

ངལ་གསོ



NGALSO
Path to Enlightenment

Self-Healing 1 & 2 Summer Course - Reading and Reflections part 6 Lama Caroline

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

lo chog zang pö päl gyur tra shi pa
thub chen tän pe thrin le yar ngö da
phel je dro lor tsham pe dze pa chän
päl dân la me zhab la söl wa deb

om ah guru vajradhara sumati muni shasane karma utta
vardanaye shri bhadra var samanaye sarwa siddhi hung hung

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

lama khyen lama khyen drinchen tsawe lama khyen
lama khyen lama khyen kyabne kundu lama khyen

om muni muni mahamuni shakymuniye soha

om maitreya maitreya maha maitreya arya maitreya soha

om ah hum karuna karuna maha karuna arya karuniye soha

Good afternoon. We are streaming here today from Lama Gangchen Albagnano Healing Meditation Centre in Italy, and we are going to continue talking about NgalSo Self-Healing I, which was the first book of Lama Gangchen Rinpoche.

Within that, we're talking about how to practise the Lojong Mind Training teachings. So if anybody has not been listening to this until now, lojong is basically having empathy for other people, then thinking about others more than ourselves, making an effort to take on the suffering and the problems of others. Together with some special meditations, which will help us overcome what is called our self-cherishing and self-grasping, our egotism and selfishness. So in Self-Healing I, the main argument is: *what is my friend and what is my enemy?* The point is that external enemies are not our enemies. They are the objects of our compassion. What is our real enemy, is our own delusions. So this is what we need to recognise is harming us. There are two main texts of lojong. One is called the Eight Verses [on Mind Training] that we liked at before and the other is called the Seven Point Mind Training, and we are in the section where it is giving lots of slogans and advice, how to practice this.

Just before we start, the other day we were talking about this idea that a bodhisattva should be like a peacock. I was saying that in Indian mythology the peacock eats snakes and poisonous things, and then they say that the feathers of the male peacock became more brilliant. Today, out of curiosity, I googled this to see if it is true or not. Apparently, peacocks really do eat snakes. I mean, they are omnivores, so they eat plants, but they also do eat scorpions and centipedes and snakes. So it is actually true, it's not a myth. However, whether it makes their feathers more brilliant, I don't know. Maybe it does, who knows. So they really do eat poisonous snakes. It's not a myth, it's true. So anyway, bodhisattvas should be like peacocks and yum yum, all problems gobble them up [laughing]. Actually, we could do with a peacock here in Albagnano. Here in Italy, sometimes, we have little poisonous snakes and scorpions, so maybe we could get one or two to wonder around our grounds. Then we would have to get somebody to look after them, I suppose, and that would be another job, peacock keeper. So that's just because we are talking about the peacocks these days, so they really do eat snakes, which I didn't know until I googled it, so thank you Google.

Anyway, we are talking about what is called the advice of the Mind Training. There are what we call vows and then there is 22 precepts, or slogans or advice, so we are going through these.

The one we got to is: ***Be released by the two: investigation and analysis.*** So what does this mean? Yesterday afternoon, more or less at the end, we were talking about how in many kinds of Buddhist meditation, you observe your body, the position of your body, how it's feeling, whether your back is straight and so on. We also observe what is passing in our minds, our emotions. For example, they have walking meditation, don't they? Where you become aware of the movements of your body. That is quite common. Then there's just watching what happens in the mind. For example, when we become angry, we just say: *ok, I am getting angry* and we watch it arise, and then we realise it will go. Or whatever: *I am happy, I am sad, I am bored*, whatever. You watch what's happening in your mind without judging. Because normally, we just get totally involved in whatever is happening, don't we? We don't have that space in our minds. Let's say there's something we don't like, then immediately we get irritated and we get angry, and we react and then we think that person is horrible. We never think: *anger has arisen in my mind*, without judgment, and then let it pass. Or desire or hatred. We get completely obsessed and then everything is outside of ourselves, the world is happening to us. We don't think: *my mind is involved in this*. Then we just create more and more karma, more and more problems and suffering for ourselves. Then we make a casino [mess], as they say in Italian. We do that all the time, every day, all day long, that's what we are doing: making a mess for ourselves. So of course, why the world is a mess is not a surprise. Because morning to night we're all creating the cause for that. First we need to just watch what's happening in our mind without judgment. They say there is like a little observer watching what is passing in the mind. We should be aware of what we say. Generally, that's good advice anyway, isn't it? Before we open our mouths, we should be aware of what's going to come out of it [grinning] but many times we are not. Then we are like: *oh, I wish I hadn't said that*. Before we open the mouth: check what's coming out. When you're walking, check where you put the feet. When you're thinking, check what thoughts are coming out. Because even though nobody else can see our thoughts, anyway they are creating our reality. Anyway, the first bit is like this.

Then it says, we should be released, freed, by investigation and analysis. So that means actually, first, we need to understand something about the Dharma teaching, like for example lamrim, lojong, Self-Healing. These kinds of subjects. Analysis means, having heard it, heard about it or read about it or listened to it, or whatever, we should then think about it and come to some conclusion. Then analysis means we should actually meditate on it and become familiar with it, through meditation. When we talk about meditating in this way, we generate a positive mind, like for example compassion or patience, or some positive mental state and then we concentrate on it for as long as possible, we hold it in our mind. Rinpoche, Lama Gangchen, said we should do that and also always request blessings from the holy beings, for example like Buddha Chenrezig or from our guru, so that positive mental state becomes more strong and grows within our mental continuum.

So this is the advice. Be freed. Freed from what? Free from delusion, free from our karma, by investigation and analysis.

