

ངལ་གསོ



NGALSO
Path to Enlightenment

Self-Healing1 – Reading and Reflections part 11 Lama Caroline

This text is a lightly edited transcription of a teaching given by Lama Caroline in the Mani Bhadra Gompa, Netherlands on June 23, 2020.

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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 dän la me zhab la söl wa deb

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

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

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

om muni muni maha muni shakymuniye soha (3x)

om maitreya maitreya maha maitreya arya maitreya soha (3x)

om ah hum karuna karuna maha karuna arya karunaye soha (3x)

Hello everybody. Good afternoon, good evening, good morning, wherever you are. Today we are in the beautiful Mani Bhadra Gomba, in Holland. This actually, maybe our friends from South America, maybe they don't know, but here in Holland we have such a beautiful Gomba made by Mr. Jan and his company, and Anouk and friends. Rinpoche has been here many times. I'm just passing by here, actually by some good karmic fortune. Rinpoche, in February, actually said to Anouk and to Toet: "please, after June the 18th, Lama Caroline will come to Holland". So, I was trying to get back to Spain and the plane was canceled, then Anouk was in Albagnano with her supercar and said: "come with me to Holland". So, just as Rinpoche organised, we're here in our Mani Bhadra Gomba in Holland. So today we'll talk in English and Dutch.

As you know, since Lama Gangchen passed away into the clear light, we decided to go through all Rinpoche teaching again. He kind of told me to do this. I started with NgalSo Self-Healing 1 and every Tuesday and Thursday, we're going through Lama Gangchen first teachings. Rinpoche said we should go more deeply into his teachings. So, today we're going to read this in English, a little bit, and then talk about it. But first what I'd like to do before we start is I'd like to do a special NgalSo interview with Mr. Jan. Maybe most of you know Mr. Jan from Albagnano. Anyway, Mr. Jan I'd like to ask you about how you met Rinpoche, and some of the nice things that happened, how your little shop became the huge Mani Bhadra enterprise, helping so much the NgalSo tradition, and Albagnano, and many people around the world. So, if you'd like to share that would be very nice.

Mr. Jan: So, I'd like to start by introducing myself. I'm born in 1944, 16 October. First one thing: why I have this jacket? It's very hot here and I have on this beautiful jacket. I'll tell you why. Six years ago, on my birthday, Rinpoche gave his jacket to me.

Lama Caroline: This is Rinpoche's jacket?

Mr. Jan: Yeah.

Lama Caroline: Beautiful!

Mr. Jan: He said: "this is for you". And I said: "I will only use it on very special occasions". So, I used it when Trijang Rinpoche was giving the initiations and that was one time, and this is only the second time. Almost I'm not using it. So now you know why I have this little bit shining dress. Actually why I'm telling this story is because we're all very special, everybody could sit here and tell a beautiful story, honestly. Because if I listen to people, I hear such beautiful things and such intense experience from people. Mine is just one, for me. I'm not so special but special also. So, I'd first like to give an introduction - not when I met Rinpoche - but from the time before. Because there's always a reason why you want to meet a guru like Lama Gangchen, there's a wish inside yourself that you are searching for a spiritual master. True or not? I think yes. So, I was born in 1944, as you know it was the Second World War. It was a very dark time, with terrible things happening to people and even young children. The first 30-35 years was the dark side of my life, very dark, with a lot of emotions and a lot of disturbing emotions, till a

very high level - very strong. I said to myself: “there must be more than only suffering, it’s not possible that there’s only suffering”. But I didn’t know more than that. I was looking for spiritual teachings, and at a certain moment in the newspaper, there was an announcement from the theosophic school in The Hague, in Holland, about the Four Noble Truths. I said to myself: “I don’t know what is it, but I go”. So, I went to the Four Noble Truths and, you know, each minute I sat more straight listening because I heard something that I’ve never heard before, and it was really very much related to my life and the questions I have. After I felt really blessed with understanding, that there is so much difference in life, and instead of being a victim of my past I realised I was part of the whole, because there was karma. In one evening I understood that immediately, I understood the difference, and I realised how much I suffered partly by my own feeling as a victim from everything. You’re a part of the whole system with your own influence and your own karma from the past lives, that brings you in this life in this situation. I understood it totally, immediately, and I said: “if that is a fact, I can change my life completely also, and I can start forgiving my parents for what they did to me”.

Everything in one time came in my mind, there was not even any discussion in myself about it; I understood. And slowly, slowly - it’s not going in one day but slowly - I took the step to forgive my parents, both, individual, for the damage that they actually brought to me and to my life. I understood they in a sense did not understand what they were doing, and the only way to get peace was to forgive my parents. I understood it. I did it in a symbolic way. My father was not able to receive any forgiveness personally, my mother was. It gave me peace also. When they died, both my parents, I had no bad feeling, it was ok, it was as it was. I could continue my life looking for a way to help others with the same or identical problems.

I was able to transform my life slowly, it did not come in one time, it took a little time because it was quite strong what happened. Can you imagine that I was even able to buy a pistol and sit in my car in my father’s street ready to kill him - can you imagine? I didn’t kill him, but for a week I stayed there, I said: “When he comes out, he’s dead”. Can you imagine? From my mother’s side, was even a much more dramatic situation. My mother left me when I was 2, she was a prostitute. They took her children away from her because she did not take care at all, totally not. So, my relationship with my mother was not deep, it was more dramatic. During my life, maybe I had this feeling that I needed a mother or whatever, but it didn’t happen in a good way. Later on, when she was old, I thought: “I need to go through this forgiveness”. She was paralysed sitting in a wheelchair, she could not talk anymore, and I came to her with a big bunch of flowers because I knew she would die soon. I needed to go to her. I gave her the flowers and I said: “Hello Mama! How are you?”. [Nodding to demonstrate how his mother reacted]. I said: “Don’t worry, I forgive you for everything that happened”. She was not comfortable with the situation... difficult. After not so long, twenty minutes, I left her, and three weeks later she died.

