



# Seeds for Enlightenment

## LINKS XII

Towards the Self-Sustainability of the Micro and Macrocosms

To uphold the humanitarian aims of the United Nations,  
Unesco, Unicef and related agencies

### “Borobudur 2020” Proceedings Borobudur Mandala for Global Education: **“Fulfilling the Missing Part”**

An education for the third millennium

International Conference,  
Manohara Conference Hall, Borobudur, Java, Indonesia  
held from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2020

*“The United Nations is the expression of the world countries' renunciation of war:  
The Nations' collective root commitment to world peace”.*

**T.Y.S. Lama Gangchen - World Healer**



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To uphold the humanitarian aims of the United Nations, Unesco, Unicef and related agencies

Conference Proceedings of Borobudur 2020:  
**Mandala for Global Education: Fulfilling the Missing Part**

**T.Y.S. Lama Gangchen - World Healer**

Cover Graphic Design and layout: Isthari D.-Adler

Compiled, elaborated and edited by Isthari D.-Adler

Transcriptions: Michael Nicholson and Isthari D.-Adler

Translations: Isthari D.-Adler

Caligraphies by Regina Isabel "Bebel" Fraco

Photographs: Isthari D.-Adler, Ashani our Borobudur Photographer; A special thank you goes to all other unnamed contributors.



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www.lgpt.ngalso.org - lgwpfoundation@gmail.com



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BUDHIST TEACHING AND...  
BUDHISTS

KACANG MENTELEM



## Author's Prelude

Dawning  
Sun rising  
Rain falling  
Wind blowing  
Night falling  
Stars glowing  
Nature moving  
Rainbow colouring  
In or out of sight  
The visible you see  
The invisible you touch  
Inner sun always  
Nature is such  
Transform darkness into light  
Never out of sight  
Heart to heart  
Heavens above  
Where only there is love  
High or low  
Mind will flow  
Lives come and go  
Goodbye or hello  
Space as an echo  
Most hidden though  
Reflecting full or hollow  
Heart's inner most secrets  
Which no one owns  
But unto itself love alone  
Can build any throne

To own nothing  
But to be  
Like the sweet melody  
Of land and sea  
Coming into harmony....

*Dedicated in Endless Loving Devotion  
to my Guru Vajradhara Lama Gangchen Tulku Rinpoche*

Isthar



## NgalSo Gangchen Labrang Tibetan calligraphy Üchen style



Tibetan spelling has its origins in the mid-7th century, when King Sogzen Gonpo sent his minister Thönmi Sambhota to India to learn Sanskrit and then be able to translate the Dharma texts into Tibetan. And so the written Tibetan began. Lama Gangchen said that this language became sacred precisely because it was born for sacred texts and then practiced for centuries in spiritual practice. He also said that in the same way Western languages, if used repeatedly for the recitation of sacred texts, acquire power and sacredness. The first Tibetan spelling was Üchen, capital letters. Its graphic characteristic lies in the fact that it 'descends' from an upper horizontal line, while

the spellings of Western languages are usually 'resting' on a lower line. The Üme, on the other hand, is the Tibetan spelling in italics. While the Lamza is decorative writing. There are also many other styles born over the centuries. I see my work as one of Rinpoche's many art projects, he guides me. Tibetan calligraphy is also a self-healing practice for me. I hope that my handwriting can touch the heart of those who look at them and that they can appear in the heart of those who meditate on them.

"Beauty never ends" ... Lama Ganchen Rinpoche told me when I was writing in the Temple of Heaven on Earth. I hope that the beauty of his teachings will never end and continue to guide you from life to life!



Caligraphy by Regina "Bebel" Franco

## Speech Blessing

rangnyi lhar säl che tengdu / ah le da teng om kar thar / a li karmo  
yäkör dang / kali marpo yön kor dang / tänying ngönpo yäkör la /  
mig ne nang rim drul du de /

With the clarity of the deity, from a syllable AH on top of my tongue arises a moon disk with a white letter OM. Circling clockwise are the white vowels, circling counter-clockwise are the red consonants, while circling clockwise is the blue essence [mantra] of interdependence.

### [White vowels:]

om a aa i ii u uu ri rii lii e ai o au ah soha (x3)

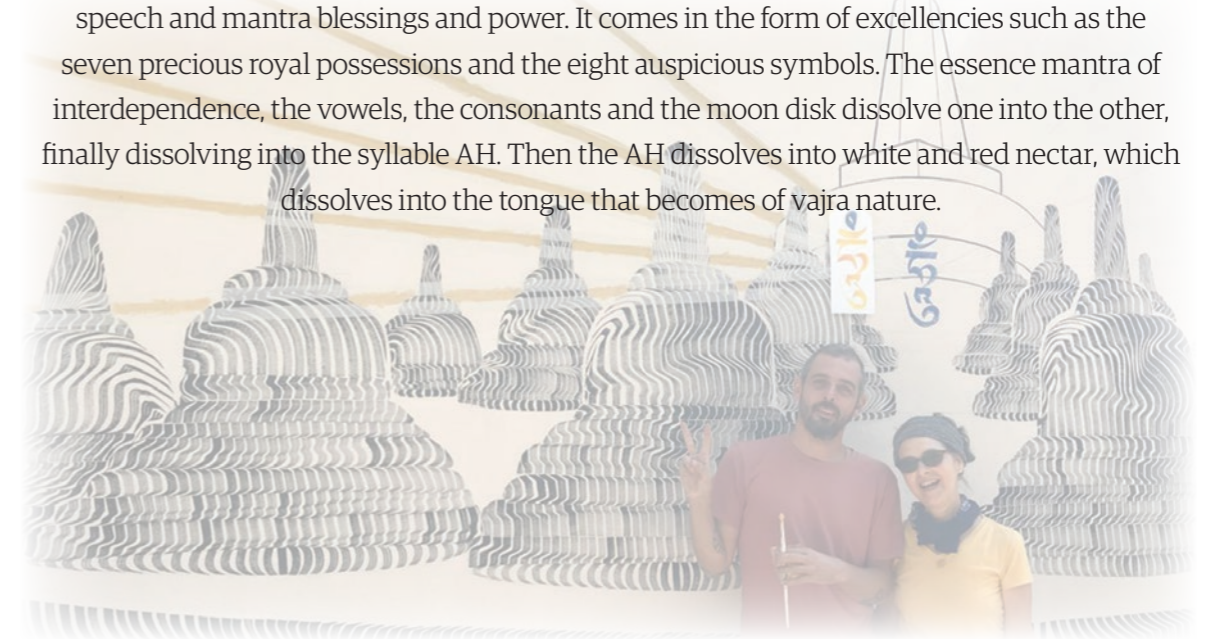
### [Red consonants:]

om ka kha ga gha nga / ca cha ja jha ña / ta tha da dha na / ta tha da  
dha na / pa pha ba bha ma / ya ra la wa / sha sa sa ha ksa / soha (x3)

### [Blue essence mantra of interdependence:]

om ye dharma hetu prabhawa / hetun teshan tathagato / hyvadat  
teshan ca yo nirodha / evam vadi maha sramanaye soha (x3)  
sabön ngag treng özer gyi / jigtän de dang ma de kyi  
sung ngag ji na thu ngag sum dang / phüntsog gyäl si rinchän dün  
trashy tag gye nampar kug / thimpe tenying kali dang  
ali om yig da dän nam / ngama chir thim ah yig gyur  
deyang kar mar dütsir zhu / cher thim dorje rangshyin gyur

The Tathagata said: "All phenomena arise from causes and conditions". Every mandala arises from the interdependent causes and conditions of recitation, concentration, meditation, faith, power and the lineage blessings of the inner science of Buddha Shakyamuni. Light radiates from the seed syllables and mantra garlands, drawing back all the mundane and supra-mundane speech and mantra blessings and power. It comes in the form of excellencies such as the seven precious royal possessions and the eight auspicious symbols. The essence mantra of interdependence, the vowels, the consonants and the moon disk dissolve one into the other, finally dissolving into the syllable AH. Then the AH dissolves into white and red nectar, which dissolves into the tongue that becomes of vajra nature.





## Borobudur Ocean of Mandalas

The ancient Buddhist sanctuary Borobudur in Central Java, Indonesia was built in the 8th century as a huge three-dimensional Vajrayana mandala. The Mandala is built like a pyramid and has four sides and ten levels that correspond to the ten stages on the bodhisattva or tantric path to enlightenment.

Since the first time Lama Gangchen visited Borobudur in 1989, he sees the stupa as a multi-mandala - an 'ocean of mandalas' - suitable for the practice of all three main traditions of Buddhism: Hinayana - or Theravada - , Mahayana and Vajrayana, including all four stages of tantra.

Borobudur Stupa Mandala is the residence of the five Dhyani Buddhas and the five Great Mothers: the archetypical meditation Buddhas who represent the five wisdoms and the five elements in their perfected state.

They are seated on the square levels of the stupa: Akshobya and Mamaki in the East, Ratnasambhava and Lochana in the South, Amitabha and Pandaravasini in the West, Amoghasiddhi and Samaya Tara in the North and Vairochana and Akashvajra in the centre.

On the round top levels in 72 perforated bell stupas we find Buddhas touching their ring fingers together. This 'mudra of union' represents the Yab Yum aspect: the union of male and female, method and wisdom, bliss and emptiness.

In the early 1990s Lama Gangchen was inspired by Borobudur to reveal the NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing practice; a traditional meditation practice for modern people, in which the five Dhyani Buddhas and the five Great Mothers play a central part. We can practice Self-Healing anywhere in the world. However, Lama Gangchen advises his disciples to visit Borobudur, the cradle of the NgalSo Self-Healing practice, at least once in their lifetime.

Hence, an increasing number of pilgrims joins the yearly retreat to Borobudur with Lama Gangchen Rinpoche. For two weeks, each morning at the crack of dawn, around 200 friends and disciples of Lama Gangchen Rinpoche climb the stupa while performing the mudras, mantras and meditation that compose the

**Self-Healing: A spiritual marathon to enlightenment!**



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## Introduction

T.Y.S. Lama Gangchen - World Healer

The ancient and sacred stupa Mandala of Borobudur - Palden Drepung, Sri Danakot, - radiates love and compassion. The stupa has been restored and reopened as a UNESCO world heritage site for which we are forever grateful owing to the immense kindness of the country of Indonesia as well as all the supporting countries and individuals. We are deeply grateful and thank Professor Pandit Lokesh Chandra for his personal request to the Indonesian Government with a proposal to have the stupa reconditioned, which was received positively by President Suharto in 1967. In 1969, the restoration of Borobudur became part of the first "Five Year Plan" declared by the Suharto Government.

Borobudur is today one of the best preserved monuments in the world and one of the most popular, counting over one million visitors from all corners of the world every year. We are eternally thankful to the Indonesian Government for taking such good care and for offering the stupa to the world; to tourists, to believers and non-believers alike, because this spiritual love and compassion wisdom mandala generates something positive, some good feelings, including for those with disabilities, blindness; each one feeling something different. Every day, all day long people circumambulate or just walk straight up to the top the stupa, and each one has some feeling, their own experience of the Borobudur stupa mandala's many positive energy levels.

We have been on annual pilgrimages to Borobudur for almost 30 years and each year more countries have been represented by peace messengers from all over the world. We have written books and practices as well as made CDs and DVDs relating to the ancient wisdom Mandala of Borobudur.

**Let me emphasize that during our journeys to Borobudur we need to feel the temple, we need to feel the conference and the teachings; we need to develop feelings in many different ways. When I first met each one of you there was each time also some feeling - this is important; it is so important to develop feelings in a positive way.** This works also to overcome any kind of fear.

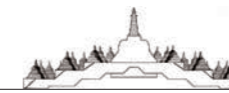
Every day we gather at the foot of the mandala with incense and flowers. We begin like this together feeling the energy rising like the morning sun as we walk in this precious garden. A different feeling arises at each stage of the retreat throughout the spiritual opening of the mandala.

Also, **our conferences are different from other conferences, as we cover many subjects like health, environment, science, nature, education, together with our spiritual teachings and practical teachings like NgalSo trulkor yoga. Then we have sound and music therapy subjects and colour therapy with paintings and drawings, and we ourselves colour the mandala each day: the outer mandala and the body mandala. Then we have Lama Caroline teaching about connecting the planets and Lama Michel teaching about Tibetan astrology and Tibetan medicine.**

So, let me take this opportunity to give our special thanks to our annual temporary home: the Manohara Hotel, for their constant care and kindness each year. We are always made to feel incredibly welcome and the facilities and conference hall are better each year. Thank you to all the staff and management.

**With sincere and dedicated effort we can learn by using Borobudur's ancient wisdom and share this precious message of peace education with more feeling now and in the future, towards a better society and world peace in the 21st century.**

We can solve all our personal, family and international conflicts and the other thousands of different days of fighting, by choosing inner peace. Fighting is too expensive; of course war is too expensive; even thinking about fighting is too expensive. On the other hand, the way of peace costs almost nothing. We have to develop a non-violent culture; it is very important for the development of the global village in the third millennium. Peace is our best friend and love. Other friends change from this day to that, but peace always helps us. Other remedies help us temporarily but peace "medicine" always heals us. Other protections sometimes fail: with inner peace we always have protection. Peace is very precious, but we need to recognise this. Peace is the bridge between



all religions. Peace is the one morality that everyone agrees upon because everyone needs it. People who do not believe in anything can still believe in peace. Peace creates good feelings. If we achieve something through violent means, the result is shaky and unstable. We need to create a peace foundation for our lives and culture.

### **Inner peace is the most solid foundation for world peace.**

We need to integrate peace into all aspects of our lives: we need to become peace messengers, peace culture ministers and ambassadors of peace. We need to make peace with ourselves. If we promote inner peace education, then the different forms of fighting and conflict will gradually stop. Many of our personal problems, family, social and environmental problems will be solved. Please take responsibility to transform our culture of violence into a culture of peace, through non-violent education. We all choose a philosophy to live by:

Please, for the sake of the present and future generations ...

### **... CHOOSE PEACE WITH FEELING!**

Transforming a culture of violence  
Into a non-violent culture

Peace culture  
Peace religion  
Peace society  
Peace politics  
Peace times  
Peace forum  
Peace World

Please!  
Peace with everything  
Everything with Peace  
Om Bishwa Shanti Hum!

A happy mind is the most economic way of life

Always try to have a comfortable mind

Always try to have a relaxed mind

Breathe to relax your mind

Buddhism gives us courage in life, because it is a method for inner growth

Buddhism gives us courage in life, because it is a method for inner growth

Deal with your problems in a positive way

Delusions are our biggest enemies and not those who deluded us

Detachment means to be more at ease and less worried

Develop the compassion that you have inside

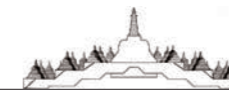
Develop your inner smile

Do not attached to or reject anything, then everything will become clear

Do not be afraid to take responsibility for your own happiness

Do not deny suffering, try to recognize it  
Do not let anger dominate you  
Do not try to change your life, change your attitude towards life  
Effort without perseverance is futile  
Emptiness is full of bliss  
Every thing that is not offered is lost  
Everything becomes easy if you have inner peace and mental space  
Fear complicates every thing  
Generosity gives meaning to life  
Give happiness, only with happiness  
Hope is a strong medicine for the body and mind

How to eliminate anger? By not letting your body, speech and mind become uncontrolled  
Identify your self with the solution and not with the problem  
Identify yourself with the solution and not with the problem  
If we give a positive direction to our mind, people will come to us like friends to help us  
If we wish to continue to experience happiness, we should continue to great positive causes  
If you cannot benefit others at least try not to harm them  
In order to help some one, it is necessary for that person to want to be helped  
In the Absolute we are only one mind, one mental continuum  
Inner blockages make you aggressive and create difficulties  
Inner peace is the best company you can have  
Inner peace is the best investment you can make  
It is not enough to be nice with people, we need to benefit them  
It is possible to liberate yourself from fear  
Keep your mind beautiful in every moment  
Learn how to use fully your mental space  
Make a commitment to not mix your mind with negativity  
Move towards the future with trust  
Obtaining inner peace is easy if you accept everything with patience  
Once you have solved a problem, do not forget to say "bye bye" to it  
Patience is the best virtue, there ^fore nothing is ever wasted  
Pay attention to what you do but remain relaxed  
Peace and bliss now and for ever  
Peace and compassion is always I fashion  
Peace with every thing, every thing with peace - Please!  
Positive experiences are needed in order to repeat them  
Problems are not problems if you treat them as small difficulties  
Problems: Face them or you will be destroyed by them  
Protect your mind with prayer  
Regenerate the true values of friendship and faith in others



Rejoicing is an investment in which nobody can harm us  
Renunciation means not to be under the influence of the object of renunciation  
Respect your level of growth each and every day  
Space is emptiness  
The antidote to attachment is having a mind that is satisfied for itself  
The darkness of negative thoughts can be illuminated by inner light  
The most divine thing you can hope for, is to realize equanimity

The right moment changes every thing  
The spiritual path is based on research and not blind faith  
The worse suffering is the attachment to suffering  
Thinking about Impermanence creates energy to meditate  
Thinking about Impermanence is to think about the precious opportunity of being a live  
Through meditation you can heal yourself and others  
To control the mind means to observe it, not to block it  
To deal with problems directly is a precious opportunity to solve them  
To have a relaxed mind is beneficial both for your self and for others  
To make people laugh is also a way to accumulate merit  
To meditate is to start to do something really useful in our lives  
Transform aggressive looks into looks of love  
Transform violent gestures into peaceful gestures  
Transform your mind into an indestructible diamond  
Transform violent sports into peace sports  
True beauty is that of the mind  
True education teaches you how to overcome fear  
True freedom is the liberation from mental defects  
Union is the inseparable energy  
Use your five senses peacefully  
We should always put our trust in the state of self-confidence  
We should always put our trust in the state of self-confidence  
What the mind accepts does not hurt  
When you meditate you do something really useful for your life  
With inner peace you attract good fortune and live happily  
With the blessings of the holy beings, nothing is impossible  
You are the only one responsible for your happiness  
You can choose to be happy and peaceful or sad and angry  
You can learn from every obstacle that made you fall, in order to stand up again  
You can only obtain inner peace by cultivating it every day  
You need to know how to give but also how to receive  
Your health is in your own hands  
Your inner strength is your most powerful protection  
Your mind needs space



## T.Y.S. Lama Gangchen - World Healer

His Activities To Promote Inner And World Peace Education, Non-Formal Education, Tantric Self-Healing And Care Of The Environment

Lama Gangchen was born in western Tibet in 1941. He was recognized at an early age to be a reincarnate lama healer and was enthroned at Gangchen Choepeling monastery at the age of five. When he reached the age of twelve he received the "Kachen" degree which is usually conferred after twenty years of study. Between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, he studied medicine, astrology, meditation and philosophy in two of the major monastic universities of Tibet: Sera and Tashi Lhumpo. He also studied in Gangchen Gompa, Tropu Gompa, and Neytsong monastery.