Next advice, this is one we could put on a t-shirt: ***Do not be boastful***. Do not show off. That's a good Kadampa advice. We shouldn't use the Dharma to increase our ego, basically. For example, as we get better at it, we shouldn't use it as a way to boost our ordinary sense of self and develop pride in ourselves. Ok, there are some kinds of positive pride. But if we just use our knowledge and so on of the Dharma or the fact that we are Buddhist, or that we were close to some famous master or something like this, this is not the right thing to do. In fact, we should do quite the opposite: we should be very humble, very normal. They always say that you should talk about all your faults. I don't know if you feel like doing that or not, but at least you shouldn't go around boasting about your real or imagined good qualities. You shouldn't behave like that. Rinpoche, Lama Gangchen, sometimes, when he used to do something really really good - this is true, you all know - he used to say: *that's my brother*, when he was really pleased with himself. He never said that's me directly. When he did something really amazing, he said: *my brother did this, my brother did that* [laughing]. He said this many times didn't he. So don't show off, don't be boastful. It's not appropriate.

Next t-shirt, next slogan: ***do not get angry***. Or, we can say in a positive way, have a happy and peaceful mind. Remember, we are practising Mahayana Buddhism. The point of all this is to develop compassion, which is one of the main causes of developing bodhicitta, the mind of awakening. One of the main things that stops us developing compassion, universal compassion, for everybody, is getting mad, getting annoyed, getting irritated, getting angry at people. Let's say somebody comes up and starts being horrible to us. These kinds of things do happen, we all know. So let's say, somebody starts complaining at us, being horrible to us. What we have to do, is think: *well, that's your problem. I don't accept this. I don't receive your delusion*. And actually have compassion for them, because they are creating the cause for more suffering for themselves. Another thing is, when somebody speaks badly towards us firstly, we think to ourselves: *ok, bla bla bla...* It's not entering, we have the vajra fence remember. Then afterwards just forget about it. By tomorrow, you should try and forget completely what they said. It's of no importance. Because if we start dwelling on it, that means we took it inside. Then actually, the other person they won and we're becoming part of the same problem. Our mind is disturbed, and we start thinking about how to react back. So yes: *bla bla bla bla bla...* As Rinpoche said: [mimics flushing] *space garbage can*. Pull the chain [mimics flushing] *pfssshh*. [laughing]. This is important, you know. We don't keep it. Whether the person was right or wrong, anyway we don't accept their negative emotion, their negative information. Just put in the space. Forget. So next week, if somebody asks you, you say: *I can't remember. I forgot*. Like no meaning. Because then it is not going inside, is it? We should do like this. So do not get angry. It's not worth it. We want to develop empathy towards all beings. Yes of course, we have some people who are really annoying, really irritating, especially usually related to us in a close way. But, they're our bodhisattva-makers, aren't they? Or not directly by blood, or marriage or whatever, but we usually have somebody around us

like this. As they say in the eight verses: *how lucky am I to have this rare and precious treasure that shows me my limits, that helps me to develop my bodhisattva-muscles. How wonderful, for free.* So do not get angry. Be very cool, be very calm in all situations.

Next slogan, next advice of the mind training: ***do not be unstable***. So the idea of this is that our mind should be calm and stable, whatever's happening. They say for example - I don't know - something nice happens to us. Maybe we win something. Then we start dancing and singing, you know super excited. We see this many times, overexcited. Then something goes wrong, and we become very down, very depressed. So our mind shouldn't go to the extreme. That's better because we are in samsara and the conditions are unstable. It's true. But if every time something nice happens, we become completely overexcited and if something bad happens, we become completely miserable and depressed, it's like we have no freedom. Because our mind is like on a roller coaster, this thing that is going up and down or like waves. We don't always want waves of emotion, it's kind of exhausting. We want stable. Calm. That doesn't mean boring, by the way. That means always positive feeling. Not like no feeling. It just means: always good feeling. That's the point.

Today, I was looking at one recording of Rinpoche in Brazil last November, and as he said many times, he was saying: *we need every day to be a peace day*. So how do we get every day to be a peace day? By acting like this: mind is stable. Stable and positive whatever happens. Buddha never said: *if you follow Buddhism, nothing will happen to you*. That wasn't part of the deal. Many things will happen. But we can choose how to react to them. We have to. We signed the contract of life without reading it. So now everything is going to happen probably, but all we can choose is how to react to it. Nobody wants to get old, but if we're lucky, we'll get old. Nobody wants to get sick. Most probably we will get sick. Everybody is going to die, guaranteed. We don't want to die, but there you are. Our only choice is how to react to these unpleasant situations that we signed up for without realising, by being born. [laughing]. So whatever happens, try and have a good mood, that is the advice.

Next slogan, next advice of mind training. This is a good one. ***Do not wish for gratitude***. [laughing]. Many times, we help people and then we feel disappointed, we feel that they didn't acknowledge us or respect us. As a Mahayana Buddhist practitioner, we have to give up on those kinds of ideas. The point is, is to help others and not to gratify ourselves. This is really difficult, because of course this is normal: everybody wants someone to say thank you to them. Anyway, even without people saying thank you... even if nobody ever says thank you, you should do good deeds. Why? Because it is the right thing to do. Your reward is having done a good thing. If we do something positive without seeking a reward, it actually helps us to grow. Then we do things in a pure way, in what's called a pure way - because when we always want something back for ourselves, which is the normal attitude, then, how we explain it in Buddhism is that it is contaminated by these worldly feelings. So when we do something positive, let's say for example I go to the supermarket and I buy loads of food and I take it to a food bank and give it to the poor. If I just do this secretly,

