is why many of us gravitated towards Buddhism, towards the dharma, to this concept of a spiritual community, to the concept of a sangha, where you know that whatever, good or bad, everybody will always be there. Actually, this is why, not just us, people who are religious are more psychologically healthy. Also Christians, Jewish people, Muslims, Hindus, spiritual people, because it's not just their practice but this thing of having a community that somehow you can rely on, it gives people a much greater sense of emotional security. So, yes, okay, we take refuge in the Buddha, the dharma and the sangha, the actual sangha or the *arya* sangha, the ones with realisations. Let's say Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche, this kind of people, Kyabje Pabongkha Rinpoche, Kyabje Domo Geshe Rinpoche, these are the *arya* sangha, the ones who we're sure have got realisations. So, the community is important, it's really, really important. It's very important. Now we can use technology in a positive way, fortunately now we have streaming, the internet, websites, WhatsApp, we have thousands of these things nowadays, don't we? We can connect with all our sangha members all over the world, the NgalSo spiritual worldwide community. Fortunately we don't need to feel alone. Actually, everything you can use in a positive way, so we try and use the technology in a positive way too.

Then what else did Rinpoche say? He says: *mantra is always good company*. When Rinpoche says mantra is permanent, he's speaking in a simple way. Of course, philosophically, nothing is permanent, but some things like a Buddha, Buddha's mind is always the same but it's ever-changing. It means like this. A mantra is positive ever-changing, but always good, in the sense that it never gets negative. I think Rinpoche meant like this because he was trying to explain in a simple way. Maybe he didn't have the words, but more to the point maybe we don't have the ability to understand. Anyway, it's true, mantra always helps us, a mantra is always good company, a very close friend, this is completely true. *Buddha Shakyamuni taught many healing methods*. They say he taught eighty-four thousand healing methods, of which we don't know all of them, but anyway, lots and lots. Why? Because there's eighty-four thousand kinds of personality, eighty-four thousand kinds of delusions. So, there's literally a method for everybody. It doesn't mean that everybody's method is suitable for us. For example, here in Albagnano, we spent twelve years receiving the initiations of the eighty-four mahasiddhas. They have some really incredible methods of how to develop the spiritual path, which were particularly suitable for them and people like them. So, it depends, no? But basically, there's a method for everybody, but the thing is we have to find it, so that's why having a spiritual friend is useful because they can help us, direct us to the way that is suitable for us.

Rinpoche says: *mantra is our spiritual friend*. Our Tibetan geshe, actually geshe is the abbreviation of the word spiritual friend in Tibetan. So, all the monks who finished what we call geshe studies, the education of the Gelugpa monasteries, and passed the exam, they're called geshe, spiritual friends. Because they have a kind of deep spiritual knowledge they can apply to help themselves and others. But the mantra is also our spiritual friend. And we also, gradually, can become a spiritual friend, a *mitra*, for everybody else. So, for most of us there's no chance ever for us to be in a Tibetan monastery. I mean, maybe for one day or two hours, or something, or a week, but very unlikely we'll go through a whole Tibetan education course. But no problem, the dharma is available in modern society, and our gurus have completely shown and given us all the empowerments, blessing, instruction, everything, all we have to do is to put it into practise. If we do so then we can become *mitra*, that's a Sanskrit word, we can become *mitras*, we can become a spiritual friend ourself. For example, here in the NgalSo tradition, we have this idea to train *mitras*, spiritual friends, to take care of different meditations. This is a pre-announcement by the way, the only place where right now we have this programme working is in São Paulo, in the Shide Cho Tsog Dharma Centre, where we have an introductory course on Buddhism that was made by Lama Michel. People have to study it and pass an exam. If you want to take care of the Tara meditations, Tantric Self-Healing meditation of Tara Chittamani, then you have to receive the empowerment, receive the commentary, do the retreat and the fire puja, and pass a little exam to see if you know something about Buddhism. Then that person is qualified to guide the NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing of Tara Chittamani as a spiritual friend. We intend to gradually develop this programme, this system, here in Albagnano and in Spain, Chile, Argentina, in Holland, in Germany, in France, in Malaysia, in China, everywhere, in all the NgalSo Centres throughout the world. Anyway, this is a pre-announcement, just like putting out some publicity. The details we'll gradually work out. Lama Michel and me, and some other friends are working out exactly how we can do this. So, if you'd like to become a *mitra* of the NgalSo tradition, why not? If you want to guide a practice and be of benefit to others, why not? How lovely! Please, think about it, and then gradually how to do will be revealed. So, don't think: *oh, I didn't go in a Tibetan monastery, I can never be a spiritual friend*. Actually, you can if you want. You can learn to guide one, or two, or three, or four meditation practices, and be of benefit to people around you. We have many different teachings and therapies that we need people to guide. Gradually we will roll out this programme in the NgalSo world, in our NgalSo mandala. If you're interested, that will become possible. All of us are good enough to become spiritual friends, all we have to do is make an effort to first recognise that we need to change something. Then we need to apply the right effort, right teachings. For sure everybody can improve. Buddha never showed anything that others cannot do, he always showed things that were suitable for everybody. So did Lama Tsongkhapa, so did Lama Gangchen Rinpoche, all the great masters showed things that all of us are capable of doing. We're very lucky, no?