In 1963 he went into exile to India where he continued his studies for the next seven years at the Varanasi Sanskrit University (Bishwa Vhidhyiana) in Benares.

In 1970 he received the Geshe Rigram diploma from Sera Monastic University situated in South India.

After his graduation, he worked as a reincarnate lama healer among the Tibetan communities in Nepal, India and Sikkim, during which time he saved the lives of many people and was named private physician to the oyal family.

In 1981, Lama Gangchen visited Europe for the first time and has since become a resident and Italian citizen for almost ten years. In the same year he also established his first European centre: Karuna Choetsok in Lesbos, Greece, where he is known to have planted a bodhi tree in the 'Buddha Garden', and in the centre of which he consecrated what was to become the first of a long line of World Peace Buddha statues, thankas and images.

Since 1982 he has travelled extensively, both healing and teaching in Italy, Spain, Greece, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, England, Ireland, U.S.A., Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Ecuador, Nepal, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Vietnam, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Mongolia, China, Tibet, Russia and Buriyatia, etc.

During these years he has lead many pilgrimages to some of the most important holy places of the buddhist tradition, in India, Indonesia, China, Thailand, Mongolia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Tibet, guiding large groups of friends and disciples from all over the world, the majority of whom have reported many physical and mental benefits from the experience.

In addition to these pilgrimages to buddhist holy places, Lama Gangchen has visited many holy sites in Europe, including that of Assisi, Italy the home of Saint Francis; the ancient temples of Delphi and Athens in Greece. In England he has visited the sites of Stonehenge and Avebury as well as visiting many Western buddhist centres and temples. During all these pilgrimages he has met many high Lamas, throughout both the East and the West.

In 1988 he opened his first residential dharma centre outside of Asia: "Shide Choe Tsok" Peace Dharma Centre in Saõ Paulo, Brazil. At present he has 85 Inner Peace Education Centres worldwide.

Since coming to the West in 1982, and later becoming both a resident in Italy and eventually an Italian citizen, Lama Gangchen's activities have taken on an ever increasing worldwide scope towards the achievement of World Peace.

Chiefly, it began with the founding of:

- The Kunpen Lama Gangchen Institute for the propagation and preservation of the Tibetan medical tradition in Milan, Italy in 1989, founding member of the Italian Buddhist Union (UBI). Here Lama Gangchen has initiated the first extensive programmes of Himalayan medical and astrological studies for western students. Also concerned with the preservation of the Himalayan culture, the centre holds courses in buddhist



*Udyana Swat Valley Pakistan 1996*



philosophy, thangka painting and other arts. Lama Gangchen has invited many groups of Tibetan monks to Europe such as the Ganden Shartse monks, the Sera-Me monks, the Nyalam Phengyeling monks and the Segyupa monks to make sand mandalas and perform sacred Cham dances; all of their activities are dedicated to world peace.

The Intitute is also the Western Headquarters of Lama Gangchen's activities and his Western residence.

- The **Lama Gangchen World Peace Foundation (L.G.W.P.F.)** - United Nations Affiliated NGO in Special Consultation with ECOSOC International Friendship for the Support of Himalayan Medicine, Vajrayana Buddhist Philosophy, Inner Peace Education, Non-Formal Education, Environmental care and Self-Healing for World Peace, established in 1992 following an International conference of doctors, healers and therapists held in Milan, Italy. The foundation, whose headquarters are in Italy, is legally registered in Spain and was officially recognized by the Spanish government in November 1993.

Each year, the L.G.W.P.F. holds International congresses/conferences in Spain, Nepal as well as Italy and Indonesia, which provide a forum for discussion between scientists, doctors, therapists and philosophers. One of the major aims of the Foundation is to provide documented scientific evidence about the benefits of ancient Tibetan Himalayan healing methods, other natural healing methods and the energetic qualities of spiritual healing. The foundation also gives a base for constructive dialogue between different cultures in order to create and promote education methods to develop Inner Peace and World Peace. Moreover, since 1995, the LGWPF has been actively promoting and supporting the creation of a permanent United Nations Spiritual Forum for World Peace which was initiated by T.Y.S. Lama Gangchen in June of that year.

- The **Himalayan Healing Centre** in Kathmandu, Nepal that provides minimal cost western medical care alongside Traditional Tibetan and Ayurvedic medical care for local inhabitants. The Healing Centre offers many different facilities enabling the use of many therapeutic systems, space to hold residential courses in Tibetan medicine, lectures, conferences and so on, with the aim to create a base for the exchange of verbal information and clinics for the actual medical practice between the Eastern and Western medical sciences.

In 1994, the Kunpen Lama Gangchen institute and the Himalayan Healing Centre jointly financed a one year project of a leprosy station in Kathmandu and another station which is linked to the Sanku hospital, 20km outside of Kathmandu.

- The LGWPF, through the "Help In Action" Association, financially supports the construction and upkeep of schools, clinics and monasteries in India, Nepal and Tibet/China, supplying them with different therapy systems, trained Western doctors and facilities, materials and medicines.
- In 1994, Lama Gangchen founded the **Peace Radio** "la Radio della Pace" and **Lama Gangchen Peace Publications**, both situated in Milan, Italy. Their aim is, respectively, to broadcast and spread positive information about Inner and World Peace Education, Self-Healing, self-responsibility and self-morality; natural therapies, environmental awareness and inter-religious cooperation.

**Lama Gangchen World Peace Foundation-LGWPF - Non Governmental Organisation associated with the United Nations in special consultation with ECOSOC**  
"...the only negotiable route to global peace and cooperation goes by way of the United Nations".  
Nobel Committee 2001

Chiefly,

#### Organisation aims

Actively committed to the development of a culture of peace and better living for world peace by cooperating in the humanitarian fields of health, education, the environment, spirituality and preservation of indigenous cultures, engaged in voluntary service in support of the United Nations programmes devoted to helping developing countries towards self-sustainability.

**Conferences dedicated to International United Nations years or decades include:** Annual conferences on Non-Formal Education and Alternative Medicines; February in Kathmandu, Nepal / March in Borobudur, Indonesia / May in Madrid, Spain

1999: International Year for Older Persons; 2000: International Decade for the Culture of Peace; 2001: International Year of Dialogue among Civilisations; 2002 International Year of Mountains and ecotourism; 2003 International Year of Fresh Water and International Decade for Literacy: Education for all; 2004 International Decade of the World's Indigenous People; 2005 International Decade of Education for Sustainable Development; 2006 International Year of Deserts and Desertification; 2007 International Polar Year; 2008 International Year of Planet Earth and international Year of the Potato; 2009 International Year of Reconciliation and International Year of Astronomy; 2010 International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures; 2011 International Year of Forests; 2012 International Year of Cooperatives and Sustainable Energy for all; 2013 International Year of Water Cooperation; 2014 International Year of Family Farming; 2015 International Year of Light; 2016 International Year of Pulses; 2017 International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development; 2018 International Year of the Bird and International Year of Environmental Literacy. (The United Nations did not declare an international year 2018; 2019 International Year of Indigenous Language.

**Publications:** "Peace Times" good news for the world quarterly printed, founded on the 9th of October 1996, the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction, distributed worldwide, including regular reports on United Nations conferences, programmes, special days and decades and other related activities.

#### Projects include:

- International Medical cooperation to promote Health Projects in Tibet, India and Nepal (including DOT programme and mother and child clinic); int. congress in Beijing, China to promote natural medicines; in support of WHO programmes and "Health for All..."
- Water project in Tibet, China in support of UNEP fresh water campaign
- Planting of trees in Tibet, China in support of Agenda 21 and UNEP "One billion trees for life"
- Children educational programmes in Nepal in support of the decade of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the children of the world
- Healing journeys to the Amazon rainforest in Brazil in support of the Decade of the World's Indigenous people, to help preserve their environmental, cultural and spiritual traditions
- Schools in Nepal for carpet factory workers in support of ILO convention on child labour
- Revitalisation of rural and alpine cultures such as the Albagnano mountain village in Italy
- Cultural education programmes to promote and sponsor heritage sites such as Lumbini and Borobudur in support of the UNESCO culture preservation campaign.
- Co-sponsors of a bronze elephant statue placed in United Nations headquarters gardens, gift presented by Kenya, Namibia and Nepal, as a "tribute to the environment and commitment to the preservation of the natural world: forever expressing the hope that all animals and human beings may exist in harmony and peace with nature"
- Support the creation of a permanent Spiritual Forum intended to provide a neutral and democratic permanent space at the global public level, where all those religious institutions and spiritual movements which are willing to join forces with the United Nations in the task of building and consolidating peace around the world could meet and jointly develop useful ways of cooperation, hence:
- Founding member of the Steering Committee and the coalition promoting the initiative for the launch of a United Nations International Decade for Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace. [www.faihtdecadeforpeace.net](http://www.faihtdecadeforpeace.net).



**“BOROBUDUR 2020” PROCEEDINGS**

**Mandala for Global Education:  
Fulfilling the Missing Part**



SPECIAL CELEBRATION OF THE SEVENTH UNITED NATIONS WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK  
Interfaith Celebrations to be held in the Borobudur "Temple of Heaven on Earth" in Albagnano, Lake Maggiore - Italy

Special Interreligious Prayer Dedications and Blessings  
with Venerable Indonesian Buddhists

Prayers and Welcome Speeches

*Precious Teachers*

T.Y.S. Lama Gangchen Tulku Rinpoche -World Healer (*Himalaya*)

Lama Michel Rinpoche (*Brazil*)

Lama Caroline (*England*)

*Speakers:*

Alfredo Sfeir Younis (*Chile*)

Elkana Waarsenburg (*The Netherlands*)

Rogier Hoenders (*The Netherlands*)

Julie Gifford (*USA*)

Giovanni Perotti (*Unesco, Italy*)

Irene Murko (*Germany*)

Edzard Geertsema (*The Netherlands*)



JUNTOS PODEMOS \* GEMEINAM KOENNEN WIR \* TOGETHER WE CAN  
INSIEME POSSIAMO \* ENSEMBLE NOUS POUVONS

*"Inner Peace is the most solid foundation for World Peace"*

T.Y.S. Lama Gangchen - World Healer

"We are committed to the implementation of the  
Sustainable Goals of United Nations Agenda 2030"

Lama Gangchen

Tibetan Medical and Healing practices



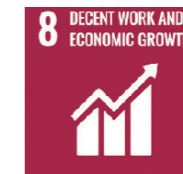
implemented in a World Heritage Site

Teaching and Transmission of traditional



Tibetan knowledge

A Community based improvement and



development of local economy

Environmental care and good practices to



preserve woods and healing landscapes



## PEACE MEDAL

SINCE WARS BEGIN IN THE MINDS OF MEN AND WOMEN, IT IS IN THE MINDS OF MEN AND WOMEN THAT THE DEFENSES OF PEACE MUST BE CONSTRUCTED.

Genoa, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2019

The UNESCO Chair Research Group of "Anthropology of Health – Biosphere and Healing Systems" of the University of Genoa, Italy represented by Dr. arch. Adine Gavazzi, Dr. arch. Gianni Perotti and Dr. ant Tania Re, is happy to award the

### UNESCO Peace Medal

to the NgalSo Tibetan healing tradition transmitted by Lama Gangchen Rinpoche at the ancestral landscapes of the World Heritage Sites of Borobudur, Indonesia and Sacri Monti of Ghiffa, Italy while promoting inner Peace as the best foundation of world Peace.

The successful implementation of four Sustainable Development Goals of the UN Agenda 2030: Goal 3 "Good Health and Well Being"; Goal 4 "Quality Education"; Goal 8 "Decent Work and Economic growth"; Goal 15 "Life on Land" deserves further recognition: the work of Lama Gangchen Rinpoche and Lama Michel Rinpoche at Albagnano Healing and Meditation Center contributes to the local territory development as well at a global scale to peace and security, promoting collaboration among communities through education and culture fostering fundamental freedoms. These values are to be found at the core of the constitutional principles of UNESCO.

*Adine Gavazzi*

Dr. arch Adine Gavazzi

*Gianni Perotti*

Dr. arch Gianni Perotti

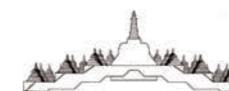
*Tania Re*

Dr. ant Tania Re

Via Balbi 4, 16126 Genova – tel +39 010 2099745 – <http://cattedraunesco.unige.it> – mail: [cattedraunesco@unige.it](mailto:cattedraunesco@unige.it)



.... Lama Gangchen is for me more than a father,  
because I can speak about everything happening in my  
life with him, which I could not do with my own father! ...



## FIRST DAY

*Lama Michel:*

Good afternoon, so it is a big pleasure I think for all of us to be here today with so many of us coming here for so many years and who continue to do so.

"There are 3 ways of blessing, traditionally:

- 1) one being can bless another being;
- 2) one being can bless a place;
- 3) a place can bless a being.

So, normally holy places are not seen as holy because of wonderful constructions: That's not what makes a place a holy or blessed place. A place becomes holy when the place has the ability to bless others because of holy events that have happened there. When people have developed great love and great wisdom, where great masters have gone, where they have given important teachings and where we have the presence of special beings and special people in one place - they bless that place.

The reason why this place, Borobudur, where we are is a very special holy place and, if we look from recent history - Rinpoche has been coming here for so many years, with so many great masters also invited here, participating in so many holy activities - this by itself is already enough. On top of that it has been a place of pilgrimage and practice for centuries and centuries. All of this adds up to make this place a very holy place. We are all very grateful to Rinpoche and, this year I was talking to our Rinpoche about Borobudur and he said, 'Yes, yes, nice but I gave the method for each one to develop Borobudur inside themselves; you don't need anything more than that!' Okay it is good to go to Borobudur, but he was not the most enthusiastic at that moment. I was just thinking about actually why do we come here? It is because we need to develop Borobudur inside ourselves and, we use the external help. To develop the Borobudur inside ourselves means to develop the Five Dhyani Buddhas, the Five Mothers, the complete mandala within ourselves; this is why we come here. I think this makes quite clear the motivation and the reason. The motivation is truly because if we are not well, we cannot help others to be better. This is something that for me is very clear. In order for us to be able to help this world, in order to be able to give to others, first we must actually find some minimum balance within ourselves also. With this motivation we come here to follow in the footsteps of Rinpoche together with him.

On the last week before coming, Rinpoche got a little bit sick - basically he was in Spain and it was very cold, there was a lot of wind and on the way back and also at the airport, he got a lot of cold so, when he arrived in Italy he had a cold. He was coughing a little bit accompanied with a small fever, but nothing too bad, he was quite okay, but he had this cold going on. Then with all this Corona virus thing around, the main worry was that, if he travels and he has fever they might put him in quarantine somewhere? This was one of the main worries that came along together: Rinpoche is fine, but he had some coughing and fever and just a normal cold that he has had many times before. However, at this particular time it is not good to travel because if you look like an Asian and you have cold and fever, it is not the right moment to travel. We have a saying in Brazil, 'Until you are able to explain that an ant is not an elephant, it takes a long time', so until you are able to explain that a normal fever is not the corona virus, then your quarantine time is already running! So, this is the

reason why Rinpoche is not here: He never cancelled anything, just postponed things and, in that way, he postponed his coming here to Borobudur.

So, on the other side we are here guided by him because Rinpoche gave us the key to Borobudur. We are completely lucky. I always had this feeling, but this time I am not having it - the fact of coming to Borobudur without Rinpoche is like going to Disney World without electricity! Everything is there but is not working! But actually, Rinpoche gave us the main switch to throw, so that actually we can turn it on and access it ourselves. Rinpoche always says that the most precious thing is not his physical presence, but rather the continuity of his lineage and teachings and so on.

From my understanding Rinpoche's objective is not for us to be 24/7 with him, rather for us to be able to develop Borobudur inside of us; that's the real reason why we come here! In a way he is like showing us the path and saying, 'Okay, you walk!' Rinpoche personally has no need to come here to Borobudur as he has already developed Borobudur within himself, but he comes to show us the Path. He has shown us the Path and it is for us now to walk it. So, this is one thing: Rinpoche is a mystery; we never know precisely. Then at the last minute he says something, you know. When I spoke to him yesterday, he was still saying, 'I don't know if I come: What I do I don't know'. Sincerely speaking, I'm just saying openly to everyone - I'm not sure, but we will follow the Path he has shown us. This is the most important thing: We are deeply connected with Rinpoche.

So, I do not want to give a long explanation, we will have a lot of time together all these days. I have already spoken to Lama Caroline and what we decided was to give today an introduction to Borobudur and the practice that we will do here as our main practice. So, I would like Lama-la to give some introduction and also the story of how Rinpoche came here and how it all came about and our connection to this place and a comprehensive overview of the practice we will do here, these days.

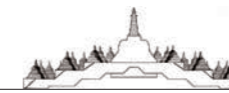
#### *Lama Caroline*

Hello everybody. Let's say that Borobudur is our alpha and our omega of our NgalSo lineage. Our lineage is a Buddhist lineage of course and it starts with the historical Buddha, Shakyamuni and, then through many great masters from India and Tibet and especially Lama TsongKhapa (because we are in the Gelugpa tradition). We have what is called a close lineage - close to us, so for us who follow Lama Gangchen Rinpoche, who follow the NgalSo tradition, somehow this is our zero point.

Borobudur was known to the Tibetan lamas throughout the centuries; it is not that they did not know about it as there is evidence that in the 18th century some of the Tibetan lamas had heard about it. However, nobody had been from Tibet for many, many years. Actually, it was the other way around (we will be talking about this a lot during these following days here). The Borobudur Stupa Mandala was built by a Buddhist dynasty called the Sailendras in the 8th century. What they were showing was their Buddhist culture, and it depicts the whole condensation of late Indian Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism. Borobudur is so fascinating because nowadays, it is the only large stupa monument from the Buddhist tradition that is left standing: Previously there were many, but during the course of history they were lost or destroyed for many different reasons. However, to repeat, this is the last remaining one.

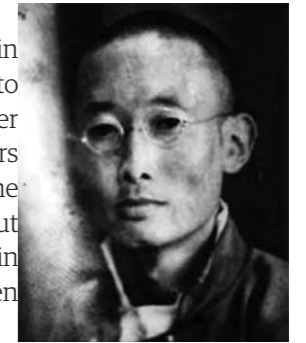
The Borobudur stupa mandala was built in the 8th century by one Buddhist dynasty, the Sailendras. Then through various events of history, the changes of societies and also volcanic activity and so on - let's say, this Buddhist Mandala was forgotten for centuries.