just wishing for the people to be well, and I understand that I don't truly exist, the act of giving is not truly existing, and the food bank and the people who are receiving it are not truly existing, but anyway, it's all positive, then I develop positive karma, positive merit, which I can dedicate and put in my karma bank. But if I go to the supermarket and buy loads of food and give it to the food bank, but then I want a selfie with the guy or the lady from the food bank, and a certificate saying *Most generous person*, who gave the most to the food bank and so on... Ok, I did something positive, I made an act of charity, but I am actually doing it to increase my ego, aren't I? Do you see the difference? If I do it because it's the right thing to do, it's completely different than when I need to be in the newspaper, or have a big certificate. People they do like this, don't they? It's more smart, if we are going to do something positive to get the best investment for our positive action. Therefore we should do it without wishing anything back. Of course that's not easy, because it is totally against our normal feeling, and everybody feels like: *I would like everybody to say thank you to me, say that I am so wonderful, I'm such a good person*, and all this kind of stuff. But anyway, we have to get over those kinds of things. Anyway, don't worry, if you are truly a selfless person everybody will finally recognise what a wonderful person you are, so no need to seek that kind of recognition. People like Rinpoche, Mother Theresa, there are many people like this in the World, aren't there? Who just selflessly do things for others, and finally everybody recognises their qualities. So don't wish for gratitude. As they say in Christianity, your reward will be in heaven. Your reward will be in Dakiniland. In Dakiniheaven or Dakaheaven, as you like [laughing]. So don't worry, ones rewards will come, especially if we act in a selfless way. If we plant the seed of a medicine plant, and we water it, then with all the right conditions, for sure, eventually we will grow medicine, won't we? So if we do a good thing and create the causes for our spiritual growth, definitely the results will surely come to us. It is guaranteed, if we do the right thing.

So that was the last of the 22 slogans of the mind training.

Then there's a little bit at the end, a kind of conclusion. Geshe Chekawa, he was an 11th century Kadampa geshe of Tibet. Kadampa geshe means the follower of Atisha. Atisha was this great Indian master, who brought Buddhism to Tibet in what's called the second wave of Tibetan Buddhism, the Kadam-sama, the new tradition. Our present tradition of Gelugpa, Ganden Nyengyu NgalSo, what we do is derived historically from the teachings of Atisha. Almost 900 years later, we are still following kind of the same lines that Atisha set down. Geshe Chekawa, who was one of the disciples of Atisha or his very close follower, he said: *because of my many wishes, I endured suffering and a bad reputation. Now, I have received the instruction for controlling self-grasping. So now if I die, I have no regrets*. So this is a bit like Rinpoche used to say: NgalSo. His teaching it means ease or relax in Tibetan - but NgalSo has two parts: **Ngal** and **So**. First syllable means all the negative things that we don't want. And **So** is the positive things, what we should do. So this verse is like this. First he says: *because of my many samsaric wishes*, selfish wishes, normal wishes, what did I get? So I had all those wishes for myself, my own happiness, my own well-being, and then I tried and I tried all my life, trying this, trying that to be happy, and what did I get? I got suffering and a bad reputation. So that was completely a

waste of time he's saying. Just thinking about me, it didn't work. I tried really hard to satisfy my desires in that way, but it's completely useless.

Then, **So**, the positive part. It says: *then I received the teachings of controlling self-grasping*. Remember in Self-Healing I, Rinpoche was saying, if we study lojong, we will understand really who is our friend and who is our enemy. Outer people and circumstances are not our enemies. They are the objects of our compassion actually. Our actual enemies are inside of ourselves. They are our negative emotions and we have many different negative emotions, and especially there is six of them: ignorance, desire, hatred, pride, jealousy, and another one [laughing]. Of these, the main ones that we need to get rid of is what is called self-grasping and self-cherishing. So what this means is automatically we all have a sense of self. Every moment of our lives - apart maybe from when we are unconscious - all the time when we are conscious, we have this feeling of self, don't we? Like *I, me*. Even in a dream, we have this, don't we? So we all feel: *here's me and there's you and there is the world*. We feel like an actor that has wandered onto the stage of life and then gradually I will wander off it. The world will be there, I just wander in and wander off, like an actor on a stage or something. We don't understand that we are connected with everything else, and we don't understand that our experience of reality is extremely subjective. In the Buddhist teachings, they explain very clearly that from the feeling of I comes the feeling of mine. Because I feel separate: me and you. I mean I don't know how you actually feel, but I presume you feel similar to me. I assume, but actually nobody knows - it is weird isn't it how anybody else actually feels. Unless we're buddhas, then we can know. From the feeling of I, we always have this feeling of something missing, this separation. Then whenever we experience something pleasant we develop desire and attachment towards it and get obsessed with it, how beautiful it is. This is like our relationships, isn't it? We meet somebody. They are so wonderful, they are so beautiful, their voice is fantastic, we wait for them to WhatsApp us a hundred times a day, and we totally obsess about them. It's true, no? That's fine until we get to know them. Then the problems start. Or conversely, we meet something or somebody that is irritating. Then we develop aversion towards them. We get obsessed with their bad qualities. Like for example our neighbours. Sometimes, we get annoyed with our neighbours and then we get obsessed with our neighbours, with their horrible qualities. It's true, no? They become absolutely horrible and you can't even bear to go past their house, and you become obsessed. Our mind is very unstable and we are creating all these fantasy situations that create suffering and problems for ourselves and others.

This is why Chenrezig, Avalokiteshvara, the Lord of Compassion, has compassion for all beings. Not because they are suffering, but because we're all in this fantasy, deluded state of creating unnecessary suffering. Really, a lot of it is just made up in our own heads. He understands that and that is why he has real compassion for us. Because we are like crazy people, actually. Really. We think only certain people are crazy, but according to Buddhism all ordinary people are crazy to one degree or another. Because we are deluded and we create this whole fantasy scenario that we call samsara, our personal samsara. Samsara is not a place. It's not got a post code. It's something that's in our own body and

mind, it's our own experience. We are creating all this fantasy, and it is very unnecessary. We have to know how to uncreate it. We have to relearn how to think.