That brings me closer to the situation that I was in, I really had a strong wish to help others with the same problems. I opened this centre, Lotus, in the Scheveningen. Lotus actually was already in relation with Chenrezig - I will tell you that later. We organised courses, we had open days, and many people came. Actually, we were quite successful. We gave meditation classes, we gave yoga, and it was the whole day running with things. I started courses in positive thinking, *lojong*. It was really a training for people to understand their

emotions better and better, on a level that you not only talk about the philosophy of Buddhism, but you give small tools to them to understand their own problems better and better. Because that was missing, there were no courses like that. We all sat in a group, and we did a mantra, and then asked people if they understood or got a feeling from the mantra. Most of the people say yes, and they say yeah I had some specific feelings when I did: **om muni muni mahamuni shakymuniye soha**. In my first course, I had one man and he said: "I don't believe in mantra". I said: "Well, actually that's a very honest and good answer. Ok, you do something for me". I said: "Can you repeat for the next month every day three hundred times: I am crazy, I am crazy". He understood immediately the power of mantra. [Laughing]. Actually, that man became my best student at that time, it was really incredible.

But there was another thing, something that really, really made a big impact on my life. In the first course, I think we were 12-14 people, there was one woman and she came after the first lesson to me and she said: "I don't know, there's something very strange all the time behind you". I didn't see anything [Laughing]. But she saw it. I said: "What is it?". She said: "I cannot explain it, but it has almost one thousand arms". Immediately I felt such an incredible protection. It was a moment of feeling so thankful for what happened with me, and for the way that I choose to help others, that there was the protection of Chenrezig. For me, this was beyond any imagination, and all the time Chenrezig was there, every course, every lesson, he was there. Actually, she didn't know that it had a thousand arms, but she said many arms, then we translated it into the Thousand-arm Chenrezig. So, it was really my guidance, in whatever I did, I had the guidance from Chenrezig, and I felt it all the time. I even didn't need to think before what I have to do, I know what to do. At the moment we started with the course, whatever we did, it was always guided by Chenrezig.

That was also the time that I was already in contact with another Guru, Geshe Konchok Lhundrup in Holland, he was the first Geshe that we had in Holland. I was also a student from Lama Zopa. Lama Zopa found it very interesting to get me in his centre, to help build up the centre, Maitreya Institute. Actually, at the time I got a little bit big ego, I always dressed in white and everybody liked me very much and, I said: "this is getting too much". So, I thought: "I need to go and get more humble". I became a co-director in the Maitreya Institute and, well, normal for me, I did a lot, and helped a lot, and everything was fine. One day I went with the director Jan Paul, together we went to Milan to invite Lama Gangchen Rinpoche. Rinpoche lived there in an apartment and the Canadian nun, was that time his assistant.

Lama Caroline: Oh! Mariette.

Mr. Jan: Yeah, Mariette. So, we asked Lama Gangchen to come to Holland to give One Thousand-arm Chenrezig Initiation.

Lama Caroline: What year was this, do you remember?

Mr. Jan: No!

Lama Caroline: Was it in the '80s, 1980s?

Mr. Jan: Ishtar's son was like this big.

Lama Caroline: So, late '80s or in '90s, yeah?

Mr. Jan: Rinpoche accepted the invitation, and he came. That was actually a big success, many people came - many, many people - so many that we even needed more assistants, and we asked Ishtar, secretary of Rinpoche, to also come because she speaks many languages. But she had a little son, little one at that time, so he also came.

By the way, I forgot to say the Lotus centre continued but without me, because I decided to work on my big ego. It continued with another owner.

Lama Caroline: Was Rinpoche healing people at that time?

Mr. Jan: Yes. At that time, in Tilburg, Nel was there, Toet-la was there, I was there, and some other people. Rinpoche always gave healing sessions and the only mantra he did was **om muni muni mahamuni shakjamuniye soha**. I decided to leave the Maitreya Institute because I could not find myself happy there and I choose Lama Gangchen as my Guru. Of course, Rinpoche accept. What I like the most from Rinpoche was his very crazy way of doing things. [Laughing]. It fits so much with my own crazy mind that I said: "What, looks like my brother!". [Laughing]. So incredible as Rinpoche acted, I never saw any Guru till then acting in such a strange but incredible lovely and pure way.

Slowly came the situation that Rinpoche found the centre in Italy. First, we went to Milan and Rinpoche was at this small centre. Toet came there and maybe also Nel and other people. We were looking for another place and then, one of the sponsors from Rinpoche, Patrizia Tursini, found the place in Albagnano. We went immediately there and looked around and he said: "This is little Tibet". Rinpoche loved the place. Already I think he had the vision that it would become a big centre. Then, in that time, in the beginning time of the centre, Rinpoche named it Albagnano Healing Meditation Centre. I said: "oh my God, a lot of things will happen here!". [Laughing] We had meetings with the people who wanted to live there, Gabriella, Francesco and some other people, and also the old students of Rinpoche that wanted to find a house there. We were all busy finding house and apartments and so on. We needed to make some structure, and Rinpoche said: "I want Mr. Jan to become director". I was thinking: "How is that possible? I don't speak one word Italian. How can I be a director? It's completely impossible!". I also had my company, my company was small, it was not as big as now. I said: "How am I gonna manage that, company in Holland, director in Italy? I don't know". And I drove every 14 days up and down, Italy-Holland, with the car, every 14 days. When I left the centre, Rinpoche would be on the road saying: "please Jan, come back next week". [Laughing] I never came with an empty car because there was nothing in the centre, we needed everything. We didn't have a lot of sponsors at that time, absolutely not. And I said ok, I will put it in the name of my company and then I take it in a trailer. I put everything - office stuff and computers, everything we needed. Cushions, tables. Everything we needed I brought to the centre. All the time. Rinpoche wanted me to start the shop because with the shop we could make money. So, I started a shop with all the products from my company.

Lama Caroline: What kind of company do you have, for people that don't know.