In the time of Indian Buddhism there were many, many great masters, enlightened beings, one of which was the Great Maha-Pandita Atisha, who for us was extremely important as the founder of the New Buddhist Tradition of Tibet, the "Sarma". So, he was here and a lot of knowledge of our tradition was actually started here in Borobudur and was taken back to India by Atisha (who was here for 12



years). So, he was invited to Tibet and Atisha was the founder of what was called the Sarma, the new tradition of Tibetan Buddhism that then became the Kadampa tradition and, later on the great enlightened master, Lama TsongKhapa founded the New Kadampa - the Gelugpa tradition, in the 14th century.

The great masters of our tradition of Tibet heard about Borobudur, but in those days it was not so easy to come - you can imagine: From Tibet to here was very far and, as we only know of one Tibetan lama who had ever been here, called Gendün Chöphel, in the 1930's. Still the Tibetan masters had heard about Borobudur, so our root guru, Lama Gangchen Rinpoche came down from Tibet to India in 1963, and in India they had heard about Borobudur. Lama Gangchen started to travel around all the holy places in India and then came to the West - invited by an Italian friend - and he then started his worldwide healing efforts.



There was knowledge of this great stupa in the south-east of Asia and Rinpoche, before he left Nepal, had asked Tsetan Gyurman Shrestha, his sponsor, for a visa for the whole world - that would be a visa for something like 200 countries, because Rinpoche had this idea of going everywhere! Tsetan said that was impossible, no way! When Rinpoche was in Malaysia in 1989 together with Mr Kok and Mr Koo, they were the ones that talked about Borobudur for the first time and Rinpoche came here with them and a very small group of disciples. Then, it was very different from now - there was no Manohara hotel, all very simple. This first time they stayed in Yogyakarta with a very few friends from Malaysia. The following year he came in 1990. At that second time I was not here - he came with a few friends from Malaysia including Claudio Cipullo. I remember when he returned because he came with one piece of paper on which was a photocopy of a book cover stuck on this paper with the 5 Dhyani Buddhas and underneath was written the mantras of each Buddha and the symbol. Rinpoche said, 'Here you are, we are going to make a book'. So, in 1990 when Lama Gangchen returned here (we were all living in Milan at that time, in his Centre, the Kunpen Lama Gangchen) he said when he came here in 1990, he had many, many visions, powerful vision of his Guru, Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche and other important gurus in the sky. He asked them and said that, until now, he had been going around the world as a healer.



So, during the first 10 year on leaving India and residing in Nepal, he'd been to **Greece**, Italy, Brazil - starting his work in the West, going around mainly healing people. At that time, he had had a real vision of his Gurus (not fantasy, a direct vision). He said, 'Of course, I have this capacity to help many people; it is not enough as there are so many problems, so much suffering and environmental problems. What I'd like to do is empower my friends, my disciples with a method, so they can heal others, like a chain reaction'. So, the Gurus, the holy beings of Borobudur gave Rinpoche permission to open up the Vajrayana tradition and create what we now call the NgalSo tradition. This is our zero point, our close lineage: Our lineage goes back to the time of the historical Buddha, but Rinpoche came back and as I was there, he said, 'We're going to make a book, a new lineage'. We never made a book before, so I said, 'Okay Rinpoche!' So, I got a little pocket book, thought that it would not take too long. He started with the Guru Prayer and, for 6 weeks, day and night we never stopped! There was writing, Tibetan, pictures - had to draw the pictures. Also remember, that in those days

we were much younger, so day and night almost no sleep. Very intense, but also high energy; there was Istar and me, with Dario helping with the impagination. Rinpoche was experimenting, he was saying to everyone, 'Now, you imagine this' so we all had to do like that. Then everybody had to tell their experience - he was trying out different things. Also, at that time we were doing various little retreats around Italy - Rome, Torino, in the mountains and around. Then we were doing all kinds of things, 'Now you dance!', this and that, all kinds of things. He would ask us how we felt and then we would continue with his book. He wanted to see if his practices worked on us. We made Mk 1 of NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing. Then we produced the first volume of NgalSo Tantric Self-Healing 2. I remember that in Milan, which was such a dirty city at that time yet, even then rainbows were happening: We really saw something different even in that dirty environment. Lama Michel was saying that Dharma can bless a place, even Milan! Of course, here in Borobudur, there have been incredible signs here over the years, really - extraordinary things.

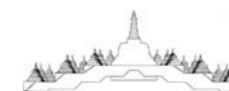
So anyway, Rinpoche started like this with Self-Healing 2 and as we all started to go around the world and, I always had the good fortune to accompany him from those early times until now. It was an extremely fortunate opportunity to see all these things directly. As Rinpoche went around from place to place, we started the NgalSo explosion going around in many, different places. It all started here, in Borobudur and this is why we need to come to Borobudur because our close lineage with Rinpoche was born here. Maybe it was born in Rinpoche's other life and this is a result of his experience and so on, but practically speaking, for us it has all started in this life, here. This place is definitely a place of great blessings for us. Actually, I have noticed over these last 30 years that, at first, when I used to come here with Rinpoche, I used to feel it was like King Arthur opening the gates of Avalon, wow! Then when he left before we did, the energy went completely flat afterwards, for at least the first few years. Recently, over the past 10 years, I was feeling very much that due to all the blessings of Rinpoche, all the other lamas, all of you and the rabne.chenmo, and all these incredible causes we all made, that each time the energy was changing; it was open and not shutting, but staying open. I have noticed this difference over the years; as though the line was still on, as Lama Michel was saying. I think it is true and now with Borobudur, the line is on. Anyway, we should come here, because for us it is a great source of blessings and inspiration for our tradition and practice.

Also, there are many, many holy relics around here. In Mendut for example, there are the relics of Atisha and also, many other buddhas: On the Stupa it is full of buddha relics, and many, many holy blessed things have happened. So, this is a place we can come to and make a pilgrimage to the 'Alpha' place of our tradition. Here in Borobudur it is business as usual; we will always come here and do as we have always done. That's the idea, this time: More or less we are going to do exactly as we do with Rinpoche (however, whether Rinpoche is here with us in person or not, he is always here with us and wherever we are). So basically, we will do exactly the same program.



At 5.15am, we start with the prostrations, taking refuge, the generation of bodhicitta then, Lama Michel and all the monks and us we all go together to the stupa mandala.

First we will go as normal and do the big cora, circumambulation round the outer path of the Stupa, say 'hello' to the elephants and feeding them every morning, so everyone can bring some coconut,



carrots or fruit for the elephants, welcome. Also, everyone should bring their own water bottle because we are trying to be more kind to our planet, so we are going to buy large water containers, and everyone can fill up their own from these.

So, we are going around the Stupa clockwise and now just past the elephants is where we go up, right? So, we need to make a complete turn and then go back up. So anyway, where we always go up with Rinpoche there is that road where we always go up with the truck and last year with the wheelchair, the path past the guards on the corner. We go up there to the Stupa and then we stop to do the Guru Puja with the venerable monks and Rinpoche so please bring your sadhana everyone. Next, we do the NgalSo tantric Self-Healing meditation in relation to the Borobudur stupa mandala; we do this at the bottom. On the east side we do all the meditations of Akshobhya; then south side, Ratnasambhava and so on.

Every year and for many years Lama Gangchen Rinpoche has invited a few monks from each monastery, this year our monks are from Nepal and India. These monks are different each year and the ones here this year have already set it up. This will all start with Lama Choepa (guru yoga) and then there is a Yamantaka self-initiation puja and the second part is that the monks will give Yamantaka initiation to this basis, we imagine here is Buddha and then many, many offerings, like offerings of bathing the Buddha, making beautiful offerings to the Buddha, requesting all the buddhas to stay here in Borobudur. This is an extremely powerful ritual, which has been done here since the 8th Century - there is evidence that it was done at that time; this has really changed the energy here over the years. For the next 4 days our venerable monks are going to do this. There will be various pujas and we have a text available: There is a pdf of the Tibetan and phonetics, you can download it on your device (Istar will help) and then you can come and follow the meditation if you can, you are very welcome. Generally, when we do rabne.chenmo, Lama Gangchen usually suggests that you do Yamantaka mantras; however this year, he was actually suggesting you could do the Pamashavari mantras, because as we know there is this sickness in Asia, so for the benefit for all those people who are suffering, we are going to do these mantras, with the aim of pacifying the ongoing epidemic.

Just a concluding remark about the special protection pill being sold, it really works as I tested it myself, in two different ways: One by eating it, which I would not recommend - definitely not! I spent 3 days hallucinating seeing rainbows and being paralysed! So do not eat the pill! When we first got that pill, we were in Brazil. Also, Istar was also paralysed, under no circumstance ingest that pill! This pill is wearable; here is one I have already - this you wear in contact with your skin, you don't need to take it out of the cloth; what is inside protected you from epidemic sickness, like for instance, corona virus or aids. I actually tested this in Rio de Janeiro, a time when there was a huge dengue epidemic about 15 years ago. At that time there were about 100,000 people in Rio that had it. There was a small Centre for Lama Gangchen called Pax Drella which was in Santa Teresa, super-nice place in Rio. Anyway, we were in this Centre and everyone was lying prone, sick: All the sangha was super sick and the few that were not sick had a mosquito net, praying and doing Om Pitchatse mantra. We had this pill and I got bitten by the mosquito - I had the pill and said the mantra and did not contract the dengue fever. Later on, we discovered that one of the foci of the dengue epidemic was an abandoned swimming pool next door to our Centre! From there was exuding these dengue infected mosquitos. I had this freedom from sickness, even though everyone was lying around - it is a horrible sickness, you can die if you have it 4 times: One is full of pain and hair falls out, horrid. I had the experience that the pill worked for me. If you can obtain a pill, why not, they are useful.

*Lama Michel:*

These pills are a very old tradition that for some time was quite lost in Tibet and Rinpoche revived the tradition to make these pills, called Nagpo Gudjor - Nagpo means black Gu means 9, Jor means 'composition'; basically it is the composition of 9 different poisons - that is why it should NOT be consumed! There is a whole way of making it and blessing it and it has this function of absorbing





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the negativities, so they are a barrier between you and the negativities. So, they are especially effective from infectious diseases. Please, just because you are wearing the pill does not mean you can do anything you want and go everywhere and try to be a superhero! Still protect yourself! But this pill is very good.

So, I was just thinking that while Lama Caroline was speaking, that some years ago I was in Tibet and Rinpoche asked me to show the practice of Self-Healing to my teacher in Tibet, the abbot of Tashi Lhunpo, Kachen Losang Panchog Rinpoche, who passed away maybe one year ago and, at the time he was one of the most respected of scholars or masters living in Tibet, especially from the Gelug-pa tradition: He was one of the most respected ones, like going to all the big monasteries - like when they needed to look for someone to teach tantra - the highest teachings on the specific school they made for tulkus, they were people coming from all the different Buddhist traditions. The only person that they all agreed to and accepted as a teacher from all the traditions, was my teacher, Kachen Losang Panchog Rinpoche. He was an extremely well-prepared lama, very traditional and so on and, I had this great opportunity for ten years to go there to receive teachings from him and therefore I developed a very close relationship with him. He would be very open and say whatever came into his mind: Very straight forward. Rinpoche asked me to show him the practice of Self-Healing, so I tentatively said 'Okay'. Then one day I said to Kachen-la that Lama Gangchen Rinpoche asked me to show you this practice that he is teaching, and he said, 'Okay', he used to have a lot of respect for Rinpoche. He said, to come a little bit before lunch - he was very busy, giving many teachings every day, so he did not have that much time. 'Will half an hour be okay?', he asked, 'Yes' I said, it should be enough. It is very easy to explain complicated things to those that already know them.

So basically, I went there and started to explain Self-Healing to him - it was maybe 11am as normally they have lunch at 11.30am. He got so excited! He liked it so much! He asked me to go into all the details and he called his disciples, 'Come here, you need to listen to this!' Then we remained talking for at least 3, 1/2 hours and, when they came in and said, 'Lunch time!', he said, 'Forget about lunch! This is more important!' He was completely amazed about Self-Healing and, his conclusion was 'If you need to practise, that's what you need to do!' At that time he was talking about Tashi Lhunpo in Tibet, he said: "You know, we have problems, for example the practice of Guhyasamaja, which is one of the most special practices inside Vajrayana Buddhism; those that can learn how to do the practice spend many years of their lives dedicating it only to Guhyasamaja, but they did not study philosophy, so they do not understand the real meaning behind it". Those that spend their whole lives studying philosophy, very few of them are able to learn later about Guhyasamaja. So, it is very difficult to have someone that has the complete path in one's own hand. We recite so much, and we understand so little! He was very self-critical in this way. As he was looking at Self-Healing he was saying 'Everything is there! And it is so simple! How did Lama Gangchen make such a thing? - It is impossible how he did it!'

Then I started to explain how Rinpoche made Self-Healing because, I personally had the opportunity to study what we call, the lam.rim.chenmo the Great Exposition of Tantra by Lama Tsongkhapa and other commentaries on Guyusamaya and so on and, in the commentaries on tantra, any self-generation sadhana or self-initiation sadhana has very precise structure.

If anyone wants to make a new sadhana, they just go and learn the structure of how a sadhana should be, how a meditation practice should be and can go there and try to make something. That is not what Rinpoche did. As Lama Caroline was saying before, Rinpoche had this inner experience. One day I asked Rinpoche what were these visions that he had, he said to me, 'If I explain, people will say I am crazy!' But the fact is that Rinpoche had his own, deep inner mystical experience with the 5 Dhyani Buddhas, here in Borobudur; something that was beyond words. Then what he did, he translated that deep personal experience into the practice of Self-Healing. Actually, when we take the practice of Self-Healing and we put it with all the commentaries and structure, it fits just perfectly in all senses. When I explained to Kachen-la that Rinpoche did not do it out of logical processing, rather he created Self-Healing out of a direct, deep experience in a holy place. Then Khen Rinpoche spoke like this, 'I take refuge' and said: "This is something so special!" and, "This is the only way to make something like this!"

And when we look in history there are masters like Tabu Dorje Chang, a very important master in our lineage - he had very deep personal experiences and visions with Tara. He had 13 different visions and each one

of his personal visions he transformed into a sadhana and afterwards taught them. This is called the near lineage, as Lama Caroline was saying. If we take Tara Chittamani, the near lineage, the Nyengu - it starts with Tabu Dorje Chang receiving this directly from Tara. Here, Self-Healing has a near lineage, and it is said that every practice that has a near lineage, the more you are near to the beginning, the stronger it is. So, we have this extremely special opportunity because it is very, very rare in history to be in the moment where a near lineage is started; where we are at the beginning of a near lineage. When a realised master has a direct experience and he is kind enough and, there are the conditions to translate that experience into a method - that's what Rinpoche did for us. This is historically a very, very rare moment to experience, so we are at a very precise moment of history, into something that is very incredible; very, very special. This is the place where all of this happened. So, Rinpoche for a long time used to say, 'There is one commitment of my disciples - they need to go at least once in a lifetime to Borobudur'.

This is something that is really, really special and the more we go into it, the more we can understand how precious it is. It is not something that Rinpoche saw, and he saw the Dhyani Buddhas and then he had a logical thinking, that maybe I need to do this or maybe I need to do that. Then, he had the time to translate his experience, as Lama Caroline was telling, she had this incredible opportunity to be there. But it is from a very deep realisation, a very deep experience, which is called the vision but, what it means by vision, none of us can really understand. When we say 'vision', some of us try to connect with our own experiences, using whatever mushrooms or who knows what? Maybe we think about visions means where we see something. Visions are something different and much stronger as all the senses are involved; it is something very realistic and very deep, something that cannot be truly be put into words. So, when we ask, 'What was the vision that Rinpoche had?'. Actually, he already told us, because he had already translated his vision into the practice of Self-Healing. Many, many great masters have come here to Borobudur, many scholars in the past centuries, in the past decades for sure and, Rinpoche has been the only one that has actually shown openly the key to understand Borobudur. Through Borobudur and Self-Healing is the key to open the secret of Borobudur and, from that to open our own path. As Rinpoche was saying, we need to develop Borobudur inside of us.

So, from everything that Rinpoche has given us and, is still giving us - Rinpoche's giving is with so many things. Personally, I believe that one of the most precious is actually Self-Healing, for many, many reasons. We don't need to go into details of that right now, but it is really something extremely precious; it is the method. We can have all the buddhas, all the holy beings, all the most incredible beings come together in front of us and bless us and do everything for us - healing - if we don't do for ourselves - they cannot do more than what we can do for ourselves. They can interact with us, they can bless us, but if we do not walk, we do not move. That's why it has always been seen as much, much more valuable to receive a tool or to receive a method than to receive a big blessing. I can be the greatest friend of the Buddha; I can be the best friend of the lama; I can be extremely near to a holy being, but if I don't have a method that I can apply - I will have a nice experience and it will be nice to go, but I will not have a tool that I can use to move myself forward.

Rinpoche gave us this most incredible tool in a very simple, humble way. In many traditions, when masters do these things they are made to be very special, difficult to reach, they are kept secret in a way that only a few people can access and it is very difficult to access and it is very expensive to access and all these types of things. Maybe one master says he can only give these teachings to 5 disciples, and then each one of them can only give to 5 people and things like that. Rinpoche instead, through his great generosity, made it all completely open and in such an easy and accessible way. Sometimes it may even look like playing a game with children, but actually he is giving the most complex and complete tool for our own enlightenment.

When coming to Borobudur, one of the important things from the whole program the most important part is going to the Stupa in the early morning. If you miss anything else, okay, (try not to miss the long-life puja) but please try not to miss the early morning visit to the Stupa. This is actually one of the most important moments we will have here.

I would like to give just a very, very short explanation of what we do when we go to the Stupa.

One thing that is important is not to try to understand everything at once. One needs to let it flow also, instead of 'Oh I don't understand this, then why am I doing it and, I don't understand that!' It is like Rinpoche is giving us something that takes life after life to understand and he is giving it us all at once! So, we personally also need some time to



digest it; we need the time to understand it. It is very important, as we are here these days to allow our own experience to flow and not try and understand and to grab at everything. If we look what Rinpoche does when he comes to Borobudur, he never explains everything, he just lets you 'experience'. After that, you can slowly, slowly understand something. We will just try to understand something very simply.

So, the Stupa Mandala of Borobudur is a precise mandala, it has the 4 sides that are square and then the centre that is round and, it is the mandala of the 5 Dhyani Buddhas and the 5 Mothers. As we are going to do Self-Healing, which is mainly focussed on the 5 Dhyani Buddhas first we need to have some small understanding about what the 5 Dhyani Buddhas mean and then how we develop these qualities as we traverse through this mandala.