Anyway, Geshe Chekawa said, on the positive side: *I have received the instruction for controlling my self-grasping, so now, if I die, I have no regrets.* Which means, now my life was really worthwhile. I can die happy. How nice. He understood about interdependence, how everything is connected. That means that everything we do matters, by the way. The normal mind is: *I am separate, I am not connected to anything, so it doesn't matter what I do.* That's how we feel. Then, even better: *if nobody sees me, I can do whatever I like.* The only slight problem with that in the West, is the idea of God. People worry that maybe God can see them or something. Anyway, we tend to feel that if nobody can see us doing things, it's ok. But this is a completely deluded mind. Everything we do, it has a consequence. It's all recorded in our own subconscious. So everything we do matters. If we understand that everything doesn't have an inherent self, everything is like a web of life, everything is interconnected, then every single thing we do matters. And on the positive way of thinking, we can all work together to do something better for the planet and for society. We might think: *I am just one person, it doesn't matter, it's useless, I can't do anything,* but actually we can. If we all do our small thing, but in a positive way, it makes a huge difference, doesn't it? One thing that the pandemic has shown is that we can work together collectively, even on a global scale, which is the first time we have ever seen this actually. Actually that gives us great hope for the future. If we really want, we can save the planet. We can put everything back in a positive way. We just have to realise this. Collectively, we understood that the Corona virus was bad for us, bad for our older family members and so on. So then we all acted together and we all know what happened. Everywhere there are lockdowns and this and that to protect people. But if for example, we also thought that the climate crisis was really so serious, we could all work together collectively to heal the planet, couldn't we? We've just seen it's possible. Many things that we thought were impossible, we can already see it's possible. Even in the last few months, the environment got much better, didn't it? In a just few months without us everywhere taking up all the space. Something positive. Geshe Chekawa said: *now I have received the instruction for controlling self-grasping,* i.e. I have identified my main inner enemy, my ego. Lama Gangchen used to sing that song Ego-Friendly. [Maria Cristina singing the song]

This is like tantra, isn't it? Rinpoche, he was always like that with us. For example, if somebody says directly to you: *you are completely stupid, full of desire, angry, full of pride and jealous,* we would just leave immediately [laughing]. We can't stand even people to mention to us our defects. Rinpoche's way, the way of tantra, is not like that. It's to become close to us, friendly with us and say it's ok and then gradually we can change. Rinpoche was always like: *wonderful.*[laughing] For example, not just Rinpoche also the historical Buddha Shakyamuni. There was one king called Ajatashatru, who was not a very nice person, I must say. What king Ajatashatru did, was, when he was a prince and he was fed up waiting to inherit the kingdom, like many medieval kings, what he decided to do was become king by killing his father and taking the throne. He killed his father, but not

only killed him, but in a horrible way. In a nasty way, he tortured him to death. But his father was an arhat. So he killed his father and his mother, like in one of those medieval films. Then he became the king. Sometime later, he felt somewhat guilty for what he had done, and then he went to talk to the Buddha, Shakyamuni Buddha. He said: *oh Buddha, I am a really bad person, actually, I tortured and killed my parents*. The Buddha said: *oh, no problem, wonderful*. Then the Buddha gave a teaching called How to kill your father and mother. This is true. There is a sutra called How to kill your father and mother. But, the real meaning of the sutra is to kill your self-cherishing and your self-grasping. The mother, I think, is the self-grasping and the father is the self-cherishing, if I remember rightly. King Ajatashatru, at first he didn't really get the point, he was like: *oh fantastic, the Buddha accepts me, everything is ok*. Then he kind of relaxed and began to follow the Buddha. If the Buddha just had said: *you are a really horrible person, you are going to go to hell for killing your parents and torturing them and killing an arhat* - because these are called the actions of immediate karmic retribution - there would have been no chance for him to change. But, in fact, King Ajatashatru began to follow the Buddha, he changed a lot and then he actually developed some inner realisations. So if some horrible person can do that, then definitely, we can too. Which I guess is why Rinpoche made the song. So first *yes, we accept, yes, I'm jealous, I'm angry, I'm cuckoo number one* (that means I am ignorant). Rinpoche always used to say like that. *I am angry number one, jealous number one, proud number one*. We accept. So Ego Friendly means, we accept. But then it doesn't mean we accept and carry on in the same way. It means we need to do something about it. So first we accept that we have an ego, which even that is difficult to accept. Because everyone is like: *who me? No, I am perfect*. If anybody asks us, we go all humble and we pretend to be so humble and so kind and all this. But in fact, we all have a strong sense of ego, don't we? So we get friendly and then *puff*, through the dharma practice in the right moment, we can overcome our delusion.

Anyway, Geshe Chekawa says like this: *before, I tried in a normal way, my life was a mess*. We've tried everything for *me, myself* and *I*. *Me first* didn't work, just created suffering and problems, also, people didn't like me. *Now, I practise the Dharma and I overcame my self-grasping and my self-cherishing, so now, really, I can die happy, thinking I did the best I could in this life*. Wouldn't that be nice? In the last moment of our life, to just smile and think: *you know what, my life was wonderful. There is nothing I feel regret for in my life*. How nice that would be. That would be wonderful, wouldn't it? I was reading one article, it was called Top Five Regrets of the Dying. The sort of thing I read on the Internet [laughing]. None of them said: *I wish I had gone to work more, I wish I'd made more money*. They all said: *I wish I'd spent more time with my family, I wish I'd done more for the planet, I wish I had done positive things* was their actual regrets. So we should try and be like Geshe Chekawa and die with no regrets whatsoever, completely happy, because we put into practise the advice of the Mahayana lojong mind training and Self-Healing. Maybe we didn't get enlightened, but we did our best. We left the world a better place than we entered it. We didn't just take, we gave. Then it's ok, my life was worth something. Wouldn't that be nice? So Geshe Chekawa says like that.

So that's the end of the mind training. Now I am going to repeat the rest of the Tibetan. Because I repeated half of it before. So I'll repeat the commitments and advice of the mind training. So now I am going to repeat what's called the vows of mind training. Rinpoche said sometimes we also have to do this in Tibetan, because originally it was spoken in Tibetan. So this is what is called the oral transmission. Excuse the accent.