So next in Self-Healing 1, it starts to talk about healing with the hands. Actually, Self-Healing 1 was kind of a prequel, let's say a preview of all the rest of the NgalSo teachings, and then gradually Rinpoche explained all these things in more detail over many, many years. For example, he brought out what we call Chagwang NgalSo Reiki teachings, but this we can talk about tomorrow.

Is there any question about what I was speaking about? I've been speaking about Lojong and om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha. Are there any questions? Anybody who's watching on streaming, you can send a WhatsApp to Maria Cristina. If you want to send one question now, if you're watching this, you can send a question in Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, or even English if you want. Other languages not, sorry, I'm not so sure we will understand. But we can manage those ones. Does anybody have any questions, or is it all completely clear?

Ok, what we'll do is we will sing the mantra of Shakyamuni Buddha together, and try and think about all this, and receive the blessings. Anybody watching, you have five minutes to send us a question. If not, we'll go on something else.

om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha (6x)

I'm going to summarise. So, there are many meditations related to om muni muni. First one: as we sing om muni muni, we have to breathe in, we have to breathe out while we're singing. So, as we breathe in, we breathe in white light and healing energy, and as we breathe out, we breathe out black energy, our stress, our anxiety, our sickness which dissolves into space. We can do that as we sing om muni muni. Now I'll say short and then later when we do this [showing the book *Self-Healing 3*], we'll do in more detail. So now it's the opposite of *tonglen*, now we're breathing in white energy, and sending out sickness and negativity. We have many different meditations. Now we're breathing in peace and positive energy. Breath in:

om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha (4x)

That's very good to do when we come back from work, our mind's full of stress, better than smoking, drinking coffee, drinking a bottle of wine. Because I need to relax, I need to reduce stress, so this is better. Healthier. Maybe just have two glasses, not a whole bottle. Like Rinpoche said: *every cigarette less is Self-Healing*, so, don't have a whole packet because you're stressed, just have one. Reduce. Say more mantras. That's the idea.