Mr. Jan: For the people who don't know, we have a company that is actually a distributor, wholesaler, in yoga and meditation supplies, and all things around. It can be also organic...

Lama Caroline: For example... [showing a Tibetan singing bowl].

Mr. Jan: We are proud that we are one of the largest wholesalers in singing bowls and meditation cushions and many other things, at the moment, in the whole of Europe. So, in that time I was not that big, I had my manager who is here today, he's been 23 years working for me. I was small, I had 4-5 people, 6 maybe.

The centre had no money and we got a little bit in trouble: everybody wanted to eat for free, everybody wanted to sleep for free, nobody brought anything. I made a whole list of karma yoga practice, so if you do karma yoga you have cheaper food, this and that, nobody did anything, they all put their name on the list and they did nothing [Laughing]. It was really wild, really you cannot imagine how wild it was. Many people they didn't mind it, they didn't want to pay, they just wanted everything for free. After a while I understood why Rinpoche choose me, because I got really upset with myself [Laughing]. I was quite tough with everybody there [Laughing]. But on the other hand, Rinpoche knew that I could make miracles in many ways, he knew that. In two days I make rooms for people to sleep, in 2-3 days two rooms ready. Where now is the shop, that was actually a restaurant with a big heater in the middle, a wood stove in the middle. I said: "We need to take it out". Rinpoche said: "You do, you do". Always like that. But he knew that the rules are completely different in Italy, for everything you need permission, you need to make a request, and you need to pay 1000 euros before even you can start. And I just did it. I was smashing it with the sledgehammer myself. Gabriella came and said: "Oh Jan, the whole building will fall down!". [Laughing] I said: "don't worry, I checked very well, inside the chimney there is a pillar, don't worry, everything will be ok". Finally, everything came ok. Then we started with the colonia that was much more mess.

Lama Caroline: The colonia is where our community, our karma yoga practitioners live. Maybe now 20 people live there.

Mr. Jan: In the beginning, it was really a mess. But finally, I reached the point that I invested so much money that the account manager from my bank said: "I'm gonna close you because you don't make profit, you only lose". [Laughing] It was true. I didn't make profit, I lose only money. I was losing the company. [Laughing] We were in crisis management. The bank manager said: "Next year better, okay?". I said: "I promise you". But it didn't get better, it got worst. [Laughing] I said now I need to be honest to the manager, I said: "Please, these numbers are not correct, here in these numbers are a lot of donations, it's all donation, donation, donation". I knew he was a Christian man, and if I told him the story, he would like it. It was true. He said: "Okay now, this is last year, next year must be really better".

I went to Rinpoche I said: "I have made a decision without asking you. I'm so sorry for that, but I stop with being a manager here, I got crazy, totally crazy, here because people don't listen to you, they do whatever they want when you are away to Holland, totally opposite [Laughing], I don't speak the language, and when I ask what did you say, they say something different. So, Rinpoche, this was such a great lesson but, I decided to become your sponsor". Then he said: "But I have only one wish". "Oh!" I said, "Another wish". [Laughing]. I know, wishes from Rinpoche are not the normal ones. Because normally I follow his wishes because I'm his student and I'm really dedicated to Rinpoche, so... He looked at me very serious and he said: "Can you please multiply

yourself two times?”. [Laughing] I said: “Rinpoche, I’m not sure [Laughing]. But I have also one wish that is, please, come to Holland and bless our company, because there are obstacles that keep me from growing. Now I officially told you that I will become your sponsor. I sponsor already, but now I really want to focus on that more and more. Please, come and make some blessing, because there is some energy, obstacles in the energy”.

In Tibetan we call that a Jindala, you become Jindala. In the meantime I also got different names because Rinpoche called me Norbu Sangpo, and later he gave me another name Jimpa Gyatso. Actually, I have already two names from Rinpoche, I have this beautiful jacket from Rinpoche, what can happen to me?

Lama Caroline: Norbu Sangpo means excellent jewel. Jimpa Gyatso means ocean of generosity.

Mr. Jan: Rinpoche came with Lama Michel, Toet-la was there, some monks were there, and it was in the old building, and he sat on the table, and even Lama Michel two weeks ago he said: “You know Jan, you remember that? That moment was so magic!”. Rinpoche was there, blessed the company, and he signed the paper. There is the paper [he turns towards the wall behind him]. Rinpoche signed the paper. Behind this beautiful house, there’s one statue that Rinpoche put 50 euro under the statue. He said: “Never touch it”.

Lama Caroline: This is when you got also the name of the company? It says Norbu Sangpo Mani Bhadra.

Mr Jan: Rinpoche changed the name of the company. He said: “From now on, the name of the company is Mani Bhadra”. Before it was Phoenix. Now the holding, the umbrella of the company, is Mani Bhadra. I asked Rinpoche: “What is the meaning of Mani Bhadra?”. He said: “Actually Mani Bhadra was the sponsor of Shakyamuni Buddha”. From that moment on everything was Mani Bhadra, the shop in Italy became Mani Bhadra, everything was Mani Bhadra. But there is also something that is really a miracle. Do you remember that in 2008 we had an economic crisis? Huge one? I grew like crazy in that time, 50% a year. After Rinpoche blessed the company, we grew, and we grew, and we grew. I could fulfil my promise to sponsor, I also put attention to Help in Action that is an Organisation from Rinpoche for Nepal and Tibet, water projects, students projects. I really even put some energy inside to get more money for Help in Action. Also I introduced my customers to the feeling of charity and sponsoring. I designed this gift box for Help in Action. It’s still there and we are still using it everywhere. Everybody can take it, put on the altar, put some money inside and then when it’s full bring it back.

We’re almost at the end of the story, but not complete. I always was very close to Rinpoche, I don’t know why but often I was in his room. One day I was sitting in his room I said: “Rinpoche I don’t have time to study, I’m always busy for getting donations together and this and that, but studying Tibetan Buddhism I’m not able”. He said: “You don’t need. You know, I’ll tell you one thing. Your mind structure is exactly the same as my mind structure. No any different”. I was shocked, not shocked in a bad way but... really? Is that the reason I always understand what he’s going to do, and this and that. Because I know that, before already, I understand immediately what he’s saying. Even the way of Rinpoche’s talking is not completely English, but I understood everything all the time, directly. He said: “Yes. So, be happy with your mind structure and continue”. I was so pleased by getting always so much attention from Rinpoche that you cannot imagine,

because whatever happened he said: “Mr. Jan... Mr. Jan...”, I need to sit near him or this or that. What I can tell you, try to understand how important it is to have a good connection with the Guru, even if you don’t see him so much, even there are people who never see their Guru, but the heart connection that you can build up depends on you.

When I see people who are suffering from all kinds of different things, I always try to help and say to them: “No, no, there’s a way out, don’t worry, please meditate a little bit, do this and that”. Something I miss a little bit is basic courses for people to enter the Buddhist path, because it’s quite difficult for people to come here and do a Guru Puja, and then we just say: “Yah, have some trust, and it comes by itself”. Well, that’s not effective always, it’s difficult. One of my deepest wishes is that there’s more attention for basic courses where people can learn how they can handle their emotions, and their obstacles, and their problems, in a simple way but based on the Buddhist way. That’s really missing. I see how desperate people sometimes are... then I think yes, this first layer is not there. How can I turn my life in a positive and lovely direction? Because we’re all the same, if we’re Buddhist or not doesn’t matter. We are all the same, everybody wants love and compassion, everybody has the wish to be loved and give love, have compassion with others, everybody wants it. But they don’t know how, they don’t have the tools to give direction to their lives. In the end we are all the same, Buddhist or non-Buddhist, it doesn’t matter, it’s not the most important issue. The most important issue is this, you can reach happiness, and that you understand part of the philosophy, like the interdependence relations towards others which is so important. It’s very important to spread love and compassion to others, we are interdependent, we depend on others, everybody depends on another, one or more, the children on the teachers, we on the partners, we on this and that and on the Guru. Look how we need a Guru to come out of our, sometimes, bad situations. If we are not in a bad situation, we still want to grow to enlightenment, to a mind that is free of suffering. It’s true. We need a Guru, somebody that shows us this is the way, and it must be an enlightenment person otherwise what are you doing? There’re so many teachers that can show us a little part and a little bit, but how many enlightened beings are there with the qualities of Rinpoche and Lama Michel? Not many. Totally not. Last week when we saw all these circles in the sky after Rinpoche died, I gave the explanation on the site, maybe you read, you understand that a being with such qualities, so unique, is able to project that in the sky. Wonderful!

As you know my past was not so good. I have times that my relationships with women were not good because of my mother, and that whole situation which influenced my mind. Finally, it was more or less ok, I was quite okay with my last wife, an Italian woman, but we happily separated. Rinpoche wanted to help me overcome my relationship problem with women: "We need to do something for Mr. Yam". He called me Mr. Yam, Yam means wind, I was always quick, Yam is wind so Mr Yam. Two years ago he came to me and said he wanted to introduce me to a Tibetan lady. She was alone with two children. The children are monks now, in the monastery. We met each other for the first time in Borobudur. I saw that Rinpoche actually, of course, always knows what he’s doing, and this situation came out very well. Many people said: “It looks like you two know each other already for many years”. Our feeling is we have a very old relation already with each other, we both have the same feeling.

Lama Caroline: Mr. Jan, you got better from cancer, that's also something else.

Mr Jan: In my life I got many difficult stories. You know when you have such a difficult life you get accidents, you almost die, and this and that. Last year I got cancer, intestine cancer, and I called Rinpoche and he said: "You do both, you do Tibetan medicine and treatment, and you do your practice. Don't forget **om parso chuso**, Black Manjushri, and Yamantaka". I did immediately since the beginning, and I got radiotherapy and chemotherapy. I'm a person that I'm never worried, not even for a split second, not at all. I was not creating problems with the cancer because it doesn't work, in my mind it doesn't work. It is there and I need to make the best out of it. Each time I had an appointment in the hospital like radiotherapy, on top I put Black Manjushri and all the visualisation, and the mantra. I came out wonderful, all the time. The power of mantra is such an incredible power. Even beginners when they don't have the belief and they start doing it, and you ask them please continue you'll see the result finally and feel the result - it's going to happen to everybody, it's like that.

I got then a message from Rinpoche: "I come to visit you". Rinpoche came here in October. And I said: "Wow! I feel very special that you come for me". He said: "No, no, no, you, all your life you dedicated to me, now I come to you". We did Guru Puja together and we had some people here, it was really beautiful and I feel really blessed in that situation. They came with big cards and all the family, our family in Italy, wrote something for me on the cards, I still have the cards. Incredible feeling. What I did, I sat on a round cushion, a meditation cushion, I put all the cards from the people around and I tuned inside the energy, I could feel all the blessings, all. It had really healing power, together with Rinpoche's energy, all together, really, it's really incredible. I knew at that moment: "Don't worry Jan, cancer will be gone". I had two months radiotherapy and chemotherapy, but I had to stop with the chemotherapy because I got a syndrome in the hand and the feet. I couldn't walk, not so nice. Anyway, I stop with that. Radiotherapy I finished. In December, before I went to Italy, I got a check-up. I had a 22cm cancer in my intestine - it's totally gone. Completely gone. Nothing left, only a wound you get because it's gone but there's still a wound that you feel sometimes. Anyway, I knew that it would happen. This is a matter of positive thinking, never going to the negative energy, please don't do, especially not when you have cancer. If you have a Guru and you're so blessed and all the people sending positive energy, it's really something very special. This is only one of the things that happened with Rinpoche's students. I'm only one of the whole list of people who really got miracle treatments and miracle healing. Lama Caroline knows it, and many people know it, and sometimes with only the water and cream pills that gave such a result, it's really incredible. So, that was my story. [Applause] Was it enough? [Mr. Jan asks Lama Caroline].

Lama Caroline: Very beautiful. I would like to thank Mr. Jan on behalf of the Albagnano Community. Since many years he is helping so much the centre, Rinpoche, in many ways, and especially the karma yogis and yoginis, and especially the poorer members of our community, with things like dentistry, medical care. Really whatever we need to live and serve in Albagnano. Everybody appreciates very much, so thank you, and please, continue for a very long time, now that you're healthy, continue for a very long time.

Lama Caroline: Now we're going to start to talk about Lama Gangchen's book *Self-Healing 1*. But just before we start, I found this here on my table today. We have Lama Gangchen's flag, a baby Buddha, lotus with a light and a vajra and bell. This morning, in Italy, in Albagnano, as you all know because you all have WhatsApp, they put the Borobudur top over the tomb of Rinpoche. We have a temporary tomb, till we make a stupa according to Rinpoche's wish. I came here and immediately found this. Finished the death ceremony, now here's a baby Buddha. I don't know, to me this is auspicious. This baby Buddha is going between the heaven and the earth - the best of men, I've come to teach the Dharma to all beings and show the way out of suffering. I think this is something very auspicious: one lotus, one light, one baby Buddha, one flag. Anyway, we hope that Rinpoche, future Rinpoche, manifests soon as baby Buddha. We don't know where or how but if we all create the positive cause and condition, for sure it will happen.

So, these days we've been reading Lama Gangchen Rinpoche's first book *Self-Healing 1*. So the digested read, short read is: who's my friend, who's my enemy? Oh, it's me! The first part, is: I'm responsible for my own experience. Every day do one less negative action, and every day do one more positive action. We think enemies are outside the house but actually they're inside of us, so we need to be aware of our behaviour. We need to listen to the messages of our body, like, for example, if we drink a bottle of whiskey and we feel sick, our body is saying: *that's hurting me*. We need to - that's what Rinpoche says in his book, no? - always pay attention of our body. We need to live in a middle way, not in an extreme way. We should have a good relationship with our families. We should practise lojong mind training, which is basically put other people first. Practice the 8 point and 7 point mind training. That bit I haven't quite finished yet but I'll continue with that these next few days. Now we'll get back to Rinpoche's book and - auspiciously and dependent arising - Rinpoche is now going to talk about coffee. In the Netherlands people like very much coffee. It's true, no? I see all my friends really drinking a lot of coffee here in the Netherlands.

Rinpoche was saying that we need to be like peacocks. In Indian mythology, the tail feathers of a male peacock are supposed to be because he eats poison, no? The more poison he eats, it transforms into those tail feathers and it becomes more and more beautiful. So, we need to act like bodhisattvas and transform the normal experiences of daily life. So, Rinpoche says: "We have to learn to swallow our mental poisons and transform it into positive energy. In this way, our daily problems will be transformed into benefits for both ourselves and others. If our mind swallows a lot of poison, and is unable to transform it, we'll become more and more ignorant and ill". He says: "Now I'll give another example: coffee". Before we start this, Lama Gangchen Rinpoche never said to people do not do things, that wasn't his way. He would talk like this, and he would say it's up to you. He would say: "Maybe you could reduce a little bit". But he never ever said to people: "don't do it", did he? Sometimes he even used to say do it more [Laughing]. Okay, Rinpoche said: "Coffee causes many problems. I'll now explain how coffee leads to problems. When we drink a lot of coffee, our blood becomes bubbly, like Coca Cola. We received clean blood from our mothers, but the excess of coffee shakes our blood cells. Maybe, at the time of drinking coffee, there's a good sensation and we have a little more energy, but soon after we drink one coffee, we feel the need to have another one, and then we start to have problems. This is why it's important to drink less coffee. We have the

fixed idea to drink coffee. That's why is difficult to stop drinking it. But we could add water to it, make it weak, so our mind will still think it's drinking coffee. I have never drunk any coffee". This is Rinpoche speaking: "Maybe it's tasty but I think, like drugs, coffee also seems to be a friend but actually is an enemy". What is truly a friend? A very important detail is omitted in this book, he said: "I think tea is ok". [Hands in prayer] Thank you! [Laughing]

This is like the start for his, let's say, *lamrim* teachings. He was using everybody's life and showing us how we actually act, and applying Buddhism to our life without calling it Buddhism. Making us observe our own behaviour. So: "What seems to be a friend but in reality is our enemy? What's truly a friend? We can use these questions in our daily experience because they are really very deep questions. We talked about how the five senses lose their power because of the abuse of cigarettes, alcohol, and coffee. This is also the case with drugs. We saw how the mind, body, organs, sight, taste and smell start to be destroyed. As a result of drug consumption both, speech and hearing become impaired, our body becomes weak and our mind becomes confused, we become very nervous with coffee. So, where is the benefit of drugs?".

Remember, Rinpoche came to the West as a healing lama. At this period of his life, when he made the NgalSo Self-Healing 1 workshop in Brazil, he'd been going around healing many, many people in India, Nepal, Europe, and South America. Many people came to him with health problems, so that's why he's emphasising very much things from Tibetan medicine, about taking care of the diet and how, actually, it's linked to our emotional states. Later on, Rinpoche opened the Kunpen Lama Gangchen in Milano, in the 1990's, a school of Tibetan medicine and astrology. We also have a very nice book called *The Rainbow of Healing Nectars*, which is about the basic principles of Tibetan medicine. It explains in great detail about the relationship between the five elements and the five emotions and how, if we want to be a healthy balanced person, we need to care of our diet and lifestyle. It's a very beautiful and important book. In the West we're obsessed with diet and lifestyle and all this stuff. But, Rinpoche was always looking at the emotional causes behind why we do this kind of thing like smoking, drinking, drugs, whatever... He was looking at how to heal the deep emotional causes that create that kind of behaviour.

I told this story the other day. One of my friends, an Italian lady, she smoked 60 cigarettes a day for 30 years. One day she was in Albagnano, doing Self-Healing with Rinpoche, then she went home and got the box of cigarettes, looked at it, said good-bye and threw it out the window. After that she never smoked again. I asked her if she had any side effects. 60 cigarettes a day for 30 years is a lot, surely she had some withdrawal symptoms! "No, I finally understood that I was smoking because I was afraid thanks to doing practice with Rinpoche. When I understood that and I actually overcame my fear I didn't want this anymore, just goodbye". There are loads of stories like this, true stories, of Rinpoche's disciples. One other good friend of mine, who is another of Rinpoche's old disciple, when she went to Rinpoche she was very addicted to all kinds of drugs. When she first met Rinpoche he had a bottle of very strong alcohol for his serkyem, and he kept saying to her have a drink of this. He made her drink a whole bottle of this super-strong alcohol. She was *glug, glug, glug*, and drank it all down and was completely drunk. Then from that point on she just doesn't drink anything anymore, doesn't smoke or anything - completely transformed. Like this I could tell you lots of stories. Rinpoche healed many people and

brought them out of addiction. I could write you a list. Rinpoche was an incredibly special person. He had an incredible psychological understanding of people. One thing he really gave people was the feeling of acceptance because people need this, like they're missing love, aren't they? Missing this feeling of love. The first thing Rinpoche gave everybody was that, then the healing process could actually start.

Then Rinpoche continues: "Drugs are another example of how family communication becomes affected when a member of the family is a drug user. He brings, he or she, brings much suffering to his family and onto himself. Besides creating problems for his family, he also has problems with society, the government, and the police. Drug users live like thieves, who are always afraid and do not have any real pleasure because of constant fear of being followed, they experience much suffering and fear and never feel like they're understood. Everyone needs calmness and tranquility. The drug-addicted person suffering is something like the suffering of hell-beings. How many dangerous illnesses arise as the result of drugs".

In the 1990s, when we were in the Kunpen in Milano, at that time there was the Aids epidemic. Many people came to Rinpoche with Aids. There was no cure. Nowadays, we have the retroviral medicine so people can live. But at that time many people were dying of Aids. Many of them, at least in Italy, through drug use. People who came to Rinpoche lived for many more years than would have been possible otherwise, thanks to **om muni muni**, the 4 limitless, the white and red blessing pills. Sometimes with some Tibetan medicine, but mainly through **om muni muni** and the red and white pills. Sometimes Rinpoche used to give a crystal as well, to very sick people. People who had really severe Aids and things, and had no chance to live, he used to give them crystals to hold in their hands and bless them. I always thought that was very beautiful. Rinpoche always used to say there's many different levels of healing and of course we all hope for the healing of the body, don't we? And the mind, of course. But, for example, people can die and still get healed, and sometimes it's part of their karmic healing process. Rinpoche really took care of a lot of addicted people in the early 90s, in Milan. Lots. For us, in the centre, it was not always easy to be around these people, but Rinpoche was a bodhisattva and accepted it. Rinpoche had a beautiful big gold watch, you know like a beautiful 24-carat gold watch, and somebody stole it. Rinpoche just used to invite them all into his room, all these drug people, and then just put his gold watch out and somebody stole it. He just said: "maybe they needed it more than me". Anyway, there're many stories which will come out bit by bit. Many true and incredible stories.

Mr. Jan: It's true that Rinpoche knew exactly the moment that you needed a pill or something. I tell you I had a kidney stone, and I suffered so much from the pain and he never gave anything. One weekend that I was going to Holland, he said: "Take tomorrow this pill". I took the pill and I went the next day to the toilet - *plup* [Laughing]. Gone! And not a small one. So, it's the miracle of Rinpoche.

Lama Caroline: So, Rinpoche says: "A drug-addicted person suffering is like the suffering of hell beings. How much suffering and dangerous illness arises, drugs, how much suffering occurs among friends? Today even children are affected by this vice. There are so many people who are worried about world wars, but drugs have already killed so many people, and are the cause of so many serious illnesses that they may be considered

much more dangerous than a 3rd World War”. Remember, Rinpoche is saying this in Brazil. As we all know, there is actually a very serious social problem. I mean, of course, it’s also a problem in the Netherlands, in Europe, but really in South America it’s worse.

“Nowadays, many people make use of drugs. Drugs are something that seem to be a friend and it seems as if they bring some benefit. This is the problem. Our feeling of attachment seems as though it’s something that benefits us, it seems to be our friend. We rarely understand that our attachment is our enemy. This is the problem. Sometimes we clearly understand but we do not accept. We say yes, yes, but... so, we end up not changing our attitude. Our mind is very rigid. It doesn’t accept the actual benefit. We’d like to have benefits. Our nature is to make and to wish good things. This is the right way of thinking. But we say yes, yes, but...”.

Rinpoche starts off with the obvious things, you know, like addictions, smoking, drinking, coffee, fighting in the family, these things that everybody are disturbed by, that everybody experiences in normal life. Then he says, look the cause is something else, it’s our mental attitude. Then he starts talking about the underlying emotional states that bring us to addiction, to fighting with our family, to projecting that everybody is our enemy. Because he knew very well. Yesterday I was translating a beautiful pray for Rinpoche to come back swiftly by a very high lama called Zemey Rinpoche. Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche, Phabongkha Rinpoche, our protector, have all written prayers. Also Zemey Rinpoche, Panchen Lama, and some others. So, I was translating this one from Zemey Rinpoche who was the main disciple of Kyabje Song Rinpoche. Two years ago, our Rinpoche went to Tibet for his enthronement, I wasn’t there but maybe some of you went. He’s a very important high lama, in our Ganden Nyengyu tradition. He wrote a very nice prayer for Rinpoche. One of the things he said is, Rinpoche was bringing peace and healing in the borderlands - that means to us who are new to the Dharma, that was his mission. Borderlands means far away from the centre of the Dharma. He is bringing Dharma around the world. To us, all around the world. When Rinpoche did the Buddha’s relic tour, remember? He did that so the Buddha relics could touch the five continents. So, there were no more borderlands. Everywhere was a holy land. That’s nice, no? I just was translating that yesterday. For example, this is like almost 40 years ago. If Rinpoche had turned up with the big Buddhist text, saying you know, point 1, point 2, point 3, and now 4, and 10 - everybody would be like *pfff*, out the door. Why? Because we don’t have this background, this kind of spiritual education. That’s why he was speaking about these very obvious examples, and then gradually bringing people in the direction of the Dharma. That’s what we call skilful means.

I’m going to read one more paragraph because what else is there to do at the moment. I don’t know about here in the Netherlands, but recently, let’s say, life has been a bit quiet. To be honest, being together with the sangha is the best at the moment. When we started to reopen Albagnano after the lockdown because of the Karuna virus, as Rinpoche called it, it was so wonderful to be together with our sangha - coming back together. I really appreciated it. It’s not that I didn’t appreciate the sangha before, but now I appreciate it more. It’s very nice that we so spontaneously gather like this together. We don’t really have other appointments, do we? Our Rinpoche - don’t worry, I’m not going to do this - but many times we would be all day there, all day together and then Rinpoche would keep us till midnight, one o’clock. It’s true! The screen would come down [Laughing]. We were

like: “Oh no! the screen!”. [Laughing] Then he would put the DVD and we would sit there until two o’clock in the morning watching Kalachakra or something, a DVD of Self-Healing. So, it’s ok, we can do a little more.

Rinpoche was very clever - no? - because somehow our sangha always looks very relaxed. When you go in the Gompa somebody is lying down, somebody doing this, somebody having a tea, you know - other people were like: what are they doing? But in the end, actually, we were there for much more than everybody else, all day long doing practice. Rinpoche used to say: “Life together with dharma”. Not just okay, time’s up. He used to say about other teachers, that after two hours all the disciples were going [makes the gesture of pointing to her wristwatch, meaning time is up]. [Laughing]. This is how it came about in our gompas that they are very comfortable, beautiful. In all our gompas we have sofas, everybody has their own little throne, we have food, drinks, everything. Why? Because we stay many hours and do a lot of practices.

Rinpoche said: “More often our mind follows the influence of our negative mind” - our mind is more easily going to the negative side than the positive side - “This is our biggest problem, and this is why we need self-healing”.

[Anouk asks Lama Caroline: Why does that happen?]

It’s a habit, isn’t it? Because we don’t have a fixed essence. Everything is dependent arising due to cause and condition, so we have strong habits to follow the negative. That’s why in the beginning it’s a little difficult because Dharma practice is changing this habit into positive, isn’t it? Rinpoche used to say it’s like two wheels. We have the wheel of samsara, it’s like a machine generating the pig, the chicken, and the snake - generating suffering. It’s like our habits, no? We have to get it to turn in the other direction. He used to say not like this [gestures a circle in the air by turning her hand counterclockwise], like this [gestures a circle in the air by turning her hand clockwise]. We need to turn our habits in the positive direction, so the mind is like a machine that generates positive experiences. That’s why at first it’s a little difficult, slightly hard, but then it gets easier and easier, doesn’t it as the momentum builds up on the spiritual path.

“Self-Healing is the ability to discriminate between the positive and negative, the beneficial action and the unhelpful action”. By the way, this means you don’t have to be Buddhist to do Self-Healing. Everybody needs this. Rinpoche always said that you can be Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim, Atheist, Agnostic, anything you like. [Laughing]. “We have to ask ourselves: who is our friend, who brings us a lot or even a little temporary benefit, and who brings us problems. First, we have to understand this very clearly. Then we must say goodbye or ‘ciao ciao’ to our problems. Only then will Self-Healing happen in a practical way. If you simply read or listen to these teachings and do not practice them, it would be difficult to attain real benefit. Maybe before we didn’t know how to practice, but if we understand what is explained here and we don’t practice, our problems will continue. To understand without practicing is the same as not understanding”.

In Tibetan culture, they say that our mind should not become like the bag that holds butter. Obviously, we don’t carry butter around in leather bags anymore but, in ancient times, Tibetan nomads, used to carry their butter around in a leather pouch. This leather pouch would become completely saturated with butter. And then it became kind of useless, there’s nothing else that can be done with this bag. So we should be careful, we’re all the

time in the Gompa: “yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah”. But it doesn’t go in anymore. At a certain point there’s no more butter that can go into the leather bag. It’s the same with us. We go to Dharma centres, we like listening to Buddhist teachings, but be careful that it still penetrates our mind. Don’t become like a butter bag, that’s the Tibetan expression. I’m just adding a traditional example that Rinpoche himself was not using. [Laughing]

Rinpoche, he said: “We have to train our mind not to drift towards the negative. We have to reflect upon our problems, and understand them, and make some decisions for ourselves”. So, self-healing means decision. This is a very important idea, isn’t it? We talk about empowerment a lot in Buddhism. Many people think it’s something like this [puts a bell on her head]. The lama is touching us with something. Empowerment is actually connecting with your own practice, and becoming more and more capable to take care of your life, take care of others, being able to make the correct decisions and things like that.

This book is available in Dutch. I don’t know how many copies we have. Many? Maybe you could borrow one from the centre, and promise to give it back. Maybe we put a stamp on it, and maybe you’ll read it. I’m also doing the same thing. When Rinpoche passed away, he requested us: please go more deeply into my teachings. Me, I was 30 years, all day long listening to him, following him around, as you know, always following Rinpoche around. But now I’m actually trying to go back to the beginning, and actually understand more deeply what Rinpoche said. Rinpoche didn’t just say this to me, he said it to everybody. So, anyway, if you like, we have many of these books here in Mani Bhadra. You could also buy one. Many books are missing in Dutch, we need to print the books, so collect some money and print the books in the Dutch language. The Dutch sangha is incredible and has always been incredibly generous and very kind, very generous towards Albagnano and all the other sanghas, to all Rinpoche projects. Mr. Jan, of course, but also many of our Dutch sangha members. So, thank you all very much for your support over the years. Please continue! [Laughing]