[repeats Tibetan]

So this is what we call the commitments of the mind training. Then there is what we call the precepts and the slogans of mind training that we just went through. That we just finished now. In Tibetan now, just to complete, this thing of the Seven Point Mind Training.

[repeats Tibetan]

So these are what we call the advices. Then there are some trainings.

[repeats Tibetan]

For example, that says: Practice all yogas by one. We went through all these. We said them all in English.

[repeats Tibetan]

They are the training, the slogans. Then it says, what we just said. *Before, I thought about myself and I experienced suffering. Now, I practise to overcome self-cherishing and now I can die with no regrets*, which in Tibetan is:

[repeats Tibetan]

That is the complete transmission of the Seven Point Mind Training. That's what Rinpoche asked us to do in the Ngalso Tantric Self-Healing I. If we think about all this, hopefully, we can recognise who is our friend and who is our enemy. Hopefully, we no longer think it's the neighbour, after all this [laughing]. Maybe, we even sometimes put a mirror and think: *it is me*. Which is very difficult to do of course, but maybe we can start. *I am responsible for my own happiness. I am responsible for my own suffering. If I am happy, it is due to me. If I am unhappy, it is due to me. I am the creator of my own experience*.

Rinpoche said we always need to link the mind training and all practice, together with receiving the blessing of the Guru and especially the blessing of Guru Buddha Chenrezig. So, in Lama Chöpa we have some verses related to mind training. Verse 97. Let's have a look. Rinpoche always said, we have to say: *Oh venerable and compassionate guru*, and then say the verse. We do like this and then we can also do **om mani peme hung**. Because now we've heard it all, how to do and everything, but many times, it's like water off a duck's back. It just goes in and comes out. It doesn't penetrate our minds. We hear many times the same thing, but we have a very hard mind, as Rinpoche used to say. He says this in Self-Healing I. We don't receive. That's why we request the Guru Buddha's blessing and say the mantras, so hopefully, something will penetrate our hard minds and then our minds

will become a little softer. They will become penetrated by the energy of love and compassion of Buddha Chenrezig and then we will improve. That's the idea. So not ducks' backs. Let's have look in the guru puja.

Fortunately, we have a very famous singer here, a famous Italian Dharma singer, so Maria Cristina come here, and help us sing this. She is multi-functional: translator and famous singer. Very kind also, so thank you for helping us this summer. Also thanks to all the other translators, for example Carolina in Chile, and Shi Yang who is doing the Chinese translation, and all the other ones, Bebel, thank you very much for helping us. So it's verse 96. So we'll go to the Lama Chöpa. First we do in Tibetan, then English because you have to understand what you are doing.

de na je tsün la ma thug je chän

96 nö chü dig pä drä bü yong gang te
mi dö dug ngäl char thar bap gyur kyang
lä ngän drä bu zä pä gyur thong nä
kyen ngän lam du long par jin gyi lob

de na je tsün la ma thug je chän

97 dor na zang ngän nag wa chi shar yang
chö kün nying po tob ngä nyam len gyi
jang chub sem nyi phel wä lam gyur te
yi de ba shig gom pa jin gyi lob

de na je tsün la ma thug je chän

98 jor wa shi dang dän pä thab khä kyi
trä la gang thug gom la jor wa dang
lo jong dam tshig lab jä nyam len gyi
däl jor dön chen je par jin gyi lob

95 Oh venerable compassionate Gurus, we seek your blessings
so that all karmic debts, obstacles and suffering of mother-beings
may without exception ripen upon us right now,
that we may give our happiness and virtue to others whereby all beings have happiness.

[chanting: **om mani peme hung**]

96 Oh venerable compassionate Guru,
should even the environment and the beings therein be filled with the fruits of my karmic
debts and unwished for sufferings pour down like rain, we seek your blessings to take
these miserable conditions as a path by seeing them as causes to exhaust the results of our
negative karma.

[chanting: **om mani peme hung**]

97 Oh venerable compassionate Gurus,

In short, no matter what appearances may arise, be they good or bad, we seek your blessings to transform them into a path ever enhancing the two bodhicittas through the practice of the five forces - the quintessence of the entire Dharma - and thus we acquaint ourselves only with a happy mind.

[chanting: **om mani peme hung**]

98 Oh venerable compassionate Gurus,

whatever occasion we meet, we seek your blessings that we may adapt it to our meditation by the skillful means of the four practices. May we render this life of freedom and endowment infinitely meaningful by putting into practice the advice and commitments of the Lojong Mind Training.

[chanting: **om mani peme hung**]

Actually there's one more verse, but never mind. Hopefully, now what it says in Lama Chöpa, this bit should make more sense to us, because we went through all this. Rinpoche always used to say, whatever practice we do we should put it back into Lama Chöpa. So then in Lama Chöpa, everything is there. Our whole practice from A to Z. We repeat a lot and we know what to do. Then we repeat every day and we try and receive the blessings. It's like gardening, all the positive qualities of our mind grow up, in our buddha garden, because we moisten them with the blessings of the guru. We moisten them with love and compassion and wisdom and these kinds of things.

So now we should know, who is our friend and who is our enemy. Every time we don't get mad, we are a winner [grins]. Every time we get mad, we are a loser [laughing]. It's the opposite way around of the normal life, ok? We have lots of bodhisattva-makers ready to test us in our practice of mind training, for free. Even if we don't have lots of time to do sadhanas, to do meditation, to say mantras, it's ok, we can do this, can't we? All day long, we face many people, some of which annoy us, some of which are really annoying [laughing]. So then we can do the mind training, which is good actually. While we are working, we have a lot of opportunity to do mind training. So then our working life and our family life becomes the practice of Mahayana Mind Training, so actually that is good. Then we have a lot more time to grow and to evolve, not thinking: *Oh, I never do any practice, I never do any mantras, I am too busy working.* We can do this. So it's a very super positive, meaningful advice. We need to make t-shirts: *Who is my friend? Who is my*

enemy? Maybe with a little mirror in the middle [laughing]. That would be a good t-shirt, wouldn't it?