Next one is healing the aura. So, aura is our subtle energy. We can see it in kirlian photography. We like very much positive energy, for example everything to do with Rinpoche we like very much, we have a nice feeling. Some people, if we're going to a charity shop or something, feel bad energy, some kind of energetic pollution. Some people's aura is not so clean. But honestly, to get secondhand clothes is good for the environment, isn't it? We should do. So, anyway, if we sing om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha, we imagine we're full of golden light, silver light, all our aura becomes very pure. Also, whatever we touch, we receive only positive energy, our environment, all the things we touch become very blessed, pure. So, that's good. Then no need to feel afraid, we're very relaxed.

om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha (8x)

Next healing meditation with the mantra of Guru Buddha Shakyamuni, is when we say the mantra we imagine a vajra tent or a vajra wall or a vajra shield. What this means is that no negative energy can reach us. Sometimes we're in a place or with a person and the energy is not so good, so we can put up like a force field. Vajra means diamond, king of stones. So, it's like many of these [shows a vajra] crossed together, a vajra fence is like many vajra crosses like this, but it goes bigger up like the universe and down to the subatomic

level. So, it's impenetrable like diamond energy of new bliss and emptiness. So, you imagine like many diamonds or something like a force field. Diamond is like the hardest thing, isn't it, but made of light, very beautiful, with many rainbows. No negative energies can enter, all the positive energies can enter, but no positive energy can leak out. So, it's nice. These days we're very much into PPE – personal protective equipment. Everybody needs a mask, and gloves, and visors, and plastic shields, everywhere you go there's somebody that's got like this in the shop or in the office. So, like this but made of diamonds. It's not fixed to a desk or an office, we carry it around with us, like a diamond shield, a diamond tent all the way around, under the feet, like a diamond bubble, or a diamond cube, a diamond box. That's very nice. So, let's do that together with the mantra and the blessing of Guru Buddha Shakyamuni.

om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha (4x)

Diamonds are a girl's best friend, and diamonds are also boy's best friend, well these vajra diamonds anyway. So, this is something to try because now we have this pandemic and we have these visors, and this and that, but sooner or later we take all this away. But these diamond visors and diamond shields, these ones we're keeping because we want to only receive positive energy forever. So, this is a very nice meditation to do.

Let's see what else Rinpoche suggests. Rinpoche suggests, like he says in Self-Healing 1, we can use the mantra om muni muni to bless medicine. So he's doing om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye eh, like the five elements. So, we can do that om muni muni eh yam ram lam bam shuddhe shuddhe soha. So, we will sing this, please sing along. If you don't know all the details, later on we'll explain it all, but probably you do. You imagine the pure elements dissolve, let's imagine you have some medicine, let's say Paracetamol, let's say some natural herbs, whatever, some medicine, even food can be medicine. But we sing this mantra and we imagine our food or our medicine, becomes more blessed, more pure, more powerful. This is more beneficial. So, me and Maria Cristina will sing and everybody who likes, welcome to join in.

om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye eh
om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye yam
om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye ram
om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye lam
om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye bam

So, we can do like this. We hear, for example, food these days it doesn't have much energy because the soil is exhausted, because of chemicals... Maybe a few people can afford to buy bio food, here in Italy it's expensive, maybe in Germany or Holland it's cheaper. But, anyway, most people can't afford to buy completely bio food. So, then we can do like this: om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye eh yam ram lam bam, and then we can do shuddhe shuddhe soha atikyana atishkiti soha. We can purify the food and put back the energy. So, this is a very good idea. Then after that we just eat it, and then we stop obsessing about it. We get too obsessed about food. If that's too much if you have some medicine, just sing om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha, and imagine that's it's dissolving into your pills, and then you eat your pills. Rinpoche says, this will help a lot.

Next. Rinpoche called this Sunlight Meditations. So, each time there was coming more sunlight. After this we're full of light, full of inner sunlight, full of inner happiness, full of joy, full of positivity. If we know somebody who's sick, ourself or somebody else, then as we say the mantra we imagine the energy of Guru Buddha Shakyamuni enters the person's crown and their heart and fills their whole body in the form of golden lights, and in the form of rainbow lights. In our NgalSo world, we have the Chagwang NgalSo Reiki WhatsApp group, we have many groups for dedication prayers, like for example we have *Pedidos* Brasil, many groups for requesting prayers, requesting healing. If you're in any of those groups and you see somebody says: *please I need help for this and that*, then you please you sing om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha, and send healing energy to that person. Why? They're asking for help. So, everybody please help. If we do together, it's much more powerful. So, let's do this: imagine somebody you know who's sick, who's tired, who's weak, and send them energy with om muni muni.

om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha (3x)

Ok, so that's very nice, there's a lot of opportunities to say that, to do that, to help people. If you're not in our dedications group and you would like to be, just ask around in the sangha and somebody will put you in it.

Next meditation: helping those who are dying. So, again, everyday many people tell us, send us messages saying please help my friend, my relative, my auntie, my grandmother, my family member is dying, my dog, my cat... So, for this we can do the same. We imagine that the dying person is enveloped in a cocoon of golden lights, and as they die, their minds are taken to heaven, to the pure land, or whatever is the right place for them to evolve, and they're guided by Guru Buddha Shakyamuni and all the holy beings.

om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha (3x)

Next sunlight meditation is for after our dear ones, our friend, our pet, whoever has passed away. We can continue to send them this energy, this mantra. In the bardo, between death and life, death and rebirth, this light of Guru Buddha is guiding them, sending them in the right way. It's very important to know. People don't just die when it's convenient, people die in many, many situations, all times of the day and night, no? Then, of course, we try and send some messages to our gurus, to our friends to pray, but we ourself need to pray for our friends and our family members. So, please, all of us can do this. Rinpoche gave us this tool, this mantra that would help, so, please use it. For example, even if our family members have passed away some years ago, maybe for sure we don't know where they are, but anyway even if they're in a new life we can send them this energy. If we dedicate for them, think of them, the energy will touch them and help them.

om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha (3x)

So, actually we only need one mantra. If that's enough for you, it's okay. Everything is inside om muni muni, it's like a panacea, one medicine that cures hundreds of problems. For ten years Lama Gangchen Rinpoche mainly taught one mantra: om muni muni maha muni shakyamuniye soha. Not because he didn't know anything else,, he knew everything, but because it's very powerful and suitable for us. Please use as much as you like. Anytime you're stressed, anxious, or in any of these situations like we explained, please use, or any other time you like, or just walk around and sing it, there are incredible benefits.

Our friend, our spiritual company, all the time, will never let us down.

Ok, so, thank you all very much for listening. Now we're going to dedicate our energy and put all our positive energy in our karma bank.

OM BHISWA SHANTI HUNG (5x)

Per il potere della verità, pace e gioia ora e sempre,

Per il potere della verità, pace e gioia ora e sempre,

By the power of the truth, peace and bliss forever.

Por el poder de la verdad, paz y felicidad por siempre. Español.

Por el poder de la verdad, paz y felicidad por siempre. Portuguese.

Pelo poder da verdade, paz e alegria agora e sempre.

By the power of the truth, peace and bliss forever.

Par le pouvoir de la vérité, paix et joie pour toujours.

Durch die kraft der wahrheit, friede und freude für immer.

Door de kracht van de waarheid, vred en vreugde voor altijd.

Yin tsen-li teu lilyang yang-yuein heuping si leu.

Nyimo delek tsen delek

Nyime gung yang delek shin

Nyitsen taktu delek pe

Kon chok sum gyi jin gyi lob

Kon chok sum gyi ngoe drup tsol

Kon chok sum gyi tra shi shok

All'alba o al tramonto, alla notte o durante il giorno, possano i tre gioielli concederci le loro benedizioni, possano aiutarci a ottenere tutte le realizzazioni e cospargere il sentiero della nostra vita con molti segni di buon auspicio.

Al amanecer y a la anochecer, por la noche y durante el día, puedan las tres joyas concedernos sus bendiciones, puedan ayudarnos a obtener todos las realizaciones y colmen el sendero de nuestras vidas con muchos signos de buen auspicio.

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 lives with various signs of auspiciousness.

Ok, gracias, obrigada, danke schön, thank you everybody in all languages.