Mr. Jan: I want to explain a little thing that helped me a lot to overcome all my negative energy that I projected on others. Rinpoche came with this tantric method that already existed, but we don’t always use, but we should use it. If you know that every person has the same potential - love, compassion, wisdom, it’s all there - then we can see everybody is a little bit a Guru for us, everybody is a kind of Guru. I don’t say it’s the same Guru as Rinpoche, this I’m not saying, but everybody is a Guru for another one, in one way or another. If you always look to the other person in that aspect: that he has the potential of being your Guru, that he has love, compassion, and wisdom, has the wish to reach enlightenment, you have a totally different way of looking at that person. You train yourself not to look any more at his negative actions because you know that his negative actions are just the simple fact that he is not really complete the Guru, but he is working on his potential. You get a totally different way to look at people, you’re getting more lovely to them, and you’re not looking into the negative things anymore. For me, it worked perfect. If you look at that, and if you realise that everybody, even if he expresses himself not good in one way or another, or one day because his mother was terrible, or the wife was terrible, but that his intention is to be good and try to do the best what he can, that is really helping to look another way at people and not to look in a negative way to actions that are made inappropriately or whatever. It happens to all of us. Totally different.

Lama Caroline: Lama Gangchen always liked very much the Gandhavyuha Sutra, and there Sudana, the person who is in the story, has 52 different gurus from all different walks of life, so like Jan is saying - it's true. Each person is very beautiful, each person can teach one step on the path to enlightenment if we understand. Speaking of which, I would just like to say Josephine sent me this card, thank you very much, it's very kind of you. Josephine is one of our Dutch sangha members. I hope Josephine you don't mind me saying this, but I'm going to tell our friends. In our sangha we have many special people, incredibly kind people, and Josephine, who's Rinpoche disciple for many years and has a special connection with Rinpoche, did the most incredible thing: she gave one of her kidneys to a friend. Not even her relative. There was somebody that was sick, and she gave her kidney. This is like these ancient stories of bodhisattvas. Actually I have one little statue she gave me and I keep on my altar, I always think about her, thinking how incredibly kind she was, you know, like real bodhisattva. Going around the world with Rinpoche for so many years I really had the privilege to meet many people with a special inner light. It's a very beautiful experience that I'm so very grateful for.

Anyway, so, to conclude for tonight, please buy *Self-Healing 1* in Dutch, we have many copies. Now is the time to buy it. Take home a copy with you, read what your Guru said, try to think about it, think about what our Guru said. Self-Healing means we have to make more decisions for ourselves, we have to think about where our problems are coming from, understand the source. And then make a decision to change for the positive way. Every day one less negative thing, every day one more positive thing. Rinpoche always used to say: every day one coffee less is self-healing, every day one cigarette less is self-healing, etc. We're going to continue with this class. Lama Michel is streaming on Wednesdays and I'm streaming on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Now we have the summer courses in Albagnano, I hope some of you can come, but anyway, generally we'll continue for a long time with the streaming. I hope now I've discovered the car [Laughing], I can come to visit more often. How many kilometres did you do Mr Jan?

Mr. Jan: Well, it's 1000 kilometres, so, most of the time it's 12 hours. But when I was younger, and I had the wish to go to Italy, I got Rinpoche in my mind and I got a lot of energy and I would go in the night. Sometimes I would have really beautiful presents like the Saraswati statue for his birthday, that came from Bali. I put it in the car, I said this is for Rinpoche's birthday and I arrived in the morning of his birthday because the whole night I drove. In the night, I made a song for Saraswati [Laughing]. For me not easy, so each text then I repeat, and then another text again, and then the whole night, and, in the morning I had the song. Then I came, bringing this beautiful Saraswati to Rinpoche: "Please, this is for you", and then I sang the song.

Lama Caroline: I hope I'll be able to drop by here more often. As you know, in Albagnano me and Lama Michel are there very often. So to go to the gompa and see the sangha is very normal. Here always seemed a little far, but now I discovered the car or the plane maybe I'll come more often. To conclude, Elkana please can you sing us the nice song: the Shades of Albagnano. Elkana and Rogier have made lots of beautiful songs. Also you [referring to Mr. Jan], and many other friends have made beautiful songs, but recently Elkana and Rogier, made this beautiful song, so if you could please sing it for us.

Elkana: I made this song for Lama Gangchen's birthday, I think 4 years ago. Me and Rogier.

[Elkana sings the song]

Rinpoche asked that we sing, before he passed away he said: "Please sing more". So, I know in Holland people made lots of songs for Rinpoche. Now we need to remember them, sing them and record them. This is another of Rinpoche's wishes. We made a lot of songs but we need to have the words and the tune. If you make a Saraswati song you have to record it singing with the melody. Also our friends in Brazil, we've also many beautiful songs from South America, please, record them - something to do in lockdown! Something positive, Rinpoche asked us to do. Then send to Carmen. I think we'll conclude for this evening. Thank you all for coming. It's very nice to see everybody, really super nice. I hope we do this more often. Tomorrow I'm going to Spain, to the Spanish sangha. I will stream on Thursday from Spain if you'd like to continue to follow *Self-Healing 1*.

Now we'll dedicate for the swift return of our precious Guru, Lama Gangchen Rinpoche, in whatever form he deems fit, as soon as possible. May all the Dharma activities in our centres around the world develop, may the coronavirus and all the sicknesses be pacified as soon as possible.

om bishwa shanti hung x5

Door de kracht van de waarheid vrede en vreugde voor altijd (x3)

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 /

Bij zonsopgang en zonsnedergang, bij nacht of middag, mogen de drie Juwelen ons hun zegeningen schenken, mogen zij ons helpen te verweven alle realisaties en besproeien het pad van ons leven met variërende tekens van voorspoed. (Dutch)

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

Thank you everybody. Have a wonderful evening! Thank you everybody in Mani Bhadra Gompa, see you all soon. Tomorrow I believe Lama Michel is teaching at 7 o'clock, European time. I'll hopefully stream at 7 on Thursday. See you all soon, thank you very much.