Are there any questions about mind training? If not, we will continue looking at Lama Gangchen Self-Healing I. So beautiful actually, so nice. Has got any questions about what we were saying? Ok, good, perfect. Anyway, we have to just do it, as they say, just try. Just try, every day a little bit. Together with **om mani peme hung**, it's very nice. We see many people suffering all the time, we can just say it to our selves. Really try and open our heart, like Rinpoche said. We have a lot of opportunities. Normally our heart is closing. it's like self-protection or whatever. But when we say **om mani peme hung**, we open our hearts to the others. We work on developing love and empathy. So also, quietly to ourselves, while we are working, we can say **om mani peme hung**, when we meet people. Obviously, we don't need to say it loudly. I know one lady, a Dutch lady, and she has **om mani peme hung** on the arm and she is a carer. So she says, every time she greets people - she cares for retired priests - every time she greets them in the door, she looks at the arm and says **om mani peme hung**. You don't have to make a **om mani peme hung** tattoo, but we can just think about it. Try and remember.

Rinpoche emphasised very much in the early years, the practice of Chenrezig, Open-Eye Chenrezig. Chenrezig means gentle eyes, loving-eyes. Rinpoche said: *every day, we need to make a peace day*. So we need to stop this kind of eye [mimics angry eyes] and we need to look with nice eyes. This has to be our practice, loving eyes. So we actually look pleased to see people, when we meet them. This is our practice. Practise means we are not perfect, but we try. Gradually, we become more perfect, we become better at it and finally we become naturals. Rinpoche emphasised that we need to remember and practise the mind training in our daily life. He said in Self-Healing I, and therefore we have been looking at what that meant.

Now, let's go back to Self-Healing I, the actual text of what Rinpoche said. If I remember rightly, we got up to the section where Rinpoche was explaining **om muni muni mahamuni shakjamuniye soha**. Does anybody remember? I seem to remember, we got to that point. I think we got to the point, where Rinpoche was explaining. I'll just read that again, because it is super nice. Now we are going to read from the book.

*Self-Healing means decision. Let's talk a little bit about the mantra **om muni muni mahamuni shakjamuniye soha**. This is the Self-Healing mantra, which can be used with some visualisations. Because all our negative energies and interferences arise due to the lack of balance of the elements of earth, water, wind, fire and space, we must visualise that all our mental unhappiness, such as jealousy, greed, expectation and hatred, and all the negativities of body, speech and mind, leave us as we breathe out in the form of black smoke and dark light.*

Now this is me talking. Actually, you can see here this is the prototype for Ngalso Tantric Self-Healing. Rinpoche, already the ideas were there, and after this, gradually came out all these incredible practices that Rinpoche shared with us. So now I am looking at this Self-

Healing I with very different eyes. The plan was all there. We just didn't know, we didn't recognise what was going to happen. It's so nice actually. This is like our *terma*, our bible or something, every thing is there but in a very short way. So for example, Rinpoche said, if we don't want to do all this complicated stuff, we can just do everything with the mantra of Buddha Shakyamuni. We can do Self-Healing together with the practice of **om muni muni**. We did that with Carmen, I remember. She showed us a couple of weeks ago, she showed us the whole Self-Healing with Buddha Shakyamuni mantra. Rinpoche always said, you only need to do one practice well to get enlightened. Unlike us, who try and do millions of practices and not getting anywhere. At least do one well.

And then: when we breathe in, we imagine that all the buddhas and bodhisattvas blessings enter into us in the form of white light, positive energy and long-life energy, the five elements and medicinal healing power. In this way, we will have a very relaxed body and mind.

So you see here, this is the blueprint for Ngalso Tantric Self-Healing. All the negativities throw out, the delusions, the elements in the form of black smoke and dirt. Breathe in all the energy, all the healing energy of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas and all the positive life energy. It's Self-Healing, isn't it, exactly. It was all there, waiting to come out. Obviously, he knew. Just we didn't know. And then all the different meditations that he showed us. Before he passed away, Rinpoche said we need to go more deeply and continue to practise all of this as deeply as possible and try and get some real experience, each one of us. If we do that, apart from the fact that we will all grow and evolve, we will also create the cause for future Rinpoche to manifest.

Then Rinpoche says: *we can also chant the mantra to create a protection around us so that external negative energy does not disturb us and so the inner positive energy, which we accumulate, does not leave us. We visualise around us a vajra-wall, as if we built a house with vajra-energy. If it is difficult for us to visualise a vajra wall, we can imagine that we are enveloped by a white radiant light coming from the buddhas.*

Now this is me speaking. All this is with the mantra **om muni muni mahamuni shakyamuniye soha**, or **om mani peme hung** or any other mantra. As a spiritual community we have the habit to recite many mantras, which is a very positive habit. However, it says here, if we say a lot of mantras, at least, negative energy should not enter. So for example, if somebody says: *You are really horrible, I hate you, bla bla bla*, you know, all this kind of stuff, then we shouldn't receive that emotional energy. It doesn't enter our minds. We just say all that lojong stuff: stay calm, stay peaceful, don't react. Not like say lots of mantras, and then somebody says *I hate you* and then we have a fight with them. Because then it is not working very well. Because we have to do sutra and tantra together. So we say lots of mantras and it has to have an effect on the rest of our behaviour and vice versa. When we do this tantric visualisation, we have to have the emotional basis of what we call sutra, like lojong and this kind of thing. Rinpoche showed us many tantric meditations, all kinds of incredible meditation practices. But Rinpoche always said: *we need to put it together with feeling*. Not just something technical like lights, colours, this

and that. It has to be full of love, full of compassion, full of energy, because otherwise it could like, I don't know, some kind of video game or something.

Ok, then Rinpoche says: *These energies have the power to protect us from the outer negative energies and prevent our inner positive energies from draining away. This practice is very effective. We may also visualise light from the buddhas between our body and our muscles and our skin.*

Now he's talking about the vajra armour. Rinpoche in this context is talking about using the mantra of **om muni muni mahamuni shakyamuniye soha**, but then later on he taught us many practices, like for example Black Manjushri. In fact, one of the last teachings he ever gave, was how to protect ourselves from losing our energy by the mantras of Black Manjushri. Then we don't get tired, we don't get sick, we don't get drained. Ok, we have committed ourselves to the bodhisattva path, like: *problems: give them to me, yes, difficult people give them to me*, but also, we have to protect ourselves energetically. Because otherwise we can become very tired and very emotionally drained. Until we're like a super-Bodhisattva, then it doesn't matter. We've overcome our sense of self and nothing can touch us. But while we are growing, we need to protect ourselves energetically. For example, you can do everything with **om muni muni**, Shakyamuni Buddha mantra. If not, you can do with Black Manjushri or many other ways. So Rinpoche says that while we are visualising all this, we should recite the mantra of Shakyamuni Buddha **om muni muni mahamuni shakyamuniye soha**. Then Rinpoche explains syllable by syllable the meaning of the mantra of Shakyamuni Buddha. Also, by the way, in this book, which actually is really amazing, called Ngalso Tantric Self-Healing III - Guide to the Good Thought Supermarket by Rinpoche, there's a section from page 160 called the 46th light up to page 172 with all kinds of special meditations related to the mantra of Guru Buddha Shakyamuni. Here he went into more detail. In this book, Rinpoche called everything a light, because his idea was like the dawn rising, like in the morning, first light, second light, up to midday. We say enlightenment, don't we in the West. Actually, the word is awakening, it's like this idea of one light growing inside us. So he said, there were like a 100 lights that we need to develop, the full light of Buddhahood, dawning within our own mind. So then he explained all the meditations with each time our light becoming stronger, so we become full of light like he was.

Later on, we will also go through Self-Healing II and Self-Healing III to honour and pay respect to our teacher, Lama Gangchen Rinpoche, and also to try to understand so we can put it into practise. So gradually, we will go through all these really wonderful things. However, if you can't wait, and you don't have a copy, you can order it from the Albagnano online shop. It's on our website, so you can have one sent to wherever you are in the world. We also have this available in Spanish and Portuguese and Italian and French. Maybe not everything's here in our centre, but if it's not here you can contact one of our centres around the world. But I would definitely recommend you get one, because, honestly, now I am looking at it in a different way, because, this is Rinpoche's mind. This is like his legacy to us, all his beautiful thoughts. He prepared everything for us. So now

we have to read what he actually wanted to say to us. It is all here [holding up Self-Healing III book]. Also, this is where we can be close to Rinpoche. If we actually put into practice. Like Rinpoche's Self-Healing basically is his mind. So if we start to do this, we will really feel close to him. This is what he actually thought, how he actually was. Then, for sure, Rinpoche will be very proud of us all.

So then Rinpoche says: *let's examine the meaning of each of the syllables of om muni muni mahamuni shakjamuniye soha*. First is **om**. There are loads of explanations. Rinpoche says here: *om means the absolute mental peacefulness and happiness*. So that means enlightenment, doesn't it? Rinpoche puts everything in a very like easy way, but actually deep way. *muni means the determination to end suffering*. This is normally in the West what we call renunciation, but we misunderstand the term. It's 'definite emergence'. Because actually, what Rinpoche said is, we need to renounce our own inner violence, our negative emotions. Not renounce our husband, our wife, our money, our job, our cat, our parrot, all these sorts of things. This is not the point. The point is to give up negative emotions, the violent emotions. It's not your stuff. People think that renouncing is like - I don't know - going sitting in a monastic cell somewhere with nothing. But if you take all your ordinary mind with you, you don't actually renounce anything. So the first **muni** represent this, this definite emergence.

The second **muni** represents bodhicitta. So Rinpoche says: *it is the determination to maintain an altruistic mind, the bodhisattva mind wishing to help all living beings*. All means all, not just the ones we like. In fact, there are many bodhisattva vows, but the only one you can't break is you must never give up on anybody. That's actually very difficult, but that is the main bodhisattva vow. You must never think that somebody is so awful that they can't be helped. If you think that truly, then you break your vow, your bodhisattva vow. In the lojong, it says we should meditate on the special cases, which we know many [laughing]. Anyway, sometimes you think this idea is putting me to the test, but we must never give up on anybody. Rinpoche never did, did he? He never gave up on anybody.

Then the next one, **mahamuni**. Rinpoche says: *this represent the correct view of reality, the perception that all phenomena have an empty nature, free of concepts, and do not possess an independent existence*. In fact, everything is connected, isn't it? When they talk about an empty nature... everything apparently to us has a fixed nature doesn't it? I'll explain to you the Indian Buddhist example. There are some trees, like in Brazil, they are really hard, hardwood. Brazil tree, super hard wood. But some trees are the opposite, they are very soft inside. They say for example a banana tree, a plantain tree, it's not like one of these hardwood trees. If you start to peel away - it looks like a tree, strong and everything - but if you start to peel away the outside, as you get further in, there's not so much there. It's kind of like - I must actually do this, I must find one, and see if it is true or not, when I go to Brazil or in Malaga, we have these in Malaga as well. We just need to find one that I can start peeling a bit away. So they say inside, there is like less there. The further you go into it, the less solid it is. Maybe just like some fluids or something in the centre. So they say reality is actually like this. It looks like it's super solid, but when you start to

investigate, there is less and less there. This is the point that we are trying to make. In fact, this is just like modern science. Because for example, here is a book [holds up book] Good Thought Supermarket, but if we start to investigate, let's say scientifically, we can see there is paper, and there is ink, and there is wood, and if you got one of those electron microscopes, we can see atoms and molecules and then we see electrons and protons and all kinds of other particles. Finally, we just see a lot of energy and space. So the further in we get to analysing it, the less apparently there is. It is like 99,99% space and very little else, except some energy moving around. So modern science is coming to the same conclusions as the ancient Buddhist masters. Things are *shunya*, which means they are empty of true existence. Ok, yes they exist and they function, but when you start to analyse, there is less there than you thought. Not so solid. In the Indian Buddhist tradition, they give very nice practical examples, based on nature most of the time. What you can actually see around you. That is why Rinpoche said it's like inner science. It's very much similar to our science, actually. Things are not independent. In fact, everything is interdependent. Like for example our bodies are made up from things from exploding stars. All the atoms in our bodies are based on the explosions of supernovas. We are actually part of the universe. We are all connected, it's amazing. We are connected with everything else. Therefore, what we do, matters.

This is an example, I'm not actually going to do, but you can see here is one beautiful table cloth. If I pulled this corner, everything is connected, so if I pulled it, everything would go and everything would fall off the table, which obviously I am not going to do. But if I did, everything would go, because everything is connected. We are connected to everything else, so what we do affects everything else. We are trying to grow and improve, all of us. So that means actually we're influencing everything in a positive way, because we're dedicating, we're developing bodhicitta. That has an incredibly positive influence on the whole world, actually. That's good and we need to continue to do that. Many of us together is very powerful. Doing positive things together is very powerful. We, and all the other positive groups - it's not just us - together we're creating the Shambala consciousness. Fortunately, not just us.

Then Rinpoche says: *shakyamuniye represents the secret tantric way, which is the quickest. There are thousands of buddhas, who have already come into this world, but none of them transmitted the tantric teachings, only Buddha Shakyamuni.* Tantra is fast because we take the basic concepts of Buddhism and then we integrate them with our subtle body and subtle mind. Not just our gross body and our gross mind. Rinpoche was an incredible great master of tantra. Now we need to, all of us, follow in his footsteps. Actually, Shakyamuni Buddha is number four. In this fortunate eon, which is our eon, there are a 1000 buddhas that will come and go. Buddha Shakyamuni is number four and he taught tantra, and number 999 will teach tantra. So don't miss the boat, or it will a long time before the next boat comes [laughing]. In our Temple of Heaven on Earth, here in Albagnano, Rinpoche put the 1000 buddhas on the wall. So when we see that, we should think don't miss the boat, otherwise there's a lot of them and it will be a really long time before we can achieve enlightenment, if we miss the chance now.

Then **soha/svaha** means: *please give me the realisations and the ability to heal*. Ok, so this was Rinpoche's special thing, our special thing of our tradition. For sure, we have to get enlightened, but Rinpoche was showing the healing aspect of the Buddhist tradition. Many thousands of people came to him and were healed in body and mind. Then finally, he decided to show us Self-Healing in many different forms, so we could heal ourselves. Maybe difficult to be a super power like he was, but anyway we can do something. At least, we can heal ourselves.

And to conclude for today, Rinpoche said: *it is not necessary to be buddhist to recite and receive the benefits of this mantra*. That means anybody in the world is welcome to do it, if they like. For example, if anybody is watching the streaming and they are not Buddhist, you are welcome to try. Why not? Try and see if it works. Just like in a curious way, like as an experiment. Rinpoche was always very keen that anybody in the world can come to our centres. Anybody from any religion, any culture: everybody is welcome. You don't have to be Buddhist, everybody is welcome to participate in our activities. For us, maybe, it's normal, but in other Buddhist centres it's not like that actually. We will continue as Rinpoche showed us.

To conclude for this evening, we will sing together the mantra of Guru Buddha Shakyamuni. Above our heads, or if we like in our heart chakra, is either Rinpoche, our guru, or Buddha Shakyamuni, who is also our guru. Whatever you feel like visualising. As we say the mantra **om muni muni mahamuni shakyamuniye soha**, we request the blessing of Rinpoche, all the gurus of the lineage, of Buddha Shakyamuni, so these seeds of renunciation, bodhicitta, correct view and the tantric realisations, ripen within our mind and we develop the peace garden, the inner buddha garden, as quickly as possible for the benefit of all beings. Also, we can imagine that from our heart the pure and positive energy radiates out, either like a rainbow or a golden light, and touches the hearts of all beings, bringing happiness and joy and peace to everybody, and healing. Let's do that together:

[chanting **om muni muni mahamuni shakyamuniye soha**]

In the beginning of Lama Gangchen Rinpoche's teachings, he started with: *who is my friend, who is my enemy?* Then towards the end of his life, he was making this song: ego-friendly, ego-cut. Rinpoche emphasised a lot singing. With our friends, he put a lot of blessing into these spiritual songs. He asked, before he passed away, that we should sing more. This is like the mahasiddha way. So we should honour him by continuing to do it.

[singing Ego-friendly, ego cut]

Rinpoche said that we need to sing that as much as possible. Also, you can sing it in Italian.

Thank you very much. Now we will dedicate and we put all our positive energy in our karma bank by giving it away.

om bishwa shanti hung (5x)

By the power of the truth, peace and bliss forever

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

Peace with everything, everything with peace.

By all the human beings' attention, and the holy beings' blessings.

om mani peme hung (5x)

om wagishwari mum (2x)

om vajrapani hung (4x)

mig mä tse wä ter chen chen re zig
dri mä khyen pä wang po jam pel yang
du pung malü jon dzä sang wä dag
gang chän khe pä tsug gyan tsong khapa
lo zang drag pä shab la sol wa deb

So thank you all very much and we will continue at five o'clock tomorrow to continue with Lama Gangchen's beautiful Self-Healing teachings. See you all tomorrow. Thank you all very much.