When we traverse the mandala in the morning, we will see the Dhyani Buddhas and we should not think of them as some sort of external gods or some deities from whom we are asking for stuff. Sure, there are many holy beings present whom we can ask for blessings. We can pray for our friends; we can pray for our families; we can connect with anyone that we like or to the planet in general; whatever we feel is most important. But the 5 Dhyani Buddhas are symbolising our own qualities developed to their maximum capacity. It is like being shown a version of what we can actually reach ourselves. So we have Buddha Akshobhya in the east, showing stability, love, compassion, patience; then we have buddha Ratnasambhava in the south, show us generosity and humility; then we have buddha Amithaba on the west side showing us concentration, satisfaction, correct speech; then as we traverse to the north side, we have buddha Amogasiddhi green in colour, showing us the power of realisation, certainty, the capacity to rejoice, the joyful happiness of others; as we go to the centre, there is buddha Vairochana, showing us the path to develop wisdom.

So, this is just one part in which there are specific qualities to connect, but one important thing to understand is that all these qualities of the 5 Dhyani Buddhas are such that we could divide them into three moments; the basis, the path and the result. The buddhas as they are depicted are the resultant state; we are the basis. Then between us and the buddhas there is the path. All this means we all have love, we all have generosity, we have all the different qualities, but we need to develop them, more and more. We need to identify with ourselves our pure aspect, our good qualities and not identify ourselves with anger, with jealous, with envy, with hatred, with dissatisfaction, with ignorance and so on. So, as we go through the Mandala, we are developing these good qualities within us, in the form of the 5 Dhyani Buddhas and, we are developing outside of the Mandala also - the representation that is showing us the path, that we will follow from within. As we move through the Mandala every day, we are training to transcend our ordinary identity, which is 'I am a jealous person', 'I have a lot of anger', 'I am a person full of dissatisfaction', 'I am sad', 'I am this, I am that' - each one of us has our own ordinary identity, so traversing the Mandala we start to connect ourselves with different qualities, such as love, patience, satisfaction, joy, wisdom, respect, gratitude and so on. As we gradually go around, we are connecting more and more with these good qualities until, when we reach the top (slightly oversimplified) it is like then we have realised all our inner qualities to their maximum potential. It symbolises reaching Buddhahood as we go around. So in this way we are training ourselves, every day as we go around - it is as if making a sadhana, in which we are training ourselves to identify with our own qualities and stop identifying ourselves with defilements (such as anger, or envy, or fear and so on). Also, we are gradually purifying our body on a more subtle, more energetic level and accumulating positive energy as we traverse the path - every day.

One of the special things about the Vajrayana practice such as this, for me is something a bit like technology. You don't need to understand how it works in order to use it. If you take a mobile phone and you call someone - I don't think anyone here truly understands how it works? At least I have no real idea. How is it possible that I am saying something, my voice is transformed into digital data that is going to the other part of the world and the other person is listening to what I am saying and, can even recognise my voice. How does that work? I really have no idea. The fact is that I use it and it works. Many of the techniques that we have, we just need to try them. It is possible to understand, no doubt, but there is a lot of knowledge and experiences and new concepts involved in it all and that takes a lot of time to assimilate. Once we really dedicate our energy into it, there is nothing that cannot be understood, but we still can use the technologies

without fully understanding them.

One of the reasons that we are all here together and, one of the things that unites us is the trust we all have in our Guru, in Rinpoche. We have trust in the method, we have trust in our guru and, based on that we follow the practice with full trust. We really allow ourselves to go through this experience every day as we go throughout the Stupa. We need to also put all of our energy into it. There are some very simple things which make a big difference. When we wake up in the morning, we will remember that we are not going through an ordinary day. We are not here just for a holiday. So, we need to focus our energy into the practice, into the Mandala, to develop our inner mandala, to develop the 5 Dhyani Buddhas within ourselves; as Rinpoche was saying, to develop our inner Borobudur.

For every practice this exists and whenever a practice is explained, it is divided into 2 parts. The yoga during the meditation session and the yoga between meditation sessions. This means, how to practise when we are actually meditating and, how to practise between meditation sessions. What is important is how we conduct ourselves and when we go to the Mandala and, then in-between what we do, that's also very important. So, I advise you that during the 10 days we have here, be careful how you use your energy, when you leave the Stupa also. We need to speak, following the 5 Dhyani Buddhas and, we need to act and relate in the same way; with generosity, with patience and putting our energy mainly into our practice and not losing our energy by gossiping or talking nonsense or looking at news - it won't change your life if you do not look to the news for one week! So try to use your phone and internet as little as possible; do not go onto all the social media - please limit that, save up all your pictures and when everything is finished then post what you like to post; this is not a rule, it is just advice. I was just sharing a thought here. As we are here, you can share anything you like, but try to focus your energy into being here in this moment and not somewhere else. If you post something or go looking on the Internet here and there, you are not present here anymore. Of course, that's all between the meditation. Then you go back to the Stupa the next morning and, hopefully, you are there. But in between you were somewhere else and, our mind very easily gets distracted; we are not the best meditators with incredible concentration. We need really to protect ourselves from our own distractions. So, I advise these days to keep speech down to a minimum, i.e. eating in silence and, allowing ourselves just to be and digest our experiences and talk if you need to: This is not a rule; it is just an advice. Try to put your full energy into being here in the Mandala; this is very important, otherwise when we get out of the Mandala and from the practice and go and start to do many other things - then we will see that our energy goes somewhere else. That's why when we do a retreat, there is the same level of importance given to how you do the meditation and what you do in-between the meditation. In the same way, we are doing something very special: As we go in the morning to the Stupa and in the moments in-between, we really need to protect ourselves from distraction. This is something important.

Also, another thing, in the morning when we go to the Stupa, if you can leave your phone behind; that's a good choice and, if you'd like to turn it off for the whole week, that's better. Just bring yourself, you do not need anything else other than a cushion, a bottle of water, sunglasses and then just take yourself as we concentrate with our full attention, as we traverse the Stupa mandala. This is an opportunity that we have here, because we never know whether we are going to be able to repeat it or not and, we need to take the



best advantage that we can of the moments. This is one small thing and the other thing is, as we go to the Stupa either silent or reciting the mantras, because it is a very special moment for all of us and we have all travelled far to come here, so as we go around, we will be concentrating on our practice and trying not to talk too much to each other. We do have this habit of talking about things that are not connected to the present moment - maybe we are there reciting the mantra and someone comes and asks some question or other and, maybe we are a few steps behind the others but still we are disturbing both others and ourselves.



I remember being here in 1994, with **Geshe Yeshe Wangchuk** (a previous Guru of Rinpoche) and he gave the Yamantaka empowerment in a way that I only received here, because nowhere else is it really possible to like this. Normally when we do the empowerment of Yamantaka, we say, 'Now you visualise that you are at the east side of the mandala', but here we went to the Mandala and the east side and did one circumambulation. Again, we were at the eastern door, we did the initiation of Yamantaka entering physically in the Mandala, instead of visualising it. We did this with Geshe Yeshe Wangchuk. So, it is really like we are really entering the Mandala and we have the key to use it in the correct way. So, we really need to focus into the spiritual part of what we are doing here.

I know all this may take a little bit of effort because we have different habits, however we have put so much energy into coming here and, I think it is a gift to all of us to make the best of it. These are together, just a few small points to notice, that will make a big difference during the time we are here. During the time in between, you can rest, you can read, you can meditate, you can go back to the Stupa anytime you like. Actually, this pass that we have, exists only for our group; any other tourists that come here, from what I know, need to buy one pass every day to go to the Stupa and, they need to enter from the main gate on the other side, which is a completely different experience. Through the kindness of Rinpoche, they have been giving us very special treatment, so we pay once and then we can enter any time. I saw once on the publicity for Borobudur, 'We have been closed for 1500 years, now it is open from 6am - 6pm!' So, we can go anytime from 6 in the morning to 6 in the afternoon, so we take advantage in the best way we can of that.

We will do the practice, as we go to the Mandala, you will have the experience, we will be able to explain how to do the meditation together and, you will find that it is an experience that goes much beyond words - we can try to explain in so many ways, but in fact is something that actually craves our presence. There is one very particular thing that is one practice which is self-generation and another, frontal generation, i.e. you generate yourself as the buddha, or you generate the buddha in front of yourself. Here we have both together - as we go through the Mandala, we are generating the body mandala, with the 5 Dhyani Buddhas inside of our 5 chakras and, at the same time we are also generating the frontal mandala, with all the buddhas in the different places of the mandala also.

As Lama Caroline said, we have decided to start by doing the practice at ground level as this allows us to concentrate better, allows everyone to listen in the same way, so that we can concentrate well, and we will explain each one of the visualisations. So, we go through it and then when we traverse the Stupa, we just do the mantras of the 5 Dhyani Buddhas and, concentrate on the qualities of the 5 Dhyani Buddhas. One thing which I advise everyone is to try slowly, slowly in order to get more acquainted with the 5 Dhyani Buddhas, they who are, what do they do. So, when we connect or when we see the east - Akshobhya, then we connect to patience, to stability, to the heart chakra, to love; we connect to the part that we need to develop. One thing that is very important, any mental defilement that we have, it does not matter how much we acknowledge it, we cannot throw it away. Imagine we go inside a dark room and we do not like darkness, we can complain about darkness as much as we like, but the darkness will not go away as long as we do not bring light inside the room.

The only way to dispel darkness is by bringing light. Once we know what the defilement is, we do not need to focus on that defilement, we need to focus on the antidote; the antidotes are the 5 Dhyani Buddhas symbolising our qualities developed to their maximum potential. So, we focus into these qualities to familiarise ourselves with them and naturally there will be opposition to the defilements. Sometimes we focus a lot on our anger, our jealousy or our envy - we do not need to focus on them as we all have these things. So we all need to focus on the antidote and here in Borobudur we have the opportunity every day, to go and practice in the correct way.

Some people might ask why we go up so early? The reasons are the heat - if we leave late, it really gets hot and then to walk all the time in the hot sun is not so comfortable, the other reason is the tourists. After a certain hour, many, many tourists start to arrive and, we are a little selfish as we like to have Borobudur to ourselves. It is really nice to do the practice in silence, when there are not so many people around. In the

morning the energy is the best energy to do the practice. Even in the Guyusamaya tantra it says that if you want to be enlightened, there is only one time of the day for it - just before sunrise. There is a special energy in that moment also, so we use that first energy of the morning to go to the Stupa and so on.

Normally, for many people that I have seen coming to Borobudur, there is a before and an after (as an experience in one's own life). It moves something inside of you. So, as you are here these days, if you start feeling a little bit sensitive and if you feel that emotions are moving in a way that you are not so used to - do not worry too much. It means that something is moving inside of you and just give time to it and slowly things will take their own shape, take their own direction. My advice is to concentrate well on the practice; concentrate well on the pilgrimage; concentrate well on the entry into the Mandala and we do it to the best of our abilities. We all have the capacity: We are all here together and even though Rinpoche is not here we are still happy, with Lama Caroline and we also have Muli Kyabgyo Rinpoche who will be guiding the rabne.chenmo. He is a very special lama from Serpo monastery, a fully qualified lama and will be guiding this practice of rabne.chenmo, as Lama Caroline was explaining.

Basically, there are 3 forms of initiation of empowerments: When a master gives an empowerment to a disciple; there is when the practitioner takes a self-empowerment and also when a practitioner gives the empowerment to the Buddha. That is something very powerful and a little difficult to understand, but it is a way to actually revitalise the energy of holy places. It is a practice that Buddha has taught more than 2500 years ago. It is one of the best offerings that we can make to a holy place and it has this function to revitalise the energy of the holy place.

This practice of rabne.chenmo, this great blessing-stabilising ceremony is something that in a large monastery is done once a year. It is not something done daily or obvious or so common. Many of us know it because Rinpoche likes it and he is doing it all the time - well not all the time, but quite often. It is a very special practice and we are very grateful that we have all these monks that come here and so on. They are here because we invited them to come in order to do these pujas for us.

When we do the rabne.chenmo, it has 2 functions, one is for ourselves, but it is also a way of offering to Borobudur - to revitalise the energy of the Mandala. This place was constructed with a particular intention and for centuries there were not so many people coming following that intention. As Lama Caroline was saying that in the beginning when Rinpoche was coming it was like

**'Finally, someone comes and opens the door!!'**

Then he gave the key to all of us with Self-Healing and as we start to practise, we understand more and then have the ability to open it ourselves. As long as we practise well, the door is open and we have this possibility. But this is something connected to Borobudur itself and is very special because if we think that it was built more than 1500 years ago, it took more than a 100 years to build it and so much energy was put into it and, it was done not as a monument just to be there; it was done as a mandala for practice. Then for centuries, no one was practising anymore; Rinpoche likes very much that it is always full of tourists going there - he said, 'You see Borobudur is so powerful that it is full of Muslim people going there every day!' Even people from any religion are going there, that is actually showing the power of Borobudur. Not people, however, are going following the intention that was originally placed there. This is what Rinpoche has given to us; it is priceless. It is priceless not only for us but also for the place itself. I imagine that for these subtle holy beings that are around here that have been waiting for beings to come and use it in the correct way, then suddenly it happens, and they probably say, 'Oh wow!!' So much happiness and joy in this way! So, we are very, very fortunate.



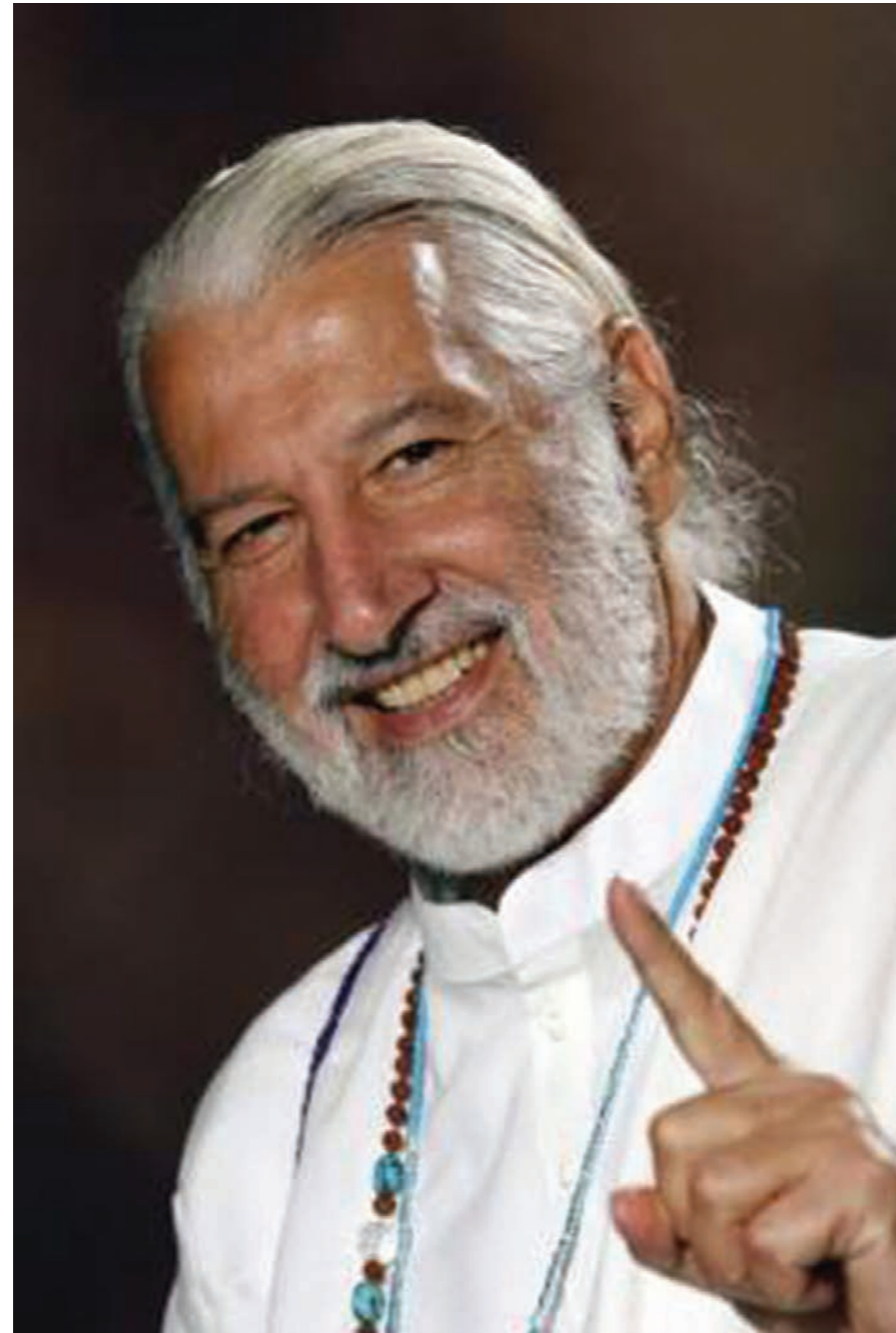
Maybe Lama Caroline can tell you when she was here with Professor Lokesh Chandra; he is one of the greatest Buddhist scholars of our present day. There was a meeting here in this hall, with the different scholars pertinent to Borobudur. Rinpoche was invited and Lama Caroline came representing him. Lokesh Chandra was scolding anyone who said anything at all, that it was all nonsense and rubbish! Lama Caroline was the last one to speak, after all the professors and archaeologists and (yes, she says) Lama Caroline was a bit worried. Then after explaining what Rinpoche said about Borobudur, Lokesh Chandra was saying, "That's the right one!! If we are going to listen to anyone - that is who we are going to listen to!" The only people that can really understand what Borobudur is all about, are the Tibetans lamas who still keep the same lineage alive - because they practice in the same way.

So it is unique what we have and very particular and very precious, so that is why I repeat once again, that we use this opportunity. If we have come here 30 or 25 times already, or if it is our first time, we need to use it to the best of our abilities because we never really know when will be the next time; this life or another life, we never know. We need to use our time and abilities, our presence in the best way we can.

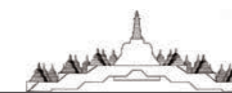
I have chosen to give some lojong teachings because our lineage of mind transformation, from Atisha is coming from Indonesia and, Atisha was here in Borobudur. So, this is a special thing and it is very important to go back to our motivation and all of that. So, we will have time to go through it. I think that is mostly it and I think also we are on schedule. The idea also was to try to make the schedule so that we know what is happening we can organise, we can rest well and, then we can be awake in the morning in the best way, because that's the real moment; it is the most important thing and I repeat again, if you need to do anything else, do it in the morning or afternoon but please, after the Stupa. Try to put this extra effort: Rinpoche used to say, 'Ah, for Westerners, waking up in the morning, that's already a lot!' So, doing something that we are not so used to doing to wake up so early and go to the Stupa is already a lot of effort, so we get benefit from putting in so much energy in this way.







*"Healing the Planet for World Peace is the center piece for Transformational Economics"*



*KEY-NOTE LECTURE IN HONOUR OF THE GREAT MAHASIDHA LAMA  
GANGCHEN TULKU RINPOCHE*

*(Never Delivered)*

*"The Buddhist Mandala of Transformational Economics"*

This work is dedicated to my dearest beloved Spiritual Father, Teacher, and Master, the Great Mahasiddha Lama Gangchen Tulku Rimpoche.

He always encouraged me to focus on two main aspects of life, which are ingrained in the totality of my spiritual life: (i) the construction of "The 200% Society": a society that is, at the same time, materially and spiritually rich and (ii) the total commitment to "Healing the Planet for World Peace": a dedication to Mother Earth (Dzambing) and all the sentient beings, as my only path to Buddhahood. They are two important manifestations of inner consciousness.

*It is the union of these two life-established manifestations of consciousness which leads me to share with all of you today: Transformational Economics.*

A form of economics that surfaces from a spiritual mandala of both inner and outer human transformation. A mandala which contains, at its very center, the power of our collective-interdependence and the simultaneous manifestation and expressions of the outer and the inner-ecology of life on this planet. The Buddhism he taught me contains all these necessary ingredients and, thus, be able to construct the spiritual mandala as a solid foundation of Transformational Economics.

Beloved Lama, thank you for your teachings, thank you for your patience with me, and thank you for all you have done for me since we met (in this lifetime) at the United Nations, on September, 1996. That moment was transcendental in every possible way. You brought my understanding of economics and environmental economics from a textbook level to the highest levels of human consciousness.

*My presentation is woven within the tapestry defined for this event: The Spiritual Opening of the Mandala.*

It is not just any opening. It seeks an "spiritual opening"; a fundamental inner shift, defining almost every aspect of humanity's individual and collective existence. This suggests that there are many alternative ways to open the individual and collective mandala of our planetary existence. Buddhism offers powerful skillful means and a unique spiritual path to open the mandala of economics.

*For the last several decades I have been talking about the great importance of bringing spirituality into the public domain: economics, politics, business, institutions and citizenry.*

In the very beginning of this journey, I devoted myself to construct the yoga, the union, of my professional life as an economist with my spiritual life. This is to say, to breakdown the duality between "doing" and "being" and "becoming". Today, I do not see the differences between my spirituality and my profession any longer. There is no separateness. I have demolished the boundaries that existed between economics and spirituality. A duality that often stems from the fact that most people see economics pertaining to the realm of "the material", while spirituality to the realm of "the non-material". In a world governed by this

duality, economics and spirituality are not supposed to mix together. Consciousness plays a very important role in dismembering the duality between matter and non-matter. Thus, this idea that they cannot mix it often mirror-images a lower state of individual and collective consciousness (i.e., no having attained 'Unity Consciousness').

*In practicing economics as a profession, it is quasi impossible for me to separate the material from the non-material.*

For example, it is impossible and undesirable to separate the 'economic calculus' from the 'ethics calculus', particularly, on decisions that are addressing issues of equity, environmental conservation, and welfare of future generations. This is also the case of situations prevalent at the global level: global warming, ozone layer depletion, loss in biodiversity, the contamination of the rivers and oceans, pollution in our cities, diseases as a result of all the above, rights of future generations and who pays for pollution and contamination. This is why economics must not be practiced within a spiritual and ethical vacuum.

*We may decide to refine this proposition by focusing on values and the metrics of success.*

Today's material economics is immersed into values and notions of success that are counter to what people expect from economic decision-making processes. In the realm of values, today's economics is materialistic and individualistic, promoting competition, exclusion and wealth accumulation. With regard to possible notions of what may constitute "success", economics embraces the dangerous principle that "more materiality is better" (to me, this is just greed). In the search for more materiality, we see with great consternation how economic systems progressively destroy our planet. The word "more" refers specifically to 'having more', to "possessing more", and to "accumulating more" material things. But, is it really a success to "having more"? Despite of being materially rich most people are not happier. When does more materiality make us better off? There must be some betterment to materiality as we are living a material life on this planet. But, what are the limits? What are the attributes that will make "more matter" a source of our happiness? In quantity and quality? Like non-attachment? And, most important of all: Should we construct societies that are material rich and spiritually poor? The answers are not trivial.

*The original meaning of a mandala is "the container of the ultimate substance".*

"Ultimate" in the sense of being the most fundamental one, the essential one, the most vital one. To "open our mandala" in a spiritual way suggests that the mandala is closed and needs to be opened; that the priority now is to uncover the spiritual foundation of our lives (and not necessarily the material one); and that the level and quality of our human welfare is not fully desirable. If, today, the mandala is closed, it means that we are not able to appreciate and enjoy that ultimate essence. In Buddhism, that ultimate essence is our "Buddha Nature": our Dharma in its full expression. Thus, we must address the causes and conditions which keep our individual and collective mandala closed. We have to establish a "the critical path" within our own spirituality to be able to open it.

*Everybody and everything has a mandala: the container of an ultimate essence.*

Today, I focus on the most relevant causes and conditions responsible for the spiritual opening (and spiritual awakening) of the mandala of economics, politics and business. To do so, it is necessary that I choose an appropriate "entry point"—the door to enter the mandala—and "starting point" of the journey to choose and use effectively the spiritual means, and all the skillful means at our disposal (e.g., meditation, contemplation, silence, mantras, sutras, yoga, prayer).

*The opening of a mandala is not just an "individual event". It is also a very sophisticated "collective event".*

It is an event deeply rooted within the realm of our powerful "collective inter-dependence". Where, interdependence is a fundamental state of our inner-being. Not dependence. Not independence; except, when the term "in" means "from within". This is why the main emphasis here is on discovering the main pillars of our collective reality; i.e., our human reality and the reality of all sentient beings and nature. The



most important conclusion we can draw at this stage is that nobody will be able to fully open its own mandala when everyone else does not open their own mandalas at the same time. Lama Gangchen's mandate to me has always been to focus mostly on the nature of our collective-human-reality, with a major emphasis on the public domain. This is the true meaning of my spiritual name: Dzambing Cho Tab Khen.

*The spiritual opening of the mandala will unfold via higher levels of both individual and collective consciousness.*



As we reach those higher levels of consciousness, we self-realize that it is not possible to practice economics, politics and business without spirituality. This relationship goes in both directions. Thus, politics without spirituality is a suicidal path. In turn, spirituality without politics becomes a simple abstract proposition. This is why the Buddha himself taught us that it is not only relevant to self-realize compassion at the personal level, but to, simultaneously, commit ourselves to the creation of a compassionate society. This is a dialectic relationship.

*True spirituality has its imprint in "action", not simply in "thinking". But, this is not only about action, but the "right action", as taught by the Buddha in "The Eight-Fold Path".*

I mention The Eight-Fold Path because the attainment of the "right action" cannot be dissociated from the right-vision, the right way of thinking, the right language, the right behavior, the right effort, the right concentration, and the right meditation. In other words, the essence is Karma-Yoga, the yoga in action, and Buddhism has a lot to offer on that. Equally important to the opening of those mandalas is the self-realization of key spiritual values immersed within the collective: love, compassion, solidarity, representation, cooperation, interdependence, justice, equality, participation, deliberation, etc. Many of these values are essential to the attainment of Buddhahood.

*As we go along the path of spiritual opening of a mandala, we will experience different forms of spiritual and cognitive experiences that will be responsible for the quality and effectiveness in opening those mandalas.*

This clearly suggests that in opening a mandala, we do not need more materiality (material economics). If we are to open the mandala of economics, spiritually, and reach a new and higher realm, we will need ever

higher levels of human collective consciousness. Spirituality must not be absent.

In preparing this presentation, I came to realize the great importance of (i) deepening the meaning of the term "mandala", (ii) learning from the debate on the Buddhist spiritual meaning of a mandala ("The Book of Protection", the three most important Lam Rims), and (iii) addressing those specific sutras where the Buddha talks about economics proper. These spaces of wisdom are intimately related.

*What we are going to find on the road to the spiritual unfolding of the mandala of economics are many unique experiences.*

These include acknowledging that there are different styles of life and different paths to attain higher levels of human welfare. This is unique when we self-realize that everything is interdependent: we depend on each other; that the scope of interdependence resulting from economic actions goes very far in time and space; that the real essence in economics is not simply materiality: most people are longing for happiness; that we need to live in a suitable locality to ensure the quality of life; that societies must improve education and skills to attain higher levels of welfare; that we are to exercising self-control (conscious consumption and conscious production); that we have to take into account not only human beings but all beings on the planet; that society has to take care of the elders and the children and future generations; that we have to follow a moral conduct and to practice merits through economic actions and not let just the market decide the outcomes of human welfare; that there is a need to adopt a model of "noble living" which responds to a different set of values—like love and kindness, frugality—which leads to a simple livelihood; that we all have to adopt and self-realize the true value of "equanimity"; that we are to set norms regarding how wealth is to be obtained; that countries must stop trade on drugs and other substances, women or children, toxic substances...an essential guide to competitiveness; and that we must practice a form of economics that dispels all forms of suffering.

*In the Dighajanu Sutta, the Buddha speaks clearly about how to expand your wealth as well as how to avoid losing it (another dimension of protection within the mandala).*

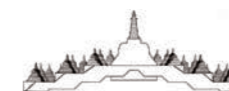
The essence of this sutra is that material wealth alone will not make a human being happy or a society a balance one. The Buddha also added a link between creation of wealth and human behavior, and he warns us that more materiality creates more desires. These desires translate in more material wealth and ego-power, greed and craving. The Buddha offers an alternative which, in essence, it is an instrument to the spiritual opening the mandala of economics. He states that consciousness has to rise in order to avoid those negative situations, via the practice of trust, confidence, virtue, liberality and wisdom. These attributes will create the space for a higher sense of values.

*In addition, the Buddha also established the individual and the collective responsibilities in economics.*

These are not only individual. The gaining of material welfare should not overshadow the concern for the society as a whole. It is the combination of the spiritual and the material notions of welfare that will result in an ideal society. The Buddha explicitly states that there are these four conditions of worldly progress, whereby prosperity and happiness go hand in hand. These are: (i) the accomplishment of persistent effort: becoming skillful and not lazy; (ii) the accomplishment of watchfulness: an obligation to take care of the wealth that has been earned (fires, thieves, etc.); (iii) the good friendship: one must bring to the creation of wealth: faith (saddha), virtue (sila) charity (caga) and wisdom (panna); and (iv) the balanced livelihood: not being extravagant. Spiritual welfare is attained via the self-realization of the above attributes.

The Buddha was also very clear about the possible sources of wealth destruction: drunkenness, gambling, and association with evil-doers. And, the normal conclusion was that the abstinence from those will increase wealth.

*In the Kaamabhogii Sutta, the Buddha talks to a Banker, named Anaathapindika, and explained him the many attitudes that people may have as regards wealth.*



These different attitudes form a model of economic behavior. One of the key aspects of this Sutra is the sharing of wealth. This is a key issue with millions of ramifications. Not easy to address but we all know how concentrated wealth is in the world, and how economics plays a fundamental role in that concentration. As a matter of fact, globalization has been a tremendous accelerator in concentrating wealth in just a few hands. This means control, and the accumulation of political power, also in a few hands. In laymen's terms, the Sutra speaks out about the spiritual consequences that inequality has.

*When speaking to Anathapindika, the Buddha established four kinds of happiness.*

The happiness that emanates from ownership, i.e., a lawful way to earn your wealth; the happiness that emanates from wealth, i.e., a proper way to enjoy the wealth you earned lawfully; the happiness that emanates from not having debts (debtlessness), i.e., do not owe to anyone; and the happiness that emanates from not being blamed (blamelessness), i.e., a form of life which is blessed by good deeds (right actions, boon) of the body, mind and speech. (Āna ya Sutta). In some way, the first three are related with what you have created and the last one contains the corresponding positive consequences. In sum, material wealth represents also a foundation for both material and spiritual development.

*All of the above is repeated in the Pattakamma Sutta.*

There, the Buddha states four fundamental "wishes": that wealth must come from lawful means; good reputation in society; live a long and healthy life; and happiness after death.

*In the Vaddha Sutta the Buddha specifically speaks about growth, including economic growth.*

Naturally, it does it in the language and with examples pertaining to a rural based society, more than 2500 years ago. The essential message is that one cannot grow a material dimension only, like with more grain, more buildings, more animals, more corporate power, more workers, etc. The Buddha explicitly states that we need to grow also in terms of faith, virtue, love, generosity, and wisdom. We need to explore much more the connection between these two groups of attributes: material and spiritual. But, we clearly know and are experiencing what happens when economics is grown without wisdom. This is the difference between focusing on growth and on human and sentient beings' evolution. Economics has to focus on both.

*It clear that the Buddha gave lots of importance to economics and to establishing the real importance of material wealth.*

The Buddha made many people aware of the relationship between poverty and spirituality. A poor person struggles against poverty, and the mind is loaded about that. The worrying about the prospects that poverty brings into life, distorts the spiritual path. It also overshadows some notion of moral responsibility of the human collective. This does not mean living without an awareness of our collective interdependence. In the Dhammapada, verse 203, the Buddha states: "hunger is the most severe illness".

*Today, I want to declare a new form of economics, based on all the above-mentioned dimensions: "Transformational Economics".*

The term "transformational" is not random. This term comes from the purest forms of Buddha's teachings. The term "transformational" must be the influencer in the process of transition towards a new economics. Transformational Economics is a form of economics that provides the space, the conditions, and the opportunities to all beings—human being and sentient beings—to transform themselves and reach full enlightenment through the practice of economics. This will happen by elevating human consciousness. It is time that economics produces happiness and peace.

*We have to transition to this new economics now.*

We have to transition away from what we have now. Buddhist principles are fundamental in paving the way to this transition. The great transition may take the form of a very unique ladder. Specifically, transition:



from private-material economics to politics of the common good, from the politics of the common good to the rights and justice of all, from the rights and justices of all to the social concerns of the community of beings -human beings and sentient beings, from the social concerns of the community to the human dimension of planetary transformation, and from the human dimensions of planetary transformation to all forms of consciousness. Each step has its challenges and it demands very specific forms of action. This transformational process dictates that our attention today must be put on the need for an economic transition. From the existing neoliberal economics -- governed by greed and markets-- to Transformational Economics.

*Today's economic system is only geared to transform matter into matter: the creation of material wealth only.*

Contrary to that, Transformational Economics demands to go far beyond matter alone. It demands an economics which becomes an important instrument to transform all humans and sentient beings into the right direction. It warns us that if that does not happen, we will always be in a lower level of vibration and welfare. It demands an economics of love, compassion, generosity, caring and sharing, dignity, justice, solidarity, inclusion, and the like. The self-realization of these transformational values of economics establishes that, ultimately, the true paths of individual transformation and collective (social) transformation are not separate from each other. They are mutually interdependent.

Because materialistic and individualistic economics focuses only on matter, this form of economics does not liberate us, it does not enlighten us....

In Transformational Economics, the process of "wealth creation" and the patterns of "wealth distribution" must take into account both the expansion of material and spiritual wealth. This transformation we are looking for within our countries and the planet as a whole, leads us to think carefully about the very different understanding we have of what constitutes (is) "development" and "human welfare". There is no doubt that the term "development" must include the "human factor", so that we are clearer about "who", and not necessarily about "what" are we to develop and transform.

*What is the ultimate form, or state, of transformation?*

Today's material/individualistic economics gives us only apparent and transitory joy. This is a major source of attachment, greed and emotional desires to have more and more. In Transformational Economics, we are in search of profound joy. We all know that profound joy is far beyond matter and material gains. For an experience of profound joy, we must transform and transcend deeply into the impacts and needed influences of economics. These impacts are felt at both the individual and social levels; these are inseparable. And, they are felt at the inner and outer levels; these are inseparable.

*The capacity to transcend today's economics depends on our levels of consciousness, awareness, mindfulness and concentration.*

The higher the levels of consciousness, the more we are able to transcend: to go beyond. Thus, Transformational Economics must be embedded and governed by higher levels of consciousness. But, how do we get there? When I say "there" I am referring to going beyond the immediate experience of transcending, like transcending the immediate material world.

*The Buddha states that economics is an important foundation to spirituality.*

Injustice and abuses surface out of poverty and economic deterioration. But Buddha also mentions as an important cause the nature of our own mind within the laws of karma. Thus, He stated that suffering was mainly because of greed, anger and delusion. He classified these three as the root causes of suffering. These are the three mental defilements. And, we have to liberate ourselves from them to attain Nirvana in this lifetime.

One of the principal objectives of Transformational Economics is to create the conditions not only for



material welfare but also for ensuring our ethical, moral and spiritual welfare. Spiritual welfare within a system that creates the conditions and promotes the implementation of mindfulness, interdependence, etc.

*Transformational Economics is organized in a way to eliminate suffering.*

And, to simplify human desires, to promote non-violent activities, to be conscious of caring for all human beings, sentient beings and nature, and to self-realize compassion, generosity, love and kindness, and the like. In contrast, today's economics is set to create more desires, convert those desires into material needs, and implement a path where more is better. For this, economics needs to promote self-interest, and give no attention to the collective interest. Self-interest is a major cause of suffering, because of our mistaken belief that we are a separate, independent, "I" (ego). This is a delusion.

*Transformational Economics liberates us from suffering, at the gross and subtle levels.*

There are several teachings of the Buddha that define, explain and indicate the way to the self-realization of each of a number of key attributes of Transformational Economics:

- Dana (generosity), sharing with others in a beneficial way objects that would improve other beings' material and spiritual welfare.
- Sila (morality, moral standing), maintaining good conduct and behavior so that the leader and followers do not breach ethical principles and morals.
- Paricoga (selfless sacrifice for the greater good), embodying an inner concern and preoccupation about the prosperity of others ("greater prosperity") and including the whole planet, all sentient beings and the future generations to come.
- Ajjava (integrity) including, for example, a great sense of loyalty, the courage to bring a great sense of truthfulness, and a constant search for honesty.
- Maddavaṇa (kindness), being gentle and open-minded, as opposed to being ego centric and arrogant, heightening the importance of the right behavior and interaction with others.
- Tapa (austerity), expecting to have a simple life, and not a life of indulgence (material indulgence) and various sensual pleasures.
- Akkodha (non-anger), leading an inner existence which must not show anger, hate, or vindictiveness against others, but rather compassion (karuṇa).
- Avihimsa (non-violence), not afflicting harm on others including animals and all living things, adhering to peace and tranquility for all and not indulging himself in his power.
- Khandi (tolerance), being patient and being capable to address all types of emotions, be they greed, anger, ignorance or any kind of suffering.
- Avirodhana (righteousness), not allowing misdeeds, and should be just like environmental justice.

*Transformational Economics is the economics of togetherness.*

It is the economics that understands interdependence: that everything and everyone impact everything and everything else. It is only within this type of economics that we can talk about compassion, love, cooperation, solidarity, justice... All of them are states of being. And, as such they must be self-realized. This is why we need a different consciousness to attain different outcomes. The above, will enable us to better understand collective emotions and develop the right collective actions. Furthermore, this notion of interdependence will allow us to construct a Transformational Economics that will understand the "total equality" that exist among all living beings and nature. We are all co-equal.

*There is no meaning to the political borders among nations.*

The strength of the mandala of a nation state is at the center and not on its borders. This is a theme I developed last year, in Borobudur. Interdependence enables us to be fully aware of our inner and outer ecology, and establish clearly the common identity of all other forms of life. A new meaning for ecological awareness and eco-morality. The Law of Interdependence states that we are completely interdependent of each other as human beings, interdependent of other living beings, and interdependent with nature. The ultimate expression of this law is that we are also indivisible. Only our intellect gives us the impression we are separate and divisible. In fact, this is intimately connected to a life-long correlation: between the quality of the external environment and the quality of our inner environment.

*We must commit to the construction of a compassionate society.*

As an activist, I am involved in Engaged Buddhism. Lama Gangchen called Modern Buddhism. Others, also called Social Buddhism. Thus, I always share the view that: Buddhist spirituality has its true imprint in "action". Not simply in thinking. The "ECO" element in many interpretations of Buddhism is absent: Eco Friendly, Eco Morality; the advocacy of self-interest and not collective interest will bring us to a collective failure: by maximizing self-interest, we will never attain collective interest; Buddhist must be environmentally conscious beings; Buddhism has a great contribution make regarding rights (human and nature's rights), justice (human and ecological justice) and equity; income is not a proxy for happiness and

*Transformational Economics embraces the economics of happiness.*

We need a transition to get out of the existing neoliberalism and its very low level of consciousness; a healing of the planet, through new forms of economics, politics, institutions and social; a commitment with the self-realization of compassion at the individual level and with the construction of a compassionate society; an understanding that our responsibility rests on the principle of interdependence described with all forms of life; an inner power of simplicity and austerity in economics; and a process of building the necessary roads and bridges which are needed between the individual and the collective (bridges of consciousness). Furthermore, a process whereby we realize the importance of a true social action and of building of communities and not commodities; a material wealth creation process with its alternative forms of public policies, designed to avoid unnecessary creation of poverty, concentration of wealth, and social degradation in our societies; and a bundle of powerful instruments to develop full harmony between our material and spiritual reality.

*Today, economics is violent.*

Violent with human beings, sentient beings and nature. This has to stop. Transformational Economics by its very nature is a non-violent activity. The time has come to build new and adequate instruments to support a transformation and revolution, which creates a true spiritual awakening. This spiritual awakening demands moving from having and doing to the being and becoming.

*Healing the Planet for World Peace is the center piece for Transformational Economics.*

The economics to heal nature and all forms of life. The opening of the Borobudur Mandala demands a New Eco-Morality. Given the challenges we are facing today, we all must aim at new ways of understanding and connecting with nature, natural law, and all living beings. They play a fundamental role in both our material and spiritual transformation. In the past, the emphasis has been on the linkages between the state of nature and our material wealth and betterment. Today, we ought to discover the existing links between "the state of nature" and our processes of spiritual transformation as well. It is in this sense that we are introducing the idea of a New Eco-Morality. At the core of this New Eco-Morality is the view that destroying nature not only has material consequences -including global warming and ozone layer depletion—but has immense implications in our spiritual transformation.

*Spirituality in economics will enable us to realize the importance of true social action and the building of*



*communities and not commodities.*

Alternative material forms of wealth creation must be carefully studied, to avoid the unnecessary creation of poverty, concentration of wealth, and social-ecological degradation in our societies. In the future, all notions of welfare and wealth must be understood as shared in an interdependent way.

*Transformational Economics will become the most powerful instrument we may have to develop and attain the full harmony in the intersection between spirituality and materiality: the 200% Society.*

In an interdependent world, it is essential to embrace the notion of 'the greatest social good'; it makes much more sense as a decision-making rule, than advocating a society in which only materialism and individualism rule the system. To embrace that, Transformational Economics incorporates the concept of moral discipline. This suggests that neither economics nor politics may be practiced within an ethical and moral vacuum.

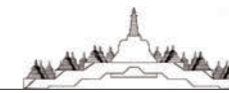
*Dzambling Cho Tab Khen*

*Plenipotentiary Ambassador, LGWPF*



Lumbini, Nepal together with Abu, Lama Gangchen's brother





## DHARMA IS ALIVE

One time some years ago, I was in Tibet for study - actually it was more than studying, I was receiving teachings from the Abbott of Tashi Lhunpo, Kache Losang Panchog Rinpoche and maybe we are talking about 5 or 6 years ago (maybe more) something like this, I have a very bad memory with time. Anyhow, while I was there - (the hotel where I was staying, because I was staying at Tashi Lhunpo monastery and, if you are not an official monk of Tashi Lhunpo you cannot sleep in the monastery. They have a sort of a guest house just in front of the monastery and I was staying there.) So, they came to me and also, there were a few monks from the monastery of Nyemo Gachen - this is a very beautiful monastery, between Lhasa and Shigatse, they came together from the airport with the umze and some other monks, whom I know quite well. They came there and asked, 'Oh can you please come and give teachings at our monastery?' I said to the Abbot, 'Oh come on! You know much better than me, you have a lot of knowledge of dharma'. He is a young abbot, a really good practitioner, really nice and humble. There was one time we were there with many Westerners and then at a long-life puja, he was the vajra master and everyone went and offered a katag to him. Then there was one lady, I don't remember who she was, I think she was from Holland - she offered a katag to him. So, he gave the blessed katag back to her and put his head against hers for a blessing and, he was waiting for her to leave but she didn't and one way or the other they were there for 40 minutes! He is a very humble man and very respectful to everyone, very kind and with real experience of dharma on many levels. So, I asked him why he wanted me to go and teach there? I said I can teach things in the West because, in the land of the blind, the one that has one eye, is king. But here, I said, you have So, much knowledge of dharma, why do you want me to go there? Then he told me, 'You have a pure lineage, so, we want to connect our monastery with your lineage'. I said, 'That's good reasoning!'.

It was of course very complicated for me to go there and do something because, it is not so obvious in China for a westerner to go to a Tibetan temple and give a public talk - so, we managed somehow, a kind of secret, hidden, half-way and, at the time we arranged it.

I went to the monastery - they made all the traditional preparations, closed the doors and then they were making tea offerings to the officials of the government in another room and we were giving teachings there. The main issue was not to give knowledge; I offered the best that I could. The main issue was, sharing a lineage. Many of my gurus when giving teachings often said, 'I don't have much from myself, but I have incredible masters'. I can say the same myself. One thing I can say I have is that I have a good relationship deep inside, with every one of my masters. If there is anything, I can say that I'm proud of, in the sense of - what do I have that is really good? I have really, a pure relation with my gurus. So, this keeps the line 'on', and we have this special opportunity of having a living lineage.

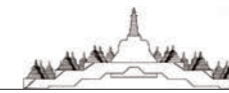
Once upon a time, there was a lama in Tibet giving an explanation about this and he said, 'The ancient example that is given is that when a master is giving teachings to the disciple, it is like taking water or nectar from a vase and pouring it into another vase'. The vase is the disciple, the water is the knowledge, the experience, the dharma. Then the disciple needs to pour the water into another one. If in-between, you leak the water out, then you have nothing to give to the next person. The other example that he was giving then was he said, 'Imagine that you make a beautiful electrical lighting system in a house, you put beautiful lamps, you pass the cables perfectly; you make the perfect system in a house. But between your house and the main power plant there is one electricity pole that has fallen down; what happens? The source of energy exists, but you cannot get any electricity - even though you have the most beautiful house, you cannot turn anything on because the connection was cut or lost. Similar to that between us and the main source, which started with Buddha Shakyamuni, we need to make sure that no electricity pole has fallen on the way. Otherwise there may be many beautiful lamps in

the house, but no electricity reaching them. We must make sure that the connection is purely on and is very stable. How does that connection remain on? Through a sincere connection of faith. Between us, how can we connect to the light bulb in front of us, which is our own guru? By having pure faith. How can we cut the connection? By losing faith. If we lose faith, if we lose gratitude, if we lose respect, if we start seeing our own masters in an ordinary way and stop having this true connection of love and respect and gratitude, then we cut the light. We can have a lot of knowledge, but we don't have the connection to pass it through to the next one. So, what is very important, more than knowledge, is that when we look to our guru we must ask, 'Did he keep a pure relation to his guru?' And what happens to his guru, did he keep a pure relation with his guru? Like this we go on until we reach Buddha Shakyamuni. This is the most important thing. You know, we can transmit a lot of knowledge - knowledge is easy. But when talking about Buddha's teachings, Buddha very clearly stated that there are two types of transmission which we call 'chokor', which is a turning of the Dharma Wheel. There is 'lungchi chokor' and 'tokpe chokor'. The former is the oral transmission and basically, I will explain to you the 4 Noble Truths, as I have heard. I will explain bodhicitta as I have heard it from my master who taught me and, as my master received it from their master who taught them and, like this we can go back and back until the teachings that Buddha taught. Even the examples that they use are the same examples. It is not that because we are in the modern times, that I decide 4 Noble Truths are not enough and let's make them 5! Or we make them 2, because we don't like to talk about suffering, so, we only talk about the cessation and the path; or we invent a new definition of bodhicitta. What is it that is very important here? It is the transmission of knowledge in a consistent way. But the Dharma is only alive when there is someone that by listening to the teachings makes a transformation inside. When we can develop more love; when we are able to perceive interdependence; when we are able to feel impermanence; when we are able to understand suffering better and the causes of suffering; when there is an inner transformation deeply happening within us, that is when the Dharma is actually alive. Otherwise only the knowledge of Dharma is alive; the Dharma itself is not alive.

So, when is a lineage alive? It is when there are people, who by listening to the teachings can actually - by being in contact with the masters and the teachings and the Dharma - make an inner transformation; such inner transformation can happen in anyone of us and, then we are keeping the Dharma alive.

We have the oral transmission and, then there is what is called 'tokpe chokor' which is the transmission of realisations - the Turning the Dharma Wheel of Realisations. This means that everyone that shares the Dharma must have had his or her own experience. It is not just a matter of knowledge because there is an immense difference between talking about something that I have the understanding of and talking about that I have the understanding but I also, have the experience; these are two completely different universes. When we talk about teaching the Dharma, something that in Buddhism is very clearly stated and, in other traditions also, but particularly I can talk from a Buddhist perspective. I can think of some Hindu traditions also, where it is stated very clearly. Whenever you teach someone, you can only transmit truly what you what you have already realised yourself; otherwise, they are just words. That is why it is such a big responsibility because we cannot truly transmit something that we do not believe in, that we do not have some experience of. That very experience is what we need to share.

My point is that actually, we have both at the moment; we have the lineage of knowledge and, nowadays knowledge is extremely easily accessible - books are so easy to find, we have videos everywhere. Some of you may remember two or three years ago there was Venerable Sanghasena from Lhadak and he was giving a talk sitting here, he said that when he was young it was so difficult to go and receive teachings, that he needed to walk for maybe one or two months in the snow; then the shoes were not good; there was pain in the feet and it was cold! Also, there was not so much food and, after such difficulties you would reach the place to receive the teachings. Next, the lama would not be there So, you would need to wait for the lama to come back. Then when he returned, you'd have to wait for the moment he would give the teachings. Then finally he gives the teachings and, then you don't understand everything! Then you only get what you understand and nothing more; you hope for another teaching and, then you have to go back home, another month walking and who knows when you can go back again for the next teaching. He said that nowadays



you go for teachings and first off all you sit in a chair and they bring you food. You even don't even need to walk; they make you fly. Everything is so comfortable. Then you sleep in a place that is so comfortable - he entered into many details on this. You then go and receive teachings from the Lama - speaking to you in your own language, not only that, you can take the Lama home! You go home and you say, 'Now you teach!' Then you tell the Lama that you did not understand, and could he please repeat it. So, then the Lama tells it again, you know. So, there is no danger that you didn't understand, and you just remain like this. 'You are so fortunate' and actually, we are.

Knowledge is so easily available nowadays. The only issue with knowledge is that knowledge is not what is available to us; it is what we perceive. Knowledge is easily accessible nowadays; we are not so much 'open' and we do not give so much 'attention' to truly learn - to absorb the knowledge. We have these strange ideas that external memories are 'there' So, I don't need to integrate them into myself. I have Wikipedia, the teachings are on YouTube, I have all the books in PDF inside here; how cool, everything is there, and I have nothing with me.

In this way we go into an extra comfort zone in a way and we have actually less of the aspect of truly giving to the importance of the knowledge and to assimilate it. When knowledge is scarcer, then we give it more value - like everything else in life. When something is very rare, we give a lot of value to it. There was only one time for me when it was the opposite; I went to Vietnam and then Rinpoche took me to the World Buddhist Forum in Vietnam and, I personally never liked these big congresses, but anyhow I was there together with a lot of jet lag as I had come from Brazil to Vietnam. Then in the whole conference there was one talk that I really wanted to listen to - Thich Nhat Hanh - he was there, So, I was very happy to listen to his teachings and so on. It was early in the morning and my jet lag was terrible and as I sat there to listen, very excited, Thich Nhat Hanh came in very silently with a walking meditation on the stage, however we were seated. He just looked for about 10 - 15 minutes and then he sat another 5 minutes minimum before he started to say anything. He began by saying to watch one's own breath, and I completely fell asleep! I was not able to keep myself awake, I was trying to do it but lost out and I woke up when he had finished! There are exceptions, but normally when we give value to things, we are more attentive; I was attentive, but my body did not allow me to be truly present.

Anyhow, what I wanted to say is that when things are not so easy to get, we give them more value. The more value we give, the more we receive; this is very clear. Many Masters of the past were not giving teachings easily - not because they wanted to make themselves precious, but because they wanted their disciples to value the teachings. At one time, while talking to Trijang Rinpoche when I went to translate for him in the United States the commentary of Heruka, he said to me, 'When teaching disciples, I think you should not make things too easy and not too complicated; if you make the explanation too easy for them, they will not use effort to assimilate it'. You need to put in effort to gain the understanding and, when you put in the effort and you gain something - wow! That remains fixed in your mind; however, if you chew up everything and give that to them, after some time the person is not truly able to digest it well, to understand it and to value it.

Anyhow, the fact is that we have an incredible opportunity: not only do we have So, much knowledge easily accessible but we have all this knowledge at the tip of our fingers; we can nowadays download any book, like Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand lam.rim, you put Pabonkha Rinpoche into Amazon; you want the lam.rim of Lama TsongKhapa you put in Lama TsongKhapa. If you wait a few minutes and can download the whole book and, then you never read it - because it is too easy to get. I remember my teacher Gelagpala when he left Tibet there was nothing that he could take with him - he escaped in the middle of the night. The only thing he took, was one book - Lama TsongKhapa's Lekshe Nyingpo (Essence of True Eloquence). He took the book in the Tibetan cloth and he put it around his body like a belt and said it was the only thing he needed. He even forgot to take a cup to drink water; on the way people were offering tea and such and he had no way to drink it; but he had his text together with him, which gave him all the strength he needed actually.

In those days, they were taking books and were copying them by hand, word by word. There were many of

them memorising the books because they did not have enough books to read. They would borrow a book from someone, memorise the whole book and then after they would recite it slowly and think about the meaning. These people could absorb knowledge. Nowadays it is So, easily accessible - not only in our Western culture, but regarding the modern world. Within the monasteries the same thing has happened; everything is there so we don't need anything within ourselves. This gives rise to a lot of problems in the long run.

Anyhow, knowledge is easily accessible for us. Not only knowledge; we have knowledge within a valid lineage. This is something that is truly, truly special and, it is not So, obvious. I often see people into many spiritual things and So, on, but the real lineage is missing. This makes all the difference, because when we are in the lineage, we receive so much in a non-verbal way. So, much is happening in a way that we maybe even don't understand and, this is really important for us. That is why we need to really rejoice about this incredible opportunity that we do have within the lineage.

One of the things that is given a lot of importance is for oral transmissions. Yesterday we talked about somehow the basics of lojong, which means why we need to train our mind and in which direction we must do it, because lojong - 'lo' means mind and, 'jong' means to train. One very important thing from this word is that it is showing us that understanding is not enough; it is good but far from enough. First, we need to understand, then we need to comprehend to the point where we have no more doubt about it, then we need to apply it in every aspect of our lives. As Lama TsongKhapa said at the end of the Three Main Aspects of the Path. He was saying that once you have familiarised yourself and comprehended the meaning of these three main aspects of the path, leave away all distractions - 'Go into solitude, my child and, put an effort to realise, renunciation, bodhicitta and the correct view of reality'. This is something I find there is difficulty within our modern society/context. It is because a lot of our lives are based on conceptual understanding; a great part of our education is based on our conceptual understanding, in accumulating knowledge; we greatly value the knowledge we accumulate. But knowledge is really not worth much. It is good, I love knowledge, but the more I progress, the more I see how knowledge is not much. What we need to do is gain knowledge and, then we need to go through a long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long process of familiarising ourselves with that understanding. The danger is that after some time - 'Oh I really didn't know that, what's next?' - we are knowledge hungry! We always want to know something new about Buddha's teachings; it does not matter if we put into practice what we already know. It is like Rinpoche giving an initiation - 'What initiation? Oh! but that I already have!' That is exactly why you need to receive it again! We need to familiarise ourselves, deepen with the practice, but we have this hunger for knowledge - and I don't know where it is coming from. One thing that Pabonkha Rinpoche puts very clearly in the lam.rim - he said: 'Be careful, when you start to have knowledge about dharma; there is one point in which you will start to have some sort of pride, thinking - this I already know; I don't need to listen to these teachings because this I already know. That I don't need, that I already know!' But the point of giving and listening to teachings very often is not to gain new knowledge. Just as Shantideva said at the beginning of the Bodhisattvacharyavatara: 'I am not writing this for the benefit of someone, I am writing this to familiarise myself with what I already know'. The point is not 'knowing' the importance of 'loving' the point is to truly open our heart and love others. The point is not knowing that everything is impermanent and repeat the definition of impermanence and have the whole understanding and say to oneself, 'I know it!' The point is to 'feel' impermanence in everything and, to flow together with impermanence and not to feel sad or upset or suffer when we perceive change; the point is to stop grasping at 'permanence' because it is actually impermanent. It is not easy because this means looking at one's own eyes and, changing our deeper habits - that is the real training. When we talk about mind training, the real training is not about having knowledge because the teachings are mind training - lojong - it is really easy to understand and to learn; it doesn't take much knowledge; it does not take a PhD in philosophy or who knows what? It is really simple. Then, it takes a lot of courage to really put oneself into the game; to say 'Okay, I'm really into it!' Deeply inside oneself: 'I'm into it!'



'I'm not only into the knowledge - selfishly speaking, it is better to be altruistically inclined?' No, it is really looking into one's own eyes and saying: 'I am tired of this selfishness! And I will look to protect myself from all the little tricky games that selfishness will play on myself'. Then we start training ourselves and, there is an aspect that is very, very important in all of this. You know, sometimes when we start listening to dharma teachings, we see what the correct way or the best way is to behave, to act physically and mentally, verbally and So, on. Then sometimes we are a little bit hard on ourselves, sometimes we can have this feeling of guilt: 'Oh how bad I am! My motivation is not good, and my life is meaningless and, I'm not doing anything really good - look at that! I'm So, full of defilements and I am this and I am that', bla, bla, bla. I think you know this. The point is that at no point in any teaching is it saying that we should have self-pity and we should be acting in this way. It is very important that we need to embrace ourselves and really, really, acknowledge ourselves and take care of how we really are. You know, there is one point that nowadays very often we see people saying: 'Oh, I must accept myself as I am and, you must accept me as I am'. There is this t-shirt you sometimes see that says on it, 'Accept Me for what I am' or something like this. What I think is yes, I should accept you for what you are, but you shouldn't! What happens is that if we simply accept ourselves for what we are, okay - if we are a buddha or bodhisattva that's wonderful you know. But if we just accept ourselves for what we are and if we think that just because we are sincere with what we are, then that's okay. What is happening is that we are just going to continue to follow up with the habits that we already have. We don't need to be false and we do not need to feel guilty and be going against oneself; we need to embrace ourselves with our qualities, with our merits, with our defilements, with our sufferings, we need to do this and give a good direction. It is like a good teacher, parent or friend is the one that goes to the other one in the moment of difficulty, embraces them, shows them the path, with love and kindness and is saying something like, 'I need to drink more water, but I don't want to'. There I am suffering and struggling because maybe I don't want the water and you embrace, take care and then slowly, slowly go and take the glass and kindly say 'Okay, now you drink, everything is fine!'

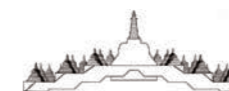
It is not the fact of how bad you are and that you don't want to drink the water - no. We need to be gentle; we need to be careful, but we still need to show the path and to accompany us on the correct path. Rinpoche says many times that 'From the mouth of those that love you, no good/ sweet words will come out'. Sometimes when we have someone who really loves us and has something to show to us, we need those things to be shown with clarity and listen to things we don't actually want to listen to. My point is that we still need to act with kindness, to embrace ourselves with a lot of gentleness; with a lot of affection towards oneself. We accept ourselves as we are; we embrace ourselves as we are and, we direct ourselves to become something better. We should not reject ourselves; we should not go against ourselves; we do not blame ourselves - we embrace, we direct and we accompany. The difference is clear right?

So, are we selfish? I would say yes; it is okay. The point is that - how do I want to continue; which direction do I want to go in and, that is where the actual training starts. Whenever we do training, we need to start from where we are and embrace the starting point from where we are. Then we need to direct our mind in one direction and say, 'Okay, I start acting in this way; it is not easy, but I will do it'. It is not easy, as I said yesterday, to look to someone else and to truly feel the other person's happiness is as important for me as my own happiness is to myself. It is not obvious, but we train ourselves. So, training is about doing something that doesn't come spontaneously but we repeat it, again and again, again and again on a daily basis. So, that slowly, slowly, it becomes natural and spontaneous. The danger that Pabonkha Rinpoche was speaking about is that we start to enter into the teachings of dharma and in the beginning, we are very enthusiastic about it, then at some point we think that we have already understood it, that we already know it. Then, when we sleep and look to the teachings again, we have the thoughts that all this I already know and even feel bored from it. We are now looking for some new teaching, we want something else and then not able anymore to feel anything and, we think it is the fault of the Dharma, or the teacher. The example that is given, is that in Tibetan culture they put butter inside a container made of leather. What happens then is that in the beginning when you put the butter on the leather, it absorbs all the butter, all the grease. After some time, the butter has been in contact then you can put as much fresh butter as you want, the leather will not absorb any more fat. Similar to that, Pabonkha Rinpoche said, this is what happens when you are in contact with the teachings, when you think that you already know and it does not matter what incredible master may be there, it does not matter what incredible teaching you are listening to; it does not make any effect inside anymore. We have to be careful not to let this to happen to us.

And, sorry to be so direct, but there is another point. Sometimes I listen and hear people saying that they have been in the Dharma for 30 years and nothing works; the Dharma does not work, they say nothing has happened for them, so, the Dharma does not work. I humbly put a question to someone who talks like this and I ask, 'You have known the Buddha's teachings and Dharma teachings for 30 years and you have put effort into doing the practices and meditation and so on, but have you actually applied it in your daily life, to the best of your efforts, truly? Or do you expect to walk on the path to enlightenment by just having a Buddhist membership?

The question is, when do we actually grow? It is when we face difficult situations and we apply the teachings; this is truly when there is some movement inside; this is when we need to take refuge; this is when we do something, when we are in difficulty! There I am with that person I really don't like - 'May I see all sentient beings as being more precious than the jewel that realises all wishes to realise the ultimate goal'. Is that person a sentient being? Yes. Can I say to that person that I wish them to be truly happy; that their happiness is as important as mine? Yes, you can. When we are able truly in that moment to make this effort, then big changes happen.

Something that I humbly request all of you, myself included, is that the moment we need the Dharma the most is actually when we are in the difficult moments of our lives. Normally, it is in these moments when we least want to practise. Really, during these moments what we want, is for a solution to come from the outside; we do not want to put in our effort because we are already So, overwhelmed with the difficulties that we are going



through, the idea of having to make more effort, from our side to change the way how we live the situation and to make an effort to change our side - it is quite difficult. But that's when the real moments happen.

For example, if you take refuge in the guru and, you are near to your guru - one sign that you are really near and receiving all the blessings, is that your life is not So, easy; but you still have the means to deal with the situations and to grow within them. Even some practitioners of the past, when life was too easy, they would create difficult situations! They would do it on purpose because it is when we are in a difficult situation that we are faced with ourselves truly; that is when we are faced with our own defilements; it is when we are faced with our own qualities also. There is a saying in Tibetan that says: 'When warm under the sun and with a full belly - acts like a great practitioner of the Dharma. When suffering befalls on the head, then he/she is just like an ordinary being.' This is what we should avoid. We really see our practice during difficult moments, because it is easy to be comfortable when everything is fine. It is actually the many different moments - the moments when our faith is fading; the moment when we have physical pain; the moment in which we have conflict in our lives, in our relationships; the moments in which we have doubts and uncertainty. This is when we truly need to take refuge; this is when we need to take refuge in the Dharma because if we truly go to the Dharma there is an answer for everything; there is nothing that will be missing.

One of the important aspects of the teachings of lojong is that it is a practice whereby there is no excuse not to practice it. When you are happy and everything is going well, it is a wonderful opportunity to train yourself to be kind and train in bodhicitta. When things are not going well, that is also, a wonderful opportunity to train. Basically, we are always there in this constant work; it takes energy, yes; it takes effort, yes - but life takes effort. This is something that for me became very clear not So, long ago, a few years ago. I was in Beijing with my mother and it was the first time for many years that I stayed for one week doing almost nothing. I was accompanying my mother to the hospital and we would leave between 4 and 5 o'clock in the morning because Beijing has so much traffic. To be in the hospital by 7 o'clock we needed to leave the house at 4am. Anyhow, I was waking up early, sleeping in the car, waiting in the hall, making some jokes in the hospital, whatever. Then returning home and eating. Then we needed to wait for the examination results for a week; it was the first time in a long time that I would spend days without really doing much. Then I saw something so clearly. When I would get to the end of the day, in which everything had been really comfortable, and I hadn't really done anything - and I had come from a period when I had done a lot - I was very tired by the end of the day. It actually became very clear to me: when we do a lot during the day and we get to the end of the day, we are tired and, when we wake up and don't do anything the whole day, by the end of the day we are tired. So, it is no excuse to say 'I will not do my meditation because it makes me tired'; we get tired anyhow! Life is energy consuming. To live consumes energy.

And the other aspect is that when I look to my own life and, I have a wonderful life, which I can just rejoice and be grateful for and, I look to the lives of other people around me but talking about my own - I have a wonderful life, but that doesn't mean that it is always easy; we go through trouble; we go through difficulties. Childhood is not easy; being a teenager is not easy; growing up as an adult is not easy; living the life of an adult is not easy; getting older is not easy; dying is not easy. Life is not easy in itself. Trijang Rinpoche had a text where he states this very clearly, he says, 'Life is not easy, but the point is that we will suffer anyway as long as we have ignorance, selfishness, attachment, hatred, jealousy, envy, dissatisfaction, fear, anxiety and So, on, we will suffer; it does not matter where we go, with whom we are.' You can move to Borobudur and after some time Borobudur will turn into something else because at some point, we need to project our dissatisfaction into something. At some point we need to project our fears, our hatred and so on.

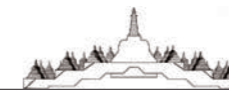
The point is that while we have this all-pervasive suffering of defilements and karma; we live by this - we experience the involuntary results of own previous actions; we are taken very strongly by our own defilements and so, inevitably suffering will be there. One of my teachers, Geshe Thubten Rinchen, used to have a term which I liked very much, he would say, 'Anyhow if you need to suffer, try not to suffer for things that are useless, at least suffer for good things.'

So, putting an effort to act in a way that is maybe not so natural to us, but is a positive way we want to be. Maybe it is not so pleasurable to wake up at 4 - 4.30 in the morning to go to the Stupa; maybe it is not too pleasurable to be walking under the sun and be doing that for many hours; maybe it is not so pleasurable to stay listening to teachings when we are hungry; maybe it is not so pleasurable to do many things. There is some suffering involved, but we are suffering for something that brings benefit, something that adds something to our lives. I have my own theory: that at certain points in our lives, based upon our own karmic cycles, there is a certain amount of suffering that we need to experience. It is very interesting because (this is my own theory, so it can be right or wrong) what I observe is that there is a certain amount of suffering and if we add more problems what seems to happen is that one problem overwhelms the other; but the amount of suffering remains more or less the same. Then if you take away the problems, then still the same amount of suffering remains the same and we create new problems. It is very interesting to see when the person is suffering a lot and then suddenly the problems are gone, there is moment of joy, then suddenly they enter into the same level of suffering again - until a cycle is not completed. Or, someone that is suffering because of something and then you can add another big problem on top - then that first suffering somehow is gone because it is overwhelmed by another one. So, really, as Atisha said, 'Do not fear suffering'.

One time when I was in Tibet and I went to see my teacher for teachings, it was December and snowing and really cold. Normally I don't suffer the cold much in Italy, but in Tibet it was so cold that day; I think because of the humidity that day and no heating in the house, I had 4 blankets on top and 2 underneath, 2 pashminas and I was still shivering on the bed. Then I needed to put extra sweaters and extra socks and gradually began to warm up. The next morning, I went there early at 8 o'clock as the sun was rising to receive teachings (Beijing time: should be 6 o'clock really). There I was and it was really cold and I arrived and received the teachings and when they were finished, I looked and (my guru lived in a small house in the place of the historical abbots of Tashi Lhunpo) in front there was a small kind of terrace where they just closed one part of the terrace with some very thin plywood and, there was someone living there; one of his disciples. I looked at the place where he lived and [you guessed right] it was really cold. There were gaps and the wind blew in. I looked at him and said, 'Don't you get cold in the winter here? It was not yet the real winter! He looked up at me as though I was asking the most stupid question and said, 'Winter is cold; So, now what?'

It was a big teaching because the meaning is - winter is cold, so during the winter where is his mind? His mind is into learning the teachings, doing the practice - not thinking that it is cold, it is cold, it is cold. Here it is hot and humid; we are in Indonesia's rainy season. How much space occupies our mind with this? That's the point. Take a blanket or put on the A/C but don't occupy the mind fully with all of this. So, what happens is that when we fear suffering it overwhelms all our inner space. It takes much more space the time before the suffering, with the pre-suffering and the post-suffering than the actual moment. What happens is that this space occupies all of our mind and, life goes by.

It is like going on a diet and we say that I should not eat that anymore. Is it difficult? Anyone following through a real diet, is it difficult? Yes, it is difficult. We just need to make one very clear decision: is it what I need to do? Yes! The more we keep giving space to that inner dialogue and this inner little crying, 'Oh I don't want!', the more this overwhelms us and the more we suffer. 'I have made the decision to do this', now let us go through it; is it difficult? Yes, but life is difficult: the first Noble Truth - 'Life is suffering' - sorry, I make it like this, but the point is that there is a second Noble Truth that says, 'Where is the suffering coming from?'; then there is the third Noble Truth that says it is possible to eliminate the suffering, possible to have the cessation of suffering. Sometimes we forget that there is a fourth Noble Truth, which is the path to cessation. The cessation of suffering is not going to be given to us by someone. It takes lifetimes, not just one lifetime. We might say that we are practitioners of tantra and in tantra you can get enlightened in 3 years. Okay, having all the correct conditions and practising in the correct way; no doubt! This means however, practising with the full strength, having all the correct preparation and, practising 24/7 non-stop. Really like, every moment being there; being in the sadhana every moment, day and night - when we are awake, when we are dreaming, when we are falling asleep, when we are eating, when we are washing, when we are doing anything - minimum 14 hours a day meditation with good concentration; then something can really happen fast. But still it takes



time. For most of us we are not prepared for this; we do not have the conditions; it is for the very few - sorry to be so direct. The important thing is not how fast we walk, the important thing is that we walk in the correct direction. This for me is the most important.

We have all the tools and, I would like to give the transmission of the 8 Verses of Mind Training because we don't have time these days here to go through the whole commentary of all the 8 Verses, one by one and so on. Knowledge is not something that is difficult to get nowadays as we can read books, listen to recordings of teachings and such, but the Lineage is fundamentally important. There are 3 conditions necessary to practise well: having the minimum necessary materially, which we do have; having a correct lineage and someone who guides us in the correct way, which we do have; the third is having the joy in the practice - to put effort into the practice.

The one thing that we touched on yesterday and, I'd just like to remind you of it, is that one of the interferences of our practice is when we get somehow overwhelmed by the needs of this life. When we end up leaving this life as a final goal and not as a means of something higher. So, when the body becomes the goal - we serve the body. If we just think for one moment, how much energy in one lifetime is consumed by serving the body? Between eating; making money to eat; resting; giving pleasure to the body; digesting food etc; how much inner space does all of this consume - quite a lot! Then how much time and space consumes our own livelihood: making money and managing money; taking care of stuff; how much time and energy are consumed by our material world around us? A big part of it. Then how much time in our life do we spend trying to make other people be what we think they should be? Also, the time spent with our relationship with others and all of that, in the external way. How much time is left from all of that? So, if we want to practice Dharma outside of our normal daily activities, forget it! We have almost no time left. As Atisha said, 'During the night you are sleeping; during the day you are distracted - then when can you practise?' Then there is another very beautiful text of which I want to get a translation done of it one day, after we have finished the building projects. It is a text in which Atisha was about to go away from Tibet - he did not actually go, but he was about to go back to India. The king of the time went to Atisha and asked, 'Can you give please a final instruction to us?' It is a very short and interesting text in which Atisha gives the very essence of many things and, in the very beginning he starts by saying something like this: 'In these times of degeneration, the objects of knowledge are many; life is short and, death is certain. So, focus on the things that are more important.'

There are so many things to know. Concerning objects of knowledge there is so much that we can learn, so many things we can touch and being touched by so many beautiful things, here and there. The important thing is not the knowledge; it is rather what we become out of this - that's important. When we die, knowledge is gone. Then we are again, 'a, b, c, d,' but the qualities that we develop deep inside ourselves, we take them with us. You can see very clearly if you look at a small baby - when we look at babies, we can see the qualities in the child very clearly, that are taken from life to life. Some children since very small, it is very easy to see they are so jealous; others are so kind, others they are very patient and peaceful; others are very nervous. We can see this very clearly in childhood. So, we take our qualities with ourselves, the qualities that are deep within ourselves. We must put extra effort in our lives to apply the practices in everything that we do. For example, Self-Healing that we do these days here. We also, need to apply Self-Healing in our daily lives.

Basically, there is one part in tantra which is called Bringing the Result into the Path. If I was Ratnasambhava what would I do? Guru yoga: if I was my guru what would he do in this situation? He would be kind - I am not my guru, but if I was. Okay, so let us do it! Then when we are in the moments where we find that there is some arrogance coming out, then we take refuge, then we remember again Ratnasambhava and we take refuge in Ratnasambhava and we make an effort and act with generosity; we act with humility. We need to bring this to every aspect of our daily lives. Not leaving it in the sadhana, in the Stupa. We are there doing the practice at the navel chakra receiving the crown empowerment of guru buddha Ratnasambhava; we put away the arrogance, the pride and the miserliness and so on. Then when we have finished doing, someone asks if they can have some water - 'No, this is mine!' The point is that even if we may think it is because we have habits, that's when we need to breathe in, breathe out and, act in accordance with what we know is the best;



not in accordance to what is our natural habit - in a gentle way towards oneself. We connect to the practice; we connect to the meaning of each one of the 5 Dhyani Buddhas and, there they are: I take refuge in Akshobhya; I take refuge in Ratnasambhava; I take refuge in Amogasiddhi in the different moments of our lives and we apply the practice in our daily lives; that's fundamentally important for all of us.

When we talk about mind training it is not a text, it is a way of life; it is a way of life in which we have a clear direction that is to develop love and wisdom and, to be in the service of others. 'That's what I want - I am not there yet, but that's what I want' and we put that direction and anything that we do, we always bring ourselves back to the same place. This is about training; it is not about reading a text or learning something that has been written by someone. Then there are the texts which guide us in this process and, they are very beautiful. Sometimes I wonder because I listen to comments like, 'Oh lama thank you, the teachings were so beautiful' but they are not meant to be beautiful or meant to be pleasurable; it can happen that we go to a dharma teaching and we get out of the teaching and we feel terrible; that's good sometimes. If our parents call us for something that is not okay and we redirect our minds - it might not be pleasurable, but that's good. Teachings are meant to redirect our minds into a positive way; that's the main point. If we really read the 8 Verses of Mind Training with real sincerity, it is very hard; it is not pleasurable. There are beautiful verses, yes; incredibly beautiful, but they are not easy. For example, this verse which says: 'When one or more persons act towards me out of jealousy, out of envy or any other negative emotion and treats me with aggression, verbally or physically - may I offer to him or her the victory and take upon myself the defeat'.

Some time ago I was in Albagnano and there was a situation that made me quite upset. In fact, there was one situation in which I was really upset. There was a person there who was treating someone else with aggression, very clearly out of envy, and was being aggressive to this other person. What is the spontaneous way of reacting? To protect oneself and go against the other. Then we start entering into the game of attraction and aversion, we start talking to someone else in order to put that other person into a bad light in order to gradually create this aversion into other people also, and, attraction to the aggressor's views. I was looking at this and wondering what we should do in this situation, because I could not be totally passive in front of this situation; I needed to do something before it got really bad. So, I talked with Rinpoche and we discussed many solutions - we walked up and down. I said, 'Oh what to do Rinpoche?' I gave some ideas and Rinpoche was saying, 'Yes, yes, good!' But I felt inside that it was really not the right thing yet! Then as I was walking down to the Centre, from the woods and, then came to my mind Geshe-la to me; not that he arrived there, he came into my mind! This verse came into my mind: 'When others out of envy, jealousy or any other negative emotion treat us with aggression, verbal or physical, may we offer to that person the victory and take upon our self the defeat'. When I remembered that verse the real solution became so clear to me - to give the victory! It was incredible, because the moment I felt it, all the weight on my shoulder went away! There is attachment to be 'right'; the attachment to get the victory. At one point, it is not anymore about the actual issue of discussion; rather it is about who is right and who is wrong; it is about gaining the victory and defeating the other. That is very heavy; it takes so much energy; it consumes so much within us. Then what happens is we enter into this game of attraction and aversion and, slowly, slowly we start creating groups and we start playing this game and when we see that our objective is just to defeat the other, the original issue does not matter anymore. That is a very painful process. It takes so much energy. On that occasion I was looking at the situation, looking at it and I saw the only real solution at that time, asking myself: 'Am I able to change the mind of this person? No! Could I change the mind of the other person? No!' I could say many things to that person, and they will not, truly speaking, change their way of behaviour and thinking. So, what do we do? We act in a way that we are not anymore attached to beat the victorious one; we act with love towards both. That is a real test. When we see someone acting in a way that we do not agree with; to act with love, which is the next verse: 'Whoever and whomsoever I have benefitted, or in whom I have placed my hopes and, in case this person in whom I have placed my hopes, or whom I have treated very well and benefitted - when someone like this treats me with a lot of harm, may I see that one as the great teacher.' May I see that one as a great guide on my spiritual path; a great teacher - which is a truth.

It is easy to love someone who acts in the way that we want. The point is that when we are confronted with



someone who acts in a way that we really don't like - that is really against our expectations, is really not in a way that we appreciate people being with us and, really not pleasant in many aspects, then that is the real test to see if we are able truly to love sentient beings. When at that moment we are able to see that that person is being taken by all pervasive suffering, (just as myself) and, we are able to allow ourselves to say to them that it does not matter what they do, it will not change the way that I love and feel towards them. This does not mean that I agree with their behaviour; however, it should not change what I feel. When we are able to do that, then this friend of ours is a great teacher and is teaching us so much; showing us our selfishness; showing us our limitations and thus is really a great teacher.

These verses are not pleasurable to really reflect upon, but they are really powerful if we really bring them to our own lives. So, we need to be really sincere with ourselves and we need be very gentle and kind toward our own selves. At the same time, we need to be gentle, kind but also, strong and clear; not allowing ourselves just to fall into our habits.

I will now do the transmission of the Eight Verses of Mind Training. I will give each one of you time to read and reflect upon it - I will just go through it very briefly. The main issue is that we have a pure lineage and we have this opportunity. I will give you the transmission, then we just need to start applying it to our lives because in truth, the meaning is not so, difficult to understand. I know that many of you already do it. What is important is that whenever we practise something deep, it must be done in secrecy.

There was a very important lama, living in the house of one of my guru's (the abbot of Tashi Lhunpo) when he came to India - his name was Rabto Kyonla Rinpoche living in France. He was staying in the house there and I stopped a few times and my friend, who was often there was doing his daily practice. It was very hot, and the door was usually open. He was meditating in a perfect position and doing his meditation very beautifully - if he saw, if he perceived that someone was looking at him, he would make as though he was sleeping, why? Our tendency is to do the opposite, if we are half asleep, we do the opposite and go 'Oh!' We are attached to the image of being the good practitioner. He is fighting against that attachment and protecting himself from his own weaknesses.

Anyhow, let's go to the transmission. So, we connect to all the masters of our lineage as these teachings and transmission I have received myself from Lama Gangchen Rinpoche; from Trijang Choktrul Rinpoche; from Kyabje Dagom Rinpoche; from His Holiness the Dalai Lama; from the abbot of Tashi Lhunpo in Tibet, Kachen Lobsang Phuntsog Rinpoche; from Geshe Thubten Rinchen - So, from different masters and we connect with all these masters who themselves received from their own gurus, such as Kyabje Trijang Dorjechang; who received from Pabonkha Rinpoche; who in turn received from Tabu Dorje Chang and so on, going back to Lama Tsongkhapa; to Atisha; and from Atisha who was physically present in this very place where we are now, received it from Guru Survana Tipa from Indonesia and then from his gurus until arriving at Shantideva; Nagarjuna and Buddha Shakyamuni.

Before the transmission, we make the mandala offering because since the time of Buddha, who made very clearly that no teachings should ever be given if not requested. So, it is very important that we always request the teachings. The other thing is that when we receive a teaching, we should always manifest our gratitude. So, the first mandala offering is to make the request; the second mandala offering at the end is to pay our gratitude. So, let's go through the verse briefly and I will make a spontaneous translation here.

Remember, these verses mean that they are only meant for those who are really willing to train themselves in bodhicitta; they are not meant for many people - they are meant for the few brave ones; they are like the peacocks in the garden. Peacocks are animals that eat the poison and transform this poison into beauty. Similar to that, the bodhisattvas are like the peacock because they eat mental defilements, conflicts and difficult situations and, transform them into the Path, because it is said that the bodhisattva is not looking for a comfortable place to be. Rather he is looking for a place of greater benefit and, often the bodhisattva is giving this example that is in the Wheel of Sharp Weapons mind training text - it begins with this very analogy of

the peacock.

A bodhisattva is someone who is brave; a bodhisattva is someone who is brave to be in earthly life; to be in the system and still be against the system; to be in samsara, but still not follow samsara; to be with others and still not let himself be taken by the common way of being and doing and so forth. So, it takes a lot of courage. This is not a text that is for just anyone. It is a text that takes a lot of courage to truly receive and practise it. We have this lineage so, we receive it and then we keep it there until the moment when we can say that we are ready, then we can start to bring it into our own lives. Again, we have this precious opportunity, but it is not something that is of common knowledge. Try to listen to the meaning, not the words.



May I always cherish all limited beings by considering how far superior they are to wish granting gems for actualising the supreme aim.

May I always cherish each and every sentient being I come in contact with by considering them as being far superior to any great material things that I may have refined in my life. For actually helping me to actualise this supreme aim of enlightenment.

To reach enlightenment, any sentient beings that we meet are much more precious than any other things that we may find.

May I be able to recognise this in my life.

Whenever I come into anyone's company, may I regard myself less than everyone else and, from the depth of my heart, value others more highly than I do myself.

So, whenever I come into anyone's company, may I never make the mistake of comparing myself to others. The point here is that we should not compare ourselves to others and say, 'Oh he is this, I am that; he has this, I have that' and in a constant state of feeling ourselves superior to some and inferior to others.

May we actually see that we are there to serve others; we are not superior, and we are not inferior, but we are there to serve.

This is something that is very important to understand because in our modern culture we have this idea that if we are serving someone, we are inferior to that person. Very often we have difficulties serving because



when we are serving someone, it is as if we are in an inferior position. We see this on a very practical level, when actually it is not. No one can put me in an inferior position because I am what I am. No one can make me superior, because I am what I am. In another teaching of lojong it says, 'Anyone can come and tell me that I am an emanation of a buddha or the gods on earth - it won't make me one. Anyone can come and say that I am the devil on earth; it won't make me one. So, I am what I am, and I am following my own path. What I am on the path of the bodhisattva - I am the servant of the Dharma; I am the servant of beings. I am happy to serve. I am not superior and, I am not inferior; I am myself on my own path, with respect and gratitude to all'.

This is something that is a very big teaching because we are constantly comparing ourselves all the time; it is very tiring actually. In this attitude of constantly comparing oneself we end up with having 3 main attitudes; we have envy towards those that have more, they have more attention, they are more beautiful, they have more money, they have more time, they are better practitioners - who knows what? Then towards those who are equal to us we act with competition; we try to be better than them. To those that have less than us - what is the attitude? We end up behaving with arrogance.

All of this is coming from the root of comparing self with others. So, in this verse it is not saying that we should see ourselves as inferior, but we should not act as superior. The main point is that wherever I go, with whomever I'm with, I am in the service of others. I don't see others in my service, but I am into the service of others, because I am in the service of my guru and he is in the service of sentient beings - So, I serve sentient beings. Who are sentient beings? it is they guy in the check-in desk; it is the person serving us the food; it is the person seated by our self; it is the lady that gave birth to us that we call mother. Sentient beings are everywhere and, we are in their service. So, we should not put ourselves with superiority in front of anyone else. We do not need to see ourselves as inferior either.

'Whatever am doing, may I check the flow of my mind and, the moment that conceptions or disturbing emotions arise, since they debilitate our self and others, may I confront and avert them with forceful means'. 'Again, whatever I am doing - it doesn't matter if I am talking to a friend, if I am watching a movie, if I am doing whatever I am doing at any moment; may I check the flow of my mind; may I check whatever is happening inside of me; may I be aware of what is happening inside of me. At the moment that thoughts, conceptions or disturbing negative emotions arise regarding the past, regarding the future, regarding judgement of other people - whenever we have a negative thought, or a negative emotion; strong attraction that brings jealousy; strong aversion, fear, anxiety - any sort of negative emotion that arises in us, at that moment, since these negative conceptions, negative thoughts and emotions bring harm to myself and to others, they debilitate myself and others - 'May I confront and avert them with forceful means!'

But here there is one key; what happens when we have a negative thought and we try to put this thought far away? It sticks even harder. So, the point is not to throw away a negative thought, the point is not allowing that thought to overwhelm ourselves. Whatever we are doing it is necessary to always have this state of vigilance, of self-awareness.

Whenever we see that our mind is going in a bad direction, whenever we see that we have emotions that are not good for us, we don't need to block them, but we should not follow them. Remember that they are impermanent and, just as they come, they will go. I don't think it's happened to any of us that upon generating anger it has remained with us forever. It doesn't matter how angry we were, at some point, anger fades away and then suddenly we are happy.

Then what happens to that happiness after some time? It also, fades away. Our thoughts and emotions are all impermanent, constantly moving. The moment that these emotions come, we do not block them but make an effort not to materialise them by speaking or acting. The moment that we materialise our thoughts and emotions, we try to justify the thoughts, we try to justify share them with others, we try to manifest our emotions and, then what happens? By doing so, we make them stronger. So, whenever we see that these thoughts and emotions come, we take refuge and we remember they are impermanent; just wait a few moments and they will go away. Don't direct your life, your thoughts and energies, through those thoughts and emotions. If you just wait, you will see that just as they come, they will go. it is important, do not identify oneself with these thoughts and emotions; it is not easy, but that's training.

Then with Forceful Means there are different ways to do that with breathing. Forceful Means, means what Rinpoche teaches us in Self-Healing. You see that thought is coming - phew, blow it out! We do something that puts it away. There are different techniques like this, but the technique of Forceful Means is to use the breath to strongly put out different thoughts and emotions as we say 'Shuddhe Shuddhe Svaha!' When forceful means do not work, then you need to use peaceful means. When someone comes mithering us over and over again and it is not the moment for discussion, we can be strong and say, 'Stop it is not the moment!' However, people are not always ready to listen So, what do we do then? We just let it flow; you allow the person to speak but you don't listen, you say, 'Now is not the moment'; then slowly, slowly it fades away.

When it comes to us, it is very important to have this constant awareness and whenever we see those negative concepts or emotions are arising - we let them flow and remember that they are impermanent. One extra thing about this is the fact that actually what can happen is at some point we do not feel well; maybe it is due to astrological aspects, maybe something connected to our body, maybe our hormones, whatever, it is the impermanence of our feelings and they are impermanent. So, when we are not feeling very well, what is our tendency? We acknowledge that we are not feeling well, we remember that it is impermanent and will pass, so we can let it flow or we can try to find someone to blame and find a reason why we are not well. Normally we will look for external reasons and we start reasoning and start pointing a finger, looking for something or someone that is the reason why I am not feeling well. Most of the times it has nothing to do with our feelings whom or what we point the finger at. After some time that feeling goes away, but the results of the action we have created by speaking, by choosing, by acting, will need to be dealt with as the consequences of that. These things have been clear to me on many, many occasions.

There is a British lady scientist who made a research (I read an article about it) into human behaviour and, her conclusion was that most of us are not really able to judge what we are feeling; that we judge our feelings based on context. She made many examples about herself also and doing very strange research and tests on these things. One of these things about herself was that one day she was in the laboratory and a colleague whom she did not like much, invited her to go out to the pub. So, she said okay and as she was there having a beer, she started to feel some movement in her belly inside and started to feel a warm feeling coming up and her face getting warm and warmth inside. She thought that maybe she liked this man and didn't know it? So, she had another beer and fixed another date to go out again. When she got home however, she found that she actually had a cold. So, in fact she had a fever, and this was the heat she was feeling. Because of the context she thought it was something else. If she had stayed at home, maybe she would have associated it with starting a cold?

The point is that very often we have feelings that come from our body and our mind; sometimes we see something that connects to a past memory and we even don't know; sometimes we have astrological aspects that influence our emotions and our minds and we don't know. Then we look for something to blame. We put our full energy into changing that, but until that cycle is not complete, we are not able to change that emotion. Finally, we need to pay the consequences for our actions. When we see that negative emotions arise, when we see that there is this moment of not feeling too well, remember it is impermanent, it will pass. When also, we have good moments, remember that they are also, impermanent and will pass; enjoy as much as you can! Live it with greatness - when we have a moment of pleasure, enjoy it!! When we are feeling well, relaxed and peaceful, feeling joyful - be it; live it fully. These will also, pass, but do not identify yourself with the pleasure or with the pain; none of us are the pleasure or the pain, we are something that goes much beyond that.

Remember, it will pass, it is impermanent. So, by this we will be able to direct ourselves better in our lives. So, here Geshe-la says that whatever I am doing, may I check the flow of my mind. The moment that conceptions or disturbing emotions arise, since they debilitate myself and others, may I confront and avert them with forceful means. Or, may I not follow them and wait until they go away. For myself, I like to have the image of a big tree. For example, if we have a big tree and then a strong wind comes, the tree holds against the wind by its root system and moves with the wind but does not fall. As the wind passes it comes back to its own place, allowing the wind to go through; if the tree tried to block the wind - it would break and fall. So, we should



not follow the wind and we should not block the wind rather we should go back to our roots, which are the teaching we received, the faith in our gurus, our own path, our own values in which we truly believe; we stick to it, we take refuge and say to the wind to just pass by. As it comes it goes; it maybe the winds of hormones; it maybe the wind of a certain situation we are going through; it may be the wind of another mental projection we are going through; whatever is the wind - let it come and let it go because it will pass. The important thing is not to materialise it. Every time we materialise it by speaking, by acting, by making choices and interacting we give ten times more strength to it.

Next verse - the 8 Verses as we go on get harder and harder. This next verse says that 'Whenever I see beings being instinctively cruel, overwhelmed by negativities and suffering, may I cherish them as if they were difficult to find, like discovering a treasure of chance.'

So, whenever we see anyone being cruel and negative and completely overwhelmed by defilements - what is our tendency? it is to have aversion and to make distance from it. Instead what should I do? May I take care and cherish it as the most precious thing I have ever met. This is an example; I saw Rinpoche doing this a few times - you have to see this in action. One time we were in Tibet together and it was 2am and Rinpoche had gone through the whole day, doing so much; I was exhausted and I had only done half of what Rinpoche had done and Rinpoche said 'I need to go and see that person' and, I said, 'Rinpoche-la come on, please - your patience and your love has no end, but your body has needs, you need to rest!' I thought that this person could wait till the morning at least. Then Rinpoche told me and, normally Rinpoche doesn't speak to me so directly normally, but at that time he was very direct and, I was so grateful, he said, 'What we repeat every day, that every being will have happiness and it is causes, then the one that is of greater need we put aside? Not possible.' So, I accompanied him.

Remembering that situation this was a person whom according to my own perception was acting out of strong defilements, was into a state of suffering that according to me was superficial, because there was no big issue here and I thought he was trying to gain attention - this was my own perception. But suffering cannot be judged; suffering is suffering. If I am suffering because my glass is not full of Coca Cola, it is a stupid suffering because Coca Cola harms me - but still, it is suffering. Suffering is a quality that we should not judge the suffering of others. Whoever we meet - why is it so precious - like a coveted jewel when we meet someone that is harmful and is strongly taken by defilements? Because that's the greatest opportunity for us truly to open our hearts; that is when we need to check, whether or not we are ready to follow the path of the bodhisattva or not? What is the path I want to follow: the comfortable samsara or the path of the bodhisattva? Am I truly in the service of sentient beings and the Dharma, or am I in the service of myself - making myself a comfortable life through dharma? Sorry if I am being blunt; but it is only when we are confronted by difficulties, difficult situations that we try ourselves. As it is said here, 'Whenever I see beings being instinctively cruel...'. That is quite strong! 'Overpowered by negativities and suffering, may I cherish them as difficult to find as discovering a treasure of chance. May I cherish them, may I take care of them and see them as something very precious that I need to take care of'.

One important thing to mention is that these verses is not something that we need to do right away, but it is showing us the direction where we want to go. That is why we need to train ourselves to go into that direction; if it was not a training and needed to be done right away, it would not be called training. Training means that I am not yet there, but this is the direction in which I need to go.

The next verse - 'When others out of envy treat me unfairly with scolding insults and more, may I accept the loss upon myself and, offer the victory to others'.

That is a very powerful tool. