

Lama Caroline

Making peace with the elements

**Introduction to the gross,
subtle and very subtle elements**

EH BAM LAM RAM YAM

Transcript - day 3

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Kunpen Lama Gangchen, Albagnano, Italy

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given at Kunpen Lama Gangchen, Albagnano, Italy
August 2017

Lama Gangchen Peace Publications
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lgpp.org
ahmc.ngalso.net

First edition: 2018

Lama Caroline, Dorje Kanyen Lhamo, was born in England in 1965. As a child she was fascinated by science, astrology and space exploration. Whilst at the university of London, she began to feel that the scientific approach to reality was too external and conceptual and so began to investigate reality through Buddhist meditation and explore inner space. From 1986 to 1991 she studied Gelugpa Buddhism in Cumbria, England, with Geshe Kelsang Gyatso. Then in 1991 she met her spiritual master, Lama Gangchen Rinpoche, and, impressed by his open modern approach to spirituality, she began to study and collaborate with him. For the past 28 years she has accompanied him on numerous teaching tours and pilgrimages worldwide, promoting non-violence, non-formal education, the NgalSo tradition of Tantric Self-Healing and an inter-religious spiritual forum for world peace. She is the chief editor of Lama Gangchen Peace Publications, which publishes books on Buddhism, peace media and peace education. She is presently editing the NgalSo Gyatso – the collected works of Lama Gangchen that form the basis of the NgalSo tradition.

In August 2000, in Tibet, she was recognised by Lama Gangchen as Lama Dorje Khanyen Lhamo (Goddess Who Upholds and Transmits the Vajra Speech of the Buddha) and is one of the two lineage holders of the NgalSo teachings.

She has done numerous meditation retreats of the Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions and teaches courses and workshops on Buddhist philosophy, tantra, medicine, yoga and astrology. She has a diploma in Inter-religious Studies from the Open University (UK), an MA (with merit) in Buddhist studies from the University of Sunderland (UK) and is about to embark on a BA in Tibetan and Sanskrit.

We were very fortunate to receive a commentary on the Five Supreme Healers and Five Element Mothers during a course from the 2nd to 12th August 2017 at Albagnano Healing Meditation Centre in Italy. The course was given by Lama Caroline who since 28 years has worked alongside Lama Gangchen recording his teachings and producing the books and sadhanas we now have. The following is a lightly edited transcript of the second half of this course - concentrating on the Great Element Mothers and the element absorption practices.

To follow this text it will be useful to have the following books and sadhanas from Lama Gangchen Peace Publications:

- *Making Peace with the Environment*
- *Crystal massage method to create the pure energy form of light and nectar - the secret commitment assembly of Guyusamaja*
- *The process of death, bardo and rebirth according to tantra*

Day 3

We've been talking about the Five Supreme Healers and the Five Great Mothers related to the *NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing* practice of T.Y.S. Lama Gangchen Rinpoche. Before Rinpoche left to Tibet, in July, he suggested to me that we follow the external mandala system related to the Five Supreme Healers. On the walls of our meditation hall we have beautiful paintings and images of the mandalas of the Five Supreme Healers and Five Mothers. So we started by meeting the buddhas one by one, as we entered into the mandala: Supreme Healer Akshobya, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha, Amoghasiddhi, Vairochana. We also talked a little bit about what they really mean in relation to our emotions, to our energy. What it means to meet a Supreme Healer. Yesterday, we talked about something very interesting; in our *Borobudur Self-Healing* practice we enter into the mandala from the east, circling clockwise, like when we go in and around the Borobudur stupa-mandala, the outer mandala, and ascend up to the centre and in this way we are on a spiritual journey of meeting the Five Dhyani Buddhas. Once we're in the mandala we need to come out again, so the male energy is going in clockwise and the female energy is going out anti-clockwise. We understood that as we go out we are actually going through space, wind, fire, earth and water elements - **EH YM RAM LAM BAM.**

These days I've been trying to fill in some of the background of *NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing* practices because I had the fortune to work with Rinpoche on them. I was the one writing them down - helping Rinpoche to express these ideas, so I understand a little bit the background of the practices. We were also looking in the Guyusamaja Tantra and the commentaries, from the section on the body isolation - about how the five aggregates manifest as the Five Supreme Healers and the five elements in the pure form arise as the Five Mothers. We explained that in the Guyusamaja Root Tantra there is the space

element, it's written in the first paragraph. We have to understand the emptiness of the five aggregates and how they manifest as the Five Supreme Healers, and then on top of that we meditate on the emptiness of the five elements and understand that they are arising as the Five Element Mothers. The source of this is the Guyusamaja Tantra.

So, we have Five Fathers and Five Mothers, and we have a basic level, a path level and an enlightened level. The basic level is what we have already - an ordinary everyday body and mind which we can transform by what are called the path practices. In the end what comes out if we purify the different elements of our normal human experience - if we completely purify our body and mind - is the Five Supreme Healers and the Five Great Element Mothers. This is what we mean by buddha or an awakened person: having a completely pure body and mind. The images of the mandalas of the Five Fathers and Five Mothers are very important. I'm summarising now what we have already talked about in these past days.

Then we started to look in Rinpoche's book, *Making Peace with the Environment*. There is a lot of information in the book and I was explaining where it comes from. One of the major sources is the Guyusamaja Tantra. It explains about the five *pranas*, the five energies, and we were talking about what that means - these energies that run our autonomic nervous system... the energies that keep us alive. We need to learn how to recognise, purify and use them. Then we talked about cosmology, about how in the west we have the big bang theory and about how in the Indian-Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhist version of that we have something similar to the big bang motivated by consciousness. Due to the collective karma, the collective consciousnesses, of beings in the universe which are zillions of consciousnesses, arises the space element. Then the energy of these consciousnesses creates an energy, some movement or wind. We know from physics that energy is never lost, it just transforms into

a different state. The movement of wind causes friction which creates heat and so we have the fire element. This heat rises up and then, as we can see in nature, the heat goes up and it results in heavy rain. It's a natural cycle. From the heat rising and condensing comes water and finally things solidify and the earth element manifests. We talked about cosmology and the idea that: "*just as it is in the outer world so too it is in the inner world*".

Just recently scientist discovered - I don't know how - that 60% of the atoms in our body are made from collapsed stars from other galaxies outside of our solar system. So we are really made of star dust. That's how the outer universe has an effect on us, because we are made up of the same stuff. There are also many other scientific studies about how everything is inter-related, from the point of view of modern astrophysics, theoretical physics and so on. In Rinpoche's book *Making Peace with the Environment*, it's working a lot with the relationship between ourselves, our consciousness, our inner elements, the *pranas* and the outer world. Of course we accept that the outer world affects us because we know when it's cold, when the seasons change, and so on, it has an effect on us but it's much more difficult for people to accept that our thoughts and emotions can have an affect on the environment. Not just in terms of recycling garbage but actually positive effects. So we talked about how that is possible.

When Rinpoche wrote the *Making Peace with the Environment* book he asked me to use information from many different tantras, one of the main sources of information is Guyusamaja, but there is also information from the medical tantras, from Kalachakra and also from the Tantric Grounds and Paths. Then we were talking about why, because everyone always asks, are there are different element systems in *NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing* and *Making peace with the Environment*. Actually there are many different element systems, it's like if we had a computer with only one programme we would think that it was very boring and send it back. Each of the element systems

creates a particular kind of inner experience, an inner healing effect. There are many systems. We need to learn how to use all of them because each one has a very specific healing effect. Rinpoche has kindly shared all those systems with us, but now it's up to us to use them and understand what they are. There is one system where white Vairochana is with a white female buddha and blue Akshobya is with a blue female buddha. But we can also see, also here in our gompas, blue Akshobya is with white Mamaki and white Vairochana together with the blue Great Space Mother. When Supreme Healer Vairochana is together with the Space Mother and Supreme Healer Akshobya is together with the Great Water Mother Mamaki - the source of this is the Tantric Grounds and Paths teaching. It's very important that we know the origin of all our practices. We need to know the authentic source of our lineage and all our teachings because it needs to be very clear and we need to have confidence in it.

People always ask why in the *Making Peace with the Environment* practice the earth element is in the secret chakra and not the wind element. Actually the source of this is from the Tantric Grounds and Paths teaching, in the commentary it clearly says that there are two possibilities. One is we can start from the secret chakra and move up: green, yellow, blue, red and white or it says at the secret chakra we can also have the downward-moving wind, the tursel lhung, which is yellow and associated with Ratnasambhava. This is an important text explaining the stages of the path of tantra. It says clearly in this text that the life-supporting wind, the sogdzin lhung, is white and is associated with Akshobya and the downward-moving wind is yellow and is associated with Ratnasambhava so therefore Akshobya is blue and is with the white Great Water Mother in the heart and in the secret chakra we have the yellow downward-moving wind and the earth wind Lochana. So Lochana is what is called the consort of Ratnasambhava but even so, Ratnasambhava stays in the navel chakra. We shouldn't think this is weird, it's like when we are married to someone we are not obliged to sit in the house together

with them all the time, we can also go out to other places. Actually there are about 10 different element systems and each one has its own perfect explanation about why an element is related to a particular place in the body, to a chakra, to an emotion, to a colour and so on. In this particular case one of the explanations of why the earth element is in the secret chakra is because that is where we are formed, we grow inside our mother's womb, we physically manifest inside the secret chakra, in the uterus of our mother. So there is a connection with earth. This is a reasonable explanation because it's true, because our body does form there inside our mother's body.

What I want to do is to explain, according to the Tantric Grounds and Paths teachings, about the absorption of the elements. It is a very important teaching and Rinpoche is always emphasising it very much. Of course we can use the elements for all kinds of incredible things which are all very useful: for our health, for our wellbeing, for having a good quality of life but the most interesting thing we can do with the five elements is learn to use them on the subtle level and recognise what's happening when we go to sleep, dream and wake up or when we enter into meditation, meditate, come out of meditation, and one day when we die, after death and when we are reborn. It's such an important teaching. It is really one of the main essences of tantric practice so Rinpoche has kindly made us this practice. All the information in a very condensed way is inside this book, so I'll explain in more detail what it means - earth absorbing into water and so on.

It says: **T.Y.S. Lama Gangchen Tulku Rinpoche, Tibetan Lama World Healer, NgälSo** - that's the name of our tradition, our practice - then the title, **Tantric liberation in the palm of your own hand, the process of death, bardo and rebirth according to tantra**. Then there is this picture of hands holding a vajra and bell which means we need to generate the exalted wisdom of non-dual bliss and emptiness, a very high realisation.

Then: thanks to Lama Gangchen Rinpoche for teaching us such essential and precious NgalSo meditations, for making our practice of the highest yoga tantra possible. To Lama Michel Rinpoche for helping with the Tibetan. To Sharon Dawson for the English editing. To Geshe Thupten Kunsang and Tenpal-la for the Tibetan editing. To Carmen Iodice and Gabriella Lo Re for the compilation of the practice and to all friends who have contributed to making this work possible. I like to make sure we thank everyone because it's more respectful and without the kindness of these friends we wouldn't have all these lovely books and teachings and so on. Of course we also need to remember the kindness of the previous generations of practitioners who passed these precious teachings on to us. When the lamas and monks came out of Tibet they hardly had any books, many of the sadhanas we now have were written down from memory by great lamas like Zong Rinpoche, one of Lama Gangchen's main teachers. Lama Gangchen also has an incredible memory- he knows almost all the pujas including the long ones of 3-400 pages by memory. I often sit next to him and can see he has the puja book but never really uses it as he doesn't need to. The text starts with this verse taken from a very beautiful much longer long life prayer, written by a Tibetan lama called Geshe Jampel Lodoe. He knows Rinpoche from Tibet, and he came here to Albagnano some years ago and he's the one who made the encyclopaedia of the ten sciences that we have here in the gompa in Tibetan. He made this very beautiful long life prayer, or shabten, for Rinpoche. Of course there are many long life prayers for Rinpoche, all very beautiful, but somehow this lama understood really well Rinpoche's qualities. He explained systematically Rinpoche's different actions in terms of healing, in terms of spiritual teaching, in terms of teaching *NgalSo Self-Healing*, in terms of Guyusamaja, Heruka, Yamantaka, Vajrayogini and so on. It shows each one of his qualities, how he is helping people around the world - it's a very beautiful prayer. We just took out one verse of this to put in the beginning of this booklet.

**RAB JAM GYAL WAI KYIL KHOR YO DO CHOG
RIG CIG RIG SUM RIG NGA RIG GYAI PAL
DRUB PAI KU SUM LAM GYI DAM PA CHOG
TSOL DZE RIG GYAI KHYAB DAG DI ME JUNG**

You give the supreme instruction on the path to realise however many mandalas of infinite buddhas there are which could be included in a single lineage, three lineages, five lineages and a hundred lineages and to actualise the three kayas you pervasive lord of hundred lineages, bestowing such instruction, are outstanding.

We talked briefly about this, from the body isolation chapter of the commentary of the Guyusamaja Tantra. We were talking in relation to the supreme healers, that from one buddha comes out three: Vairochana, Amitabha and Akshobya. Then from three come out five: Vairochana, Amitabha, Akshobya, Ratnasambhava and Amoghasiddhi and then each of these five has five divisions and it goes on like this until we end up with one hundred buddha families which actually is the meaning of when we say - **OM VAJRASATTVA SAMAYA** - the 100 syllable Vajrasattva mantra.

Let me explain this again in more detail. Here in our NgalSo Temple - which is unique in the western world - we have the 100 mandalas of the 100 buddha families on the roof, the vajra garland or vajravali set which is 45 plus some others. When we say **OM VAJRASATTVA SAMAYA** we are doing a condensed version of the mantras of all these mandalas. We can also see that here in the NgalSo Temple it all condenses into one point which is an amazing crystal pillar. This pillar, apart from being really cool and amazing, made of 200,000 quartz crystals from Brazil, symbolises the exalted wisdom of non-dual great bliss and emptiness. The pure crystal mind. The clear light is the fundamental human consciousness and through the tantric practice we learn to recognise and use that mind to meditate on the nature of reality, so the subtle mind experiences reality directly and

that's the real path to enlightenment. We can use this profound state of human consciousness called the clear light and we have various tantric methods to recognise it during our lifetime. Normally we only see this at death. There are some other moments in life when we can possibly see this very subtle pure mind, but generally most people only see it clearly at the moment of death. Through tantric practice we learn to recognise the subtle states of the mind, which are actually due to the elements absorbing, then some more subtle minds and finally we experience what we call the clear light. With this we meditate on emptiness - obviously that means we need to think about interdependence, impermanence - and we need to get used to the idea so that even on the deep level of our mind can think about it. If we do this: meditate on emptiness, the nature of reality, with the very subtle mind of clear light then this is actually the path to enlightenment. That's why in the centre of our NgalSo Temple we have a crystal pillar, this is the meaning we need to get, we need to get there, we need to get into the clear light. Not just get into it, but use it to meditate on the nature of reality.

There are infinite buddhas who can be included in a single lineage. Single lineage is non-dual great bliss and emptiness, the fundamental deep human experience used in the most pure and positive way. Some schools of Buddhism say everything arises from the mind of clear light. From this point, from our own deep human consciousness, the clear light, our whole existence expands and manifests. We are born, we arise out of the clear light, we reappear, and then one day we'll die and go back into it, but consciousness cannot be destroyed. Energy can only be transformed, so what will happen is that it'll manifest again. Ordinary average people, let's say 99.99 percent of people, have some energetic disturbances caused by delusions such as desire, hatred, wrong views and things like that, so our energy shakes and what we manifest is not clear. We manifest or project uncomfortable states of suffering, of anxiety and so on. In tantra we learn to recognise this process and pacify our negative emotions through the practice of *Self-*

Healing, working with the Five Supreme Healers, and making peace with the *pranas*, with the winds, with the Five Element Mothers. In this way everything will gather into our subtle mind in a pure and positive way, it will gather into our central channel. Then we can re-manifest a pure and positive world, like our Temple of Heaven shows.

What we do is called Vajrayana or the way of the vajra. What do we mean by this? Vajra is a Sanskrit word, dorje is the Tibetan word, the translation is: *je* lord, *dor* stone - so Lord of Stones, i.e. a diamond. Diamond is what it's actually called. We might think that a dorje is not a very good diamond - we can't get it on our finger! What do we mean - this is a diamond - because it doesn't look like a diamond, it looks like something completely different! It is actually a symbol, the bit in the centre is like the crystal pillar here in the gumpa, it is the fundamental state of consciousness, clear light. From this manifests out our reality, so we can see this kind of egg shape, a point, a bindu, then there are the two lotuses and then there comes something like five prongs on each side. These prong things are what we call *makaras*. We can see these at the Borobudur Temple, there are these big crocodile heads with big tongues that go down the sides of the staircases that lead into the mandala. A *makara* is like a kind of crocodile, a sea or river monster. Maybe we don't have many crocodiles around here but if we lived in a place like India where there are crocodiles it's like there is this sense that there is something hiding under the water. It's used as a symbol of the subconscious. It's not the conscious mind. The *makaras* symbolise what is lurking around beneath the surface - it's like what we are afraid might break out from our subconscious! If we have been buddhists for a long time we know very well how we should act, but then something triggers our emotions and we say things or do things that surprise even ourselves. This is like a *makara* has got loose! Our very subtle mind manifests the subconscious and then finally it manifests the gross body and gross mind. So, there are five prongs on this side of the vajra and five on the other side, in the un-enlightened state we manifest five negative emotions and five

impure elements, ten *makaras*, but in the pure state we manifest the Five Supreme Healers and Five Great Element Mothers. Do we want to be bad tempered crocodiles or beautiful buddhas? Actually we can choose! The vajra is a mini version of our NgalSo mandala. A portable version. The fundamental nature of the mind is pure like a diamond, that's why it's called a dorje, a diamond. It is a very important symbol for buddhist tantric practitioners. One of our commitments, relating to Supreme Healer Akshobya, is to have a vajra - not just have one and put it on the mantelpiece but to have one and think about it.

Rinpoche says the same thing in a modern way: he says we have a kind of inner minefield - that we have many un-manifest sicknesses. We've done many different actions, created many different imprints, but most of this our mind cannot see - it's unconscious, it's in our subtle mind. Rinpoche says it's all recorded on our inner space disc, like a kind of inner data cloud. This view is from the yogachara Buddhist philosophy. It's all recorded but we are not aware of it, so all of a sudden when we are going along in our life - **boom** - one of these karma bombs goes off in our subconscious. Why? Because we met with the cause and condition to explode it, and then we get sick and we feel shocked and stressed. This is how Rinpoche explains things in a more modern way. Things happen to us and we don't understand why so we suffer. The ancient way is how I explained before with bad tempered karma crocodiles lurking under the surface of the conscious mind, waiting to bite us. Maybe they used this example because hard discs weren't around then! For each time and society the same ideas are explained in very different ways. For example, in Europe we don't have crocodiles so for us it's not a such relevant thing. But, when I was in the Amazon I was swimming and I was suddenly very aware of all these eyes around me and I had to start swimming very fast! Once we've seen an alligator or crocodile close up we understand immediately the symbolic significance. It's like I was saying at the beginning, we are so cut off from the natural world that these kind of natural ancient symbols have to be explained to us. Another example

that Rinpoche uses in his books and teachings is that the mind is like an iceberg, because we only see a little bit of the iceberg above the water. We see the conscious part of the mind, but there is a much bigger subconscious underneath. This is why tantra is important - because we are working with the gross ordinary mind, and then also with the subtle mind and body and then the very subtle body and very subtle mind - there are many levels we need to heal. Otherwise, the karma crocodile will keep popping up - and biting us when we are not expecting it.

If we look at the numerous pictures of *NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing*, Supreme Healer Vairochana is in the centre, his name in Sanskrit means coming from or belonging to the sun. Just as the sun is the centre of the solar system, and the ancient rishis knew that long before Copernicus, so Vairochana represents the sun of enlightenment, the clear light, the non-dual exalted wisdom of new bliss and emptiness, peace and space. For that reason Vairochana is in the centre of the mandala. On the impure level Vairochana represents closed mindedness and ignorance or not knowing the nature of reality. We don't know why we have this conceptual error of feeling alienated and perceiving ourselves to be separate, not connected to anything, nobody knows why we have it, but most of us were born like that. Nowadays, in neuroscience they are saying exactly what buddhists have been saying forever: that we have a body which is a process in continual change, we have a mind which is in continual change, we have this basis and yes of course we exist, but on top of that there is the projection of a permanent unchanging self. It's like we got a faulty computer. The thing is we can't send it back, we have to fix it ourselves. We have a design error between our ears. Fortunately the Buddha explained how to fix it.

For most of us, unenlightened people, our fundamental experience is ignorance. This is because we feel separate. Then every single thing that gives us a pleasant feeling causes us to grasp at it - it feels good

and we really, really want it! Buddhist philosophy says that whatever gives us pleasure, we over exaggerate its good qualities, we see it as a true source of happiness. We think if we had more of it we would be happy and then we develop attachment to it and become fixated on it like a fly stuck on honey. It's a bit like when we go shopping and we get fixated on the thing we are looking for, we all know that uncomfortable feeling. Then after obsessing about it we buy it and soon it ends up abandoned in the cupboard - it wasn't a true source of happiness after all!

Anything that gives us an unpleasant feeling, it's the opposite way round. We develop aversion towards it, we get obsessed with how horrible it is, we believe it's truly horrible... and we get obsessed that it's truly awful and we go round telling our friends that it's truly horrible and asking them to agree with us, or to complain about it with us. The mind is like a kind of see-saw. Based on ignorance, from this conceptual mistake of separation, arises desire or hatred all the time. Our minds are unbalanced. So from one point comes three.

In the lower tantras, the action and performance tantras, we have three buddha families. We have the Wheel Buddha Family, the Lotus Buddha Family and the Vajra Buddha Family because these are the purification and transformation of our three main problems which are ignorance, desire and hatred. The Wheel Buddha Family is led by Supreme Healer Vairochana, the Lotus Buddha Family is led by Supreme Healer Amitabha and the Vajra Buddha Family is led by Supreme Healer Akshobya. This is what I was explaining at the beginning of the course, this central axis of the *Self-Healing* tangkha shows how our mind works on the base level and then on the enlightened level. On the highest level from one buddha family comes out three buddha lineages. When we say lower tantras we don't mean lower in the sense of inferior because actually they are very high realisations. For example, we have Kriya Tantra in both Hinduism and Buddhism. All these great saints and yogis such as Yogananda

were teaching Kriya Tantra, there is a Hindu version and a Buddhist version. Anyone who reads the Autobiography of a Yogi will for sure be impressed by his realisations. If we practice Kriya Tantra we can get incredible siddhis or realisations. It's much higher than us! From the three lineages, from Supreme Healers Vairochana, Amitabha and Akshobya come out the five lineages, the Five Supreme Healers. The body isolation chapter of the Guyusamaja commentary explains this.

Basically what it says is that from Amitabha comes out Amoghasiddhi, so on the unenlightened level what it means is from desire and grasping comes out fear and jealousy. First we desire something or someone, then we get it or them, then we develop the fear of losing it or them and we get possessive and jealous. We all know this one. Our mind is going like this, it gets worse and worse. For example, I really, really wanted this new computer so I saved up the money and I bought it and I'm so happy and it's a true source of happiness and I have to take it to bed with me and sleep with it but then all the time I'm worried. I'm worried because I need to protect my computer, I need to be so careful with it and I'm afraid of losing or breaking it. This is how we relate to things. From Akshobya comes out Ratnasambhava.

In the unenlightened state, our state, what it means is that we seek stability, because even though the world is a disintegrating basis and we are falling to pieces as we age, we do our best to ignore it because we want things to be stable. We can see here that we are developing serious emotional problems because we are out of touch with reality. I keep on saying, Buddhist meditation doesn't take us out of reality, it takes us into reality. We are already completely out of reality. We are seeking stability, which actually is not really possible, but we try. We have this delusion that we can find it, we think if we had loads of stuff then we would be happy so we need a house, a car, a cuddly toy, a parrot, a cat, ten computers, we need to get all this stuff because if we get this security blanket then everything will be ok, our life will be secure, everything will be stable. Of course this

isn't true because when we have all these things, we can't run away anymore and all kinds of emotional problems come up. I think this is what we call the mid-life crisis in the west. Actually from the map of the Five Supreme Healers we understand the underlying basis, the delusions, we can see - of course what did we expect, of course we're unhappy. Our mind has the inbuilt fault of desire, hatred and ignorance and then we're creating all kinds of emotional problems on top so of course we're a mess. What we have to do is understand our basic problems and understand that fortunately there is hope then we can understand and transform our life. We can become free of our suffering by understanding, by wisdom. We have all these wishes and then of course we have this incredible emotional suffering because we are out of touch with reality. Don't worry because there are many solutions in the dharma and in *NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing* which encompasses many different healing methods. We can solve all our emotional problems, free, which is great and it's a very deep and profound teaching.

From one energy comes three, from three comes out five or five can go into three and they can go into one, because we have zoom out and zoom in. Then it says from five lineages come out one hundred lineages, the one hundred buddha families. The 100 seed syllables in the Vajrasattva mantra actually represent the hundred buddha lineages which is the totality of all the different kinds of enlightened experience. We have many, many different mandalas because there are all kinds of different people with different personalities and needs. Each one of us needs a different method, a different solution. If we went to the pharmacy on different days for an headache, a stomach problem, and some other problem, and each time the pharmacist gave us aspirin we'd think he was rubbish and we wouldn't go back. What we need are different medicines for different problems, lots of different solutions for the many different sicknesses and difficulties that we face through the course of our lives. It's the same with dharma. We don't have just one practice because we're all different. We have

the Five Dhyani Buddhas or Supreme Healers and all these hundreds of different practices because sooner or later we will find one that fits completely with our mentality. We'll find the right practice that fits our mentality and transforms us. This is a very special feature of Vajrayana Buddhism. It's like personalised medicine. It's not just ok here you are take an aspirin, like it's a magic medicine that works the same for everybody. Buddha knew that we have desire, hatred and pride, that we have different delusions, that each person has a different predominant delusion. We can see clearly amongst ourselves that some people are really into desire, some people are full of pride or jealousy. We can see how people are. The Buddha didn't say you're all terrible people, he said we have these personality types so we should use that as a basis for transformation.

We all embody one of the five buddha lineages, the Five Supreme Healers, and finally from that comes out a hundred buddha families, the totality of the enlightenment experience. Actually what Rinpoche wants to do next is to start to share all these initiations, the Vajra Garland, the hundred buddha families. I really hope that we are lucky enough to receive that. It would be something truly amazing! This progression from one to three to five to one hundred is from **OM** to **OM AH HUNG** to **OM AH HUNG TRAM HRI** to **OM VAJRASATTVA SAMAYA....HUNG PHAT**, is showing the progression of our energies. This is why these are very important mantras in our practice. This is why **OM AH HUNG** is so important, why the seed syllables of the Five Supreme Healers are so important and why Vajrasattva is also a very, very important mantra that we repeat all the time.

It says then **with this knowledge we can actualise the three kayas**, kaya is a fancy Sanskrit word that means body. It means we can realise the three buddha bodies: enlightened body, speech and mind. If we understand this then we can transform ourself from an ordinary person into an awakened person.

Then it continues: **you pervasive lord of hundred lineages, bestowing such instruction, are outstanding.** Pervasive lord means Rinpoche, an enlightened master. Since many lifetimes he has the ability - he knows what the clear light of bliss and emptiness is - to guide us to it. We are very lucky to have a living master like him. It's ok reading books about the ancient mahasiddhas and so on, but it's much more interesting to actually know one in person. From the lord of a hundred lineages, or from five emotions, or three emotions, we can go back to the clear light. It's saying thank you for giving us such an amazing teaching, we are really, really lucky.

Now, let's continue meeting the Great Element Mothers. We have this book about what is called the stupa meditation of the elements absorbing into the clear light, then using the clear light positively, then returning. We will do this practice and pause one by one on the elements to explain, today I will explain about meeting the Great Earth Mother, Lochana. We will start at the beginning and I will stop at the earth part and explain.

An antidote related to fears of the absorption of the five elements and of the white, red, black and clear light visions in sequence.

This sadhana is extremely important. It's one of the most important esoteric practices in Vajrayana Buddhism. Why? Because it shows us how to transform the process of death, bardo and rebirth. We are very afraid of death, because we don't have any information or idea about what will happen to us. We are afraid that we will just disappear. This practice is based on the experience of many generations of great yogis and yoginis. What will happen if we start to do it? Because we have received refuge, bodhisattva and tantric vows, because we have a great tantric master, the correct initiations and so on, then slowly, slowly or quickly, quickly we'll start to see that the signs of the elements absorbing are true, then we will develop faith that this is true, and then we will feel a huge relief that when we die we will not

just disappear into nothingness and we will know what to do at that time. These are the benefits of this practice. Because we have received initiations, have a great master, and we are doing our best to practice then we're accumulating merit and wisdom and slowly we will start to see these things are true. When it talks about these signs - which I'll tell you what they are - we'll start to think: oh yes it's true, I've seen that myself when I go to sleep and when I meditate. Then even if we don't see them all, we'll know they are true and we'll know what is going to happen.

Before we talked about this first verse from Rinpoche's long life prayer by a lama called Jampel Lodro. He explained how Rinpoche is teaching us that from one lineage comes out three lineages, then comes out five lineages, then one hundred lineages. After this prayer there are the NgalSo preliminary practices which are always the same and always important to do: taking refuge, generating bodhichitta and the seven limitless meditations to develop empathy, to open up our heart towards others which is the actual basis for developing bodhichitta. Then there is the prayer and request to our Root Guru, Gangchen Rinpoche. This verse was composed by his Guru, Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche. Then follows his name mantra and we say this to receive his blessings. Then there is this **PA KHYO KYI KU DANG** that we recite all the time, it's part of the Ganden Mahamudra Lineage Prayer - which is a very long prayer so Rinpoche kindly gave us a very short version. And because we need two energies, both male and female, we also have **MA KHYO KYI KU DANG** which is the requesting the blessings of the divine mother, of the mother lineage. This also shows that enlightenment is for everyone, both men and women!

Next we imagine that the Guru melts into light and dissolves through the crown of our head and absorbs into our very subtle mind in our heart chakra and we receive the blessing of the guru's mind. Blessing means one inspirational energy - a kind of transfusion of positive energy. The translation is actually wave of transforming energy, so we

receive the blessing waves of our Guru's energy. The most important thing is to receive the inspiration of the Guru, because with this all the tantric practices are working. For these practices to have the best effect we must receive an initiation from a qualified master. Otherwise we receive this wonderful and incredible information and we try it and we begin to feel frustrated that it doesn't work! Actually this is because we haven't received an initiation from a qualified master and we haven't done the correct things like take refuge, taken the bodhisattva vows and so on. We should seek a qualified Vajrayana master if we want to do these practices. Some years ago we did a small experiment, because Buddha said don't base your ideas on blind faith but on experience. One summer we decided to do the practice with and without the Guru Yoga to see what happened, and we all concluded that with the Guru Yoga it was working much better, we all had a better feeling and a better experience.

Next we make the request **LAMA KHYEN LAMA KHYEN**. Lama Khyen is what we say to our guru if we really have great faith, great belief in him or her. Khyen means All Knowing One. Not in the sense of G.O.D. but in the sense that he really knows the nature of reality. It's showing respect to the enlightened qualities of the master, the guru, who really understands the nature of phenomena. Then **TRINCHEN TSAWE LAMA KHYEN** means: oh kind Root Guru All Knowing One. Of course we can have many, many gurus, there is no problem, but at the time of death we have what we call the Root Guru, the one who is really going to take care of us. This should already be very clear during our life - it's a karmic connection. At the time of death we're not going to think: *oh which one is my guru?* There are many incredible practices that the great masters can do at death-time, entering into the mandalas of Yamantaka, Heruka, Vajrayogini, Guhyasamaja, Tara Chittamani and so on, but for us maybe it will just be **LAMA KHYEN LAMA KHYEN - help!!** Rinpoche says we may not be great yogis but we should pray to our Root Guru for help and our guru, whether he or she is alive or not, will take care of us. The Root Guru is the one

who is most kind in giving us initiations, commentary, explanation and so on, basically he is the one who's most kind to us, the one who gives us the whole package. Not only that, but he, and for me he is Rinpoche, Lama Gangchen, is also the one who cares for us not only now but from life to life. It's a commitment between the Root Guru and the vajra disciple, but also from our side we have to be reasonable vajra disciples.

This practice is really designed for when we are dying or when somebody else is dying. Obviously we need to train in it because we don't know when we are going to die - so let's start now. If they can the great yogis and yoginis of the vajrayana tradition do the self-initiations of all their practices before their death. Maybe we'll have that fortune, maybe we'll have the conditions for that, but maybe we won't. What we need is - and remember when we are close to death we probably don't feel very well - a practice that is easy, essential and powerful. When we are dying maybe we don't feel like doing or we can't do one big, long, elaborate sadhana. Maybe we can't even see or move our hands to turn the pages. We have to consider these things because we don't know what is going to happen. It's better we have a very easy practice that we know off by heart, then we're sure! Nowadays we can also put on the CD or the DVD.

It's very important that we learn to make peace with the five elements. Of course this has many different benefits for us, for example now in terms of our health and energy - if our five elements are balanced we'll be healthy and we'll have a long life. Very important. As we were talking about before, we are made up of the same stuff as the universe and this has been proved scientifically, many of our atoms are recycled stars. So the outer elements of our universe and our world, the wind, earth, fire, and the seasons affect us, affect our health and our moods. We need to make peace with these outer elements because if we don't during the change of seasons we get sick, we have different reactions, it's too hot, it's too cold, then we get many

different problems. We don't want that. When we eat different things we need to make peace with the elements, otherwise we are going to get uncomfortable, we are going to get sick. We have many kinds of medicine, allopathic medicine, natural medicine, etc, etc.. all these are also made-up of elements so we need to work and make peace with these elements. This practice has many different levels of benefit.

One of the most deep and profound things we can do with the elements is learn to transform our ordinary death, intermediate state and rebirth into the path to enlightenment. We can do all these things with the elements, all at the same time. We eat everyday and it's beneficial to work with the elements in the food. Sometimes we're sick and it's beneficial to work with the elements in the medicine. It's nice to be in touch with the elements in nature. This gives us better health and more energy, but especially what we need to do, according to tantra, is transform death, bardo and rebirth into the path to enlightenment. Maybe for us it's a little bit difficult to even accept that there could be a bardo but anyway we'd all like to die in the best way, in the most peaceful and positive way. People are afraid not only of dying but also afraid of dying with pain and fear and suffering. If we practice *Making Peace with the Environment*, working with the elements, for sure when we die, we'll die more easily, more softly, more peacefully and with awareness. A spiritual death. This is a great gift that the Buddha and the gurus of our lineage have given to us. Just like when we switch off our computer, it always switches off in the same way going through the same process of shutting down, so do we. We might ask how we know what happens because it's like a one way ticket.

Through deep meditation yogis have come very close to death, we can say they had many near death experiences. We also believe that some people have passed through death and even have some memory of leaving their past life. Let's say in a more western way, yogis are able to go through the death process - up to or very close to death - and come back from the near death experience. They do

know what they are talking about. Over the last 2000 years or more, many people have had this experience so this is where these teachings are coming from, from the Buddha and many other great realised masters and yogis. Nowadays, we have all this wonderful medical technology and one side effect of this is that many more people have near death experiences than before, they've gone almost to death and then through modern technology they've come back. We have a much better way of keeping the body alive than before, than in the previous centuries. I have personally met several people who were not buddhist but who shared their experiences of near death during surgery and I was very amazed how similar their experiences were to what we read about in the tantric texts.

There are 8 steps in the dissolution process to what we call the clear light which is the fundamental state of human consciousness. Normally we say this manifests clearly only at the time of death however, when we go to sleep there is a similar process. It's obviously not so strong because we wake up again here in this body but when we die we wake-up somewhere else, in a new life. However, when we go to sleep, dream and wake-up it's the same process, so we can use this to learn how to become aware of the cycle of dissolution and then the reappearance of the elements. We can also do it in meditation, hence why we are sat here. We can learn how to recognise the dissolution of the elements. We will start to do this if we follow Lama Gangchen's method. There are many, many different element systems that Lama Gangchen has taught us - this particular one is called the stupa meditation. Stupas actually represent this process of the dissolution of the elements into the clear light and then coming back out again. They represent the five elements - earth, water, fire, wind and space - and then some other parts of the subtle and very subtle mind. Having received the guru buddha's blessing we imagine that inside our subtle body is a stupa made of the subtle energy of the five elements. Stupa or cho-ten in Tibetan means the basis of the dharma or phenomena. *Ten* is the basis or support and *cho* is

phenomenon. Phenomena in terms of the five elements that support our life. We learn to recognise the five elements now, and then when we do this meditation we create the cause for one element to dissolve into the next one. This meditation is incredible, it's like a magic key into our minds, into our subtle energy. It's really amazing, it's a key that unlocks our mind and it works. Obviously we have many friends and relatives and some are Buddhist and some not, if we happen to have a buddhist friend who is dying a natural death slowly in their bed - it's very good to put a picture of the five elements in front of them. I had a good friend in Spain, she was an incredible person and a great practitioner and when she was dying she had this picture of the five elements on the wall in front of her - like a beautiful mandala of earth, water, fire, wind and space - so she could focus on it all the time.

When we die, and that means when the mind separates from the body, there usually appears some kind of signs. This means that somehow our subconscious knows we're going to die. Obviously it depends how clear our mind is. They say that up to two years before we start to die we get some kind of premonitions and different feelings. For example, some people start to get nervous when they've always been peaceful - something changes. Other people have this feeling of wanting to travel far away. If we think about our friends and relatives who have passed away we can see that these examples are true. Near to death they have something different, a personality change, different feelings, different wishes.

First let's look at the normal earth element, the impure element dissolving, and then we'll talk about the positive side of the earth element that we call Lochana, Guru Buddha Lochana, the Great Earth Mother. Tantra works like this, the basis is our normal everyday life, then fortunately thanks to Guru Buddha we have a method to transform our common experience and make that situation better. What normally happens to everybody is that the earth element

dissolves first. Remember that there are three levels of this, now I'm talking about death but we can also apply it to going to sleep and to our meditation experiences.

First I'll read the death experience related to the earth element and then we'll look at it in terms of our experience now. If our elements are good we are very healthy and strong, but as we age our elements start to degenerate. The first signs of ageing are seen in our hair, teeth, eyes and bones, this is actually the degeneration of the earth element. We can see death is at the end but it's a lifelong process. Death doesn't just appear out of nothing - we're a process. As we age we become great friends with our dentist and doctor and optician!!! What it says here is what we can observe and maybe we have seen this already with our loved ones who have passed away. When the earth element starts to dissolve the body becomes very thin, maybe before we were very strong and then we became thinner and we have a feeling like we are sinking. We also have this feeling when we go to sleep. I don't know if you've noticed but when we are very tired we have this feeling of falling or sinking as we go to sleep. The next thing that happens is our limbs become very weak and if we're dying they stop moving, also when we go to sleep obviously our limbs stop moving. It's like octaves of the same experience. For example, when we go to sleep our eyes close and we stop seeing things and this is also the same when we're dying - the perception of form disappears and gradually as we are dying we don't see or recognise people anymore. This is what happens to somebody who is dying a natural death, if someone dies in a car crash or an accident this all happens very quickly. Now we are talking about someone who is old or ill and they die slowly over one or two days. The body light, the aura, of the body absorbs. We have something called a *lha* in Tibetan, it's our vital force. It's produced in our body through the process of digestion. The most essential life force drop is in the centre of our heart chakra, it's called the indestructible drop. It's indestructible until the moment of death when it opens and is destroyed when the mind leaves the body. Until then, all our life,

here in the heart chakra we have the very subtle mind, the very subtle energy, from which radiates out our subtle body. Some people like Rinpoche have much more powerful subtle bodies. When he comes in the room we can feel it. We all like to stay near Rinpoche, we love to be with him because his subtle body is full of the energy of empathy, compassion and unconditional love for us all. Normal people have a much smaller aura. As we start to die, it starts to absorb and then it leaves the body. When people are dying we can see that their light, their radiance, withdraws and then leaves the body.

The explanation I'm giving now is from the Guyusamaja Tantra. The earth element is in the secret chakra. In Guyusamaja, the Great Earth Mother Lochana is associated with who? Supreme Healer Vairochana. This is a different system from *Ngalso Tantric Self Healing*. We have an element and a consciousness that go together, mind doesn't exist without energy - there is always an energy wind and a mind. That's why there is always a male and a female buddha. They are not separate, they always go around in a pair. As the earth element absorbs, the basic mirror-like wisdom manifests. Rinpoche always gave this example, that in a tiny mirror we can see many things - we can see many things at the same time, like a reflection in a mirror. It's true. I can see the whole gumpa and all of you in this little mirror. In ordinary life this means we can see many things, but as we start to die or go to sleep or meditate this absorbs. Our perception of the world dissolves. The earth element absorbs, the earth energy, and then what happens is simultaneously Vairochana and all the deities associated with Vairochana, all the energies in the body related to them, dissolve. This is actually at the end of our *NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing practice of Guyusamaja*. The sense of the material world, the solidity dissolves. The visual things start to dissolve, to disappear. In fact what happens when the earth element absorbs is that the next element, the water element, becomes more manifest, it's not stronger it just becomes more apparent. This is why the inner sign of the dissolution of the earth element into the water element is a vision which we say is like a mirage. Like in the summer

when it's hot, if we look onto the road we can see a shining light above it or if we look at water when it's summer there's shining light. We see the same thing inside our mind. For example, when we meditate we see this shimmering, a bluish kind of watery shiny light in our mind and we have this feeling of our mind becoming more concentrated, going in. It's like octaves. What we are talking about now is the base, the basic experience. Then we have the path. Here it's explaining what we have to do in order to transform our basic experience of the earth element absorbing when we meditate, when we go to sleep or in the future when we die. We can see here very clearly what we have to do.

Absorption of the earth element, mirage like vision

In Tibetan it says from the secret place, from **LAM**, arises the earth element and it's the nature of Supreme Mother Chenma, Chenma means Lochana in Tibetan. It's not translated here but it's like in the *Making Peace with the Environment* practice. So we need to do exactly like in *Making Peace with the Environment*. We need to visualise this **LAM** vibration and a yellow light in the form of a cube in our energy body at the level of our secret chakra. It's in three stages. Of course this energy is already there but we need to feel it. In our NgalSo practices we say a lot of mantras and we touch our subtle body because like this it's easier to feel something. When I first started doing *Self-Healing* I wasn't habituated to the mudras, to the idea of meditating and moving my arms. However, gradually, I discovered that I found it easier to feel my inner energies when I did the mudras, the gestures. For example, when we do what we call the prayer or namaste mudra in front of our chakras we can feel the energy gathering there and so on. We feel more. Of course we can also sit cross legged and put our hands in our lap and meditate without moving, but most people find putting body, speech and mind together makes it easier to concentrate. At least that's what I find, for me, for my level of concentration - I find it easier when I do all these things together. Between the body movements, the mantras and chanting and having to visualise then finally there is no more room for distraction.

We imagine **LAM**. Remember **LAM YAM RAM BAM** are the Sanskrit semi-vowels and these colours and sounds have been associated with the elements since 5 or 6000 years, from the Vedic times. In the Sanskrit alphabet **YA** is the sound of wind and it's green, **RA** is the sound of fire and it's red, **LA** is the sound of earth and it's yellow, **BA** or **VA** is the sound of water and it's white. **LA** is the Sanskrit semi-vowel for earth, then what we do in Buddhism is put a zero or the **MMMMM** sound above it, the circle we can see above the letter is the zero. It actually refers to nasal sound, like **LAMMMMMMM**. The vibrating **MMMMM** bit. So when we say **LAMMMMMM** we have to feel it vibrating down here in the secret chakra all the way up to the top of our head.

Rinpoche calls this circle, zero or tige above the letter the zero point, it represents emptiness - that all things are empty of inherent existence, there is no true essence or **SVABHAVA**. In Sanskrit **Sva** means own and **bhava** means nature so it means everything doesn't have its own character, nature, self or essence, which is exactly the opposite of what we ordinary people think. According to Tantra everything arises out of emptiness, so everything that arises and manifests in our meditation we stamp it with emptiness. For example **PAM** is **PA** from padma, lotus, and the first syllable is stamped with emptiness. It's not just here's one flower that's truly existent, if I had that flower my life would be really wonderful - no, it's saying I know this is empty of inherent existence. Why? We know theoretically because it's got a zero point, a tige, above it to help us to remember the nature of all phenomena. We can see here why it's nice to use the original language, Tibetan or Sanskrit, because it still has the zero point built into it. In our language we write this vibration like **MMMMM** or **NG**. Obviously **MMMMM** is not a zero point, it doesn't have the same visual meaning. That's why it's nice that we remain with the traditional seed syllables or the *bija*. The Tibetan and Sanskrit mantric letters have a real deep meaning. Normally everything that we perceive we believe it has a **SVABHAVA**, that it truly exists from its own side,

nothing to do with us, we believe it has its own characteristics, truly and independently - this is what we call self-grasping. Then based on that wrong perception of reality we react emotionally towards it, developing desire, hatred, pride, jealousy, etc, etc, and this is the perpetual motion engine of our personal samsara. Again and again we perceive things incorrectly, we don't understand the illusion, we react emotionally and in the wrong way, again and again, and so we experience what is called our personal samsara. The tige or zero point, above all the seed letters in tantra, means we stamp or seal our naming or perception of the world, of things and people with the view of emptiness. We know either intellectually or directly that the svabhava is a big zero, an unfindable illusion. This is not saying that things don't exist, of course they exist, it means (as science says) that everything is a process based on cause and effect. Science also says that it depends on the observer, so consciousness is also there in the mix. Nowadays there are many similarities between theoretical physics and buddhism, its really interesting.

Some people ask why in the Vajrayogini practice the elements are **YA RA LA** and **VA** and **YAM RAM LAM VAM** in Self-Healing. **YA RA LA VA** are the semi-vowels of Sanskrit, the elements, and **YAM RAM LAM** and **VAM** are the same elements but emphasising that things are empty of their own self nature or essence, that they exist as mere dependent arisings, depending on cause and effect and what we call naming, labelling or imputation in buddhism. Rinpoche decides what is used in the sadhanas, and as we know Rinpoche tries many different things and he has many different ideas. We are fortunate that we have our guru here with us and that we can ask him these things - this is why we need Rinpoche to have an extremely long life and stay and guide us in our spiritual development.

Let's continue with **LAM**, the earth element. Here it looks very simple, it says: **at the secret chakra from yellow golden LAM arises the earth element and it's nature is the Great Mother Lochana.**

Lama Caroline

**OM AH GURU BUDDHA
LOCHANA KHYEN LAM
LA LA LA LA
LA LA LA LA**

Just because it looks easy does not mean that it's not extremely powerful. These meditations are very powerful. If we want we can also, as Rinpoche showed us many times, use many different meditations related to this, for example we can do **LAM LAM LAM, LAM HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE SOHA, LAM HO ATIKYANA ATISHKITI SOHA**. Then we can imagine out of the new bliss and emptiness of the lack of inherent existence of the earth element at our secret chakra, arises the Great Mother Lochana.

The NgalSo Guyusamaja practice of Rinpoche, says: **please Great Earth Mother and Great Water Mother, may I develop peace when the earth element absorbs into the water element, may I not be overwhelmed by feelings of the earth shaking, of getting washed away.**

We can have these feelings during our life, for example when we go to sleep we sometimes have this strong sinking feeling. If we don't train in meditation, if our elements are impure, then people who have had near death experiences and people who are dying say things like everything is shaking or they feel like everything is been washed away or flooded. When people are dying they start to have hallucinations because their projection of our world is breaking down, so these elemental visions are very common. My partner, worked in a hospice caring for dying people, and told me that many people close to death have these kind of visions. For example someone might see that their whole room is full of water, they are completely convinced that the room is flooded and ask for a bucket or a boat. Obviously all this comes out of the person's subconscious, but to that person it is completely real. This should make us think that maybe what we are experiencing now is all arising from what's in our own mind, in our

own subconscious. These element meditations are a very important and useful practice for all of us. Here it's very short and essential because it gets directly to the point, so we have time to do this practice on a regular basis. It means that in the course of our life we should - as Rinpoche is encouraging us to do all the time - purify and work with the elements. This means taking care of our emotions, our diet, lifestyle and many other things, and of course we can also do this meditation - we don't need to wait! This practice is short and easy but powerful.

When we get sick and nearer to death, many people see things like fire, tsunamis, earthquakes, hurricanes... they see the signs of the elements - it's quite common. Check it out the next time you get sick. Why do we see these things when we are ill? Because the elements are what we are made-up of. We should not be afraid and scared, we should do this practice and then something really beautiful will happen, something really amazing. Instead of having an experience like getting swept away by a river and feeling afraid we have the sensation: *oh, there's the Great Water Mother taking care of me*. In that moment we will recognise that Rinpoche was right, this is really the Great Water Mother, and it's actually something beautiful that we can embrace. The feeling is completely transformed because we know what's happening, we're not afraid, then it actually becomes interesting and beautiful.

When Rinpoche makes us do **EH HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE** again and again, maybe we think: *oh no, not again!* Actually he's very kind to make us do this because by ourselves we are not going to do it, we're very lazy, we'd rather watch box sets or waste our time with social media, or something else. Rinpoche makes us work with the elements again and again so actually he's helping us to prepare our energy system to be more healthy, to have less sickness, and then when we die hopefully we'll recognise the Great Element Mothers. He is doing the best thing he can do for us. He's very kind.

We say Supreme Healer Great Earth Mother Lochana. Lochana means the One who has got the Buddha Eye in Sanskrit, so she is the one who sees everything from an awakened point of view. Unfortunately for most of us, we see things from the point of view of ignorance, of **SVABHAVA**. The ordinary ignorant mind projects an impure reality, but if we recognise our enlightened nature then we start to see everything pure and positively. Like Rinpoche is always saying - *looking with peace, hearing with peace, hugging with peace, peace with everything, everything with peace*. This is actually a choice from our own mind, we don't think: *ok I'll wait until the whole world becomes pure and everybody is nice to me*, because we can forget this. We choose peace and train or re-educate our mind to see everything positively.

Lochana means that I see everything like a buddha. I see everything positively. It's like when we wake up in the morning and everything is marvellous, everything is wonderful and then the next day we wake up in a bad mood and everybody is horrible. What changed? What changed is us! We can't say that everybody who was very nice to us suddenly became horrible - it's because we've changed, the way we see things. What we want is like when Rinpoche says - *looking with peace* - it's like Lochana. Everybody is marvellous, everything is great, everybody is beautiful, this is what Lochana means. Remember the form element, it's our body and the earth, but it's also what we perceive around us, so it's looking with peace, touching with peace, listening with peace, hugging with peace, peace with everything, everything with peace. This is what Lochana means and this is the energy we are trying to recognise within ourselves. So first we need to wake up the energy, then we need to purify it with our practice and finally we experience what we call Supreme Healer Lochana. In our *NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing* practice, which comes from our guru through many generations of enlightened masters, we have all kinds of incredible ways of working with our elements. We also have many kinds of yoga techniques and breathing exercises to stimulate these energies or winds, because now our energies are a bit weak. Firstly

we need to get them to wake-up and then we need to purify them, but first of all, most importantly, we need to feel something. Modern technological life is killing our feelings, sensations and emotions, on many different levels, so we need to stop being like the Walking Dead (literally). We need to recover the essence of our human life energy, joy, happiness, empathy and emotions.

In the Tantric Grounds and Paths teaching, the downward-moving wind is related to Ratnasambhava, the earth element. Earth is the downward-moving wind, so many people as they get older get problems as the downward-moving wind weakens. It's one of the signs of ageing. These meditations have a lot of benefit in the meantime. They give us lots of energy, good health and balance and we all want to feel young and have energy - it's not the main reason to do the meditation but it's a very nice side effect. Actually there are many different trulkor yoga exercises related to this and fortunately we've been taught some of them here. Trulkor literally means machine, in the sense of something moving, rotating, vibrating that generates energy. There is one exercise from the Niguma system which helps to wake-up and make peace with the earth element. It's called the position of the snow lion. We visualise the earth mandala at our secret chakra, then we have to make like a square by crouching like a snow lion; this makes a square between the two hands and two feet which are like the corners of the square. We then hold the breath and concentrate on gathering the energies into our secret chakra. We hold the breath and lift up the backside, and what we feel is energy - a shaking sensation down our legs. In the secret chakra we imagine **LAM**, we're holding our breath and saying **LAM LAM LAM** or **LAMMMMMM** and if it's

working we start to shake. We keep our hands and feet on the floor and we go up as much as we can depending how flexible we are. We just do what is comfortable, we don't over extend. When we come down we breathe out.

Lama Caroline

**LAMA LOCHANA KHYEN
LAMMMMMMMMMMMMM**

It's a bit like acupuncture for tantric people, so we also have to press some points. They're called the daka and dakini points. We have to press the points around the feet and upper body that stimulate the upper and lower energies of the earth element. One point is between the ankle bone and heel - if we're a lady this is really useful to stop period pains, it also helps to stop haemorrhoids - then on the same side 4 fingers above the nipple. The points usually hurt when we press them. Maybe if we are awakened or balanced they are not sensitive anymore, this we will have to see with practice.

LAMMMMMMMMM
The same on the other side.
LAMMMMMMMMM

**LAM HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE SOHA x2
LAM HO SHANTI KURIYE SOHA
LAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA**

**OM AH LOCHANA LAM HO SHANTI SOHA
OM AH LOCHANA LAM HO ROK SHANTI SOHA**

Within Guyusamaja, within *Making Peace with the Environment*, within Kalachakra, and Yamantaka and Heruka and in all the Ngagso practices we have very clear information about the different ways of how to work with the earth element. So in the next days we will go

through the elements and dissolutions one by one. We will use the very essential seed letters like Rinpoche has taught us. Now we are going to say **LAM LAM LAM BAM BAM BAM**. We can also look at the book if we want, if we're not sure about the colours and positions.

We have already done the Guru Yoga and all the preparations. Just to be sure we'll do a bit more.

OM AH GURU BUDDHA SIDDHI HUNG x5

**LAM LAM LAM LAM LAM
LAM HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE SOHA
LAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
LAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
LAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA**

We can also say the mantra **OM AH GURU BUDDHA LOCHANA LAM** or **OM AH LOCHANA LAM HUNG** or as Rinpoche also says **OM AH GURU BUDDHA SIDDHI LAM**. There are many different mantras. We need to do the mudras because it has something to do with the energies, with the feeling. As we said before **SHUDDHE SHUDDHE** or **VISHUDDHE VISHUDDHE** means clear clear, purify, empty of inherent existence. **SVAHA** or **SOHA** was originally said during Vedic fire pujas, when making offerings so here we are offering relative and absolute purification. **ATIKYANA ATIKITI** means something like blessing and empowerment. In reality it's **ADHISHKYANA ADHISHKITE** but when we started working with Rinpoche, writing down his sadhanas, I didn't know very well Sanskrit or Tibetan so I just wrote down phonetically what I heard. I learnt how to spell it and the meaning later, but let's say both **ATIKYANA ATIKITI** and **ADHISHKYANA ADHISHKYITE** are correct as they contain the blessings of our guru and the previous gurus' energy.

**Guru Buddha Mamaki Khyen
BAM BAM BAM BAM BAM
BAM HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE SOHA
BAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
BAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
BAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA**

Lama Caroline

Next is the red fire element at the heart chakra, with the vibration **RAM**.

Guru Buddha Pandarvarsini Khyen
RAM RAM RAM RAM RAM
RAM HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE SOHA
RAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
RAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
RAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA

Next is the green bow-shaped wind element at the throat chakra, with the vibration **YAM**, the essence of the Great Wind Mother Samaya Tara or just Tara.

Guru Buddha Tara Khyen
YAM YAM YAM YAM YAM
YAM HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE SOHA
YAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
RAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
RAM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA

Next at the crown chakra, from **EH** arises a blue sphere like space, and the new bliss emptiness of that arises as the Great Space Mother.

Guru Buddha Akasha Devi Khyen
EH EH EH EH EH
EH HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE SOHA
EH HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
EH HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
EH HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA

As we do this meditation we should feel that our mind is gathering into our chakras. We feel our mind naturally concentrating and our energy going inside because this is the key that makes the elemental

dissolutions happen. Now we are doing this together very quickly, but it's nice to do this meditation slowly then we can actually experience it. As Rinpoche has shown us many times, first there are the dissolutions of the gross body and mind, then the subconscious body and mind manifests and there are the white, red and black visions. We'll talk more about them later.

We all have three parts of our subconscious and various parts of those subconscious experiences can manifest. Our subconscious has a male part, a female part and a neutral part. White is the male part, red is the female part and black is when the two energies meet together in the heart chakra. Now we are doing this with the seed syllables, we can also do many other versions of it but Rinpoche shows first the practice with the seed letters, with the vibrations.

Now the manifestation of the male part of the consciousness that we call the white vision.

**LAMA NANGDZE DORJE KHYEN
OM OM OM OM OM
OM HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE SOHA
OM HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
OM AH VAIROCHANA HUNG x3**

Next is the manifestation of the female part of the consciousness that we call the red vision.

**LAMA CHO DORJE KHYEN
AH AH AH AH AH
AH HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE SOHA
AH HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
OM AH AMITABHA HUNG x3**

Lama Caroline

Next is when the two energies of the subconscious meet, the white and red visions, we experience a kind of blackout. This blackness is kind of why we are afraid of dying, but after it arises the fundamental human consciousness - the clear light. This is something we have to get used to. When we fall to sleep it feels like this - blacked out, because of the black vision.

**LAMA MIKYO DORJE KHYEN
HUNG HUNG HUNG HUNG HUNG
HUNG HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE SOHA
HUNG HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
OM AH AKSHOBYA HUNG x3**

Next is the clear light or osel. The fundamental state of human consciousness is a very clear sensation of mind, they say it's like when the dawn is just about to rise, it's kind of a bit greyish in the sense that it's not brilliantly white but an extremely clear and blissful state of mind - the fundamental state of human consciousness. It can appear in meditation, during sleep and of course at the time of our death. Rinpoche makes us visualise the clear light just below the navel. This is because it is where the central channel and the two side channels join, it's like under the sink! The channels join here, 4 fingers width, underneath our navel. If we meditate on this clear light energy here then there is more chance for the winds to gather into the central channel. When the winds gather into the central channel the process of dissolution will happen in a very powerful way. It won't be like I'm feeling a little bit nice, a little bit meditative, it'll be like wow - a very strong experience. One of the best ways to get the energies in the central channel is by visualising the very subtle mind at this point or junction here, below the navel.

**LAMA VAJRADHARA KHYEN
O O O O O
O HO SHUDDHE SHUDDHE SOHA**

**O HO ATIKYANA ATIKITI SOHA
OM AH VAJRADHARA HUNG x3**

When we call Rinpoche - Guru Buddha Vajradhara holding the vajra and bell, that means he is someone who can get his winds into the central channel and experience the non-dual exalted wisdom of new bliss and emptiness and transform all his elements and emotions into the Five Mothers and Five Fathers. That's what we mean when we call someone Vajradhara, that they are somebody who can do this, who has been through that process. How do we do this? How do we become Vajradhara? We do this by gathering our winds into the central channel and absorbing the elements, going through the 8 dissolutions. We get the elements dissolving one into the other, earth into water, water into fire, fire into wind and wind into space. Then there is the white vision, red vision, black vision and finally the clear light. On each level we have to learn how to meditate on emptiness, on reality, and finally we need to learn to meditate on the emptiness of inherent existence of ourselves and others things, on the nature of reality with our very subtle mind - the mind of clear light. We have to learn to meditate on the first level, second level, and then the third and deepest level. This is not easy and so that's why we respect our guru and call him Vajradhara, the holder of the vajra. We respect our guru for having these profound inner qualities. We recognise he has those qualities.

Now we imagine that out of the state of new bliss and emptiness our mind takes the aspect of a letter **HUNG** and then in one second we arise in the form of our yidam, our chosen meditational deity. This happens very quickly, it's called transforming death into the dharmakaya, and then transforming rebirth into the sambokakaya, and then arising as the nirmanakaya, the emanation body. We arise in what is called the Action Deity form. That means with one face and two hands. For example, if our favourite deity is Tara, we'd arise from **TAM** as Tara, if our favourite is Yamantaka we'd arise from **HUNG**

Lama Caroline

as Yamantaka, **HUNG** could also be Heruka. Anyway we arise out of the clear light of bliss, at least out of our imagination of it, not as our ordinary miserable self but as a pure crystal buddha. Now I'm buddha: I'm going to have dinner and enjoy the yoga of eating, now I'm going to have a great time, looking with the eyes of the buddha so everything is beautiful, everything is wonderful, I'm looking with peace, touching with peace, listening with peace, hugging with peace - everything is great! We are full of empathy and wisdom because those are the natural qualities of a buddha.

It's very good to do this practice of the three transformations as we go to sleep: take refuge and generate bodhichitta, do the guru yoga that blesses our heart and then the stupa meditation. Maybe we can do the whole thing, but maybe we fall asleep before. We imagine the stupa inside us from top to bottom and it is dissolving into our heart chakra. Try it, it's interesting and it's the best investment. If we're worried about dying - and we are all worried about it and anybody who say they're not it's not true - this is the best insurance policy. Try meditating on the stupa elements dissolving as you go to sleep.

Seven limitless prayer

Limitless love

May all beings have happiness and its causes

Limitless compassion

May all beings be free from suffering and its causes

Limitless joy

May all beings never be separated from the great happiness
that is beyond all misery

Limitless equanimity

May all beings dwell in equanimity, unaffected by attraction
to dear ones and aversion to others

Limitless health

May all beings recover from the sicknesses of mind and body
pollution so that they all enjoy relative and absolute health now and
forever

Limitless ecological regeneration

May all beings relax in a pure and healthy outer and inner
environment now and forever

Limitless peace

May all beings enjoy inner and world peace now and forever

Making peace with the elements
Albagnano 2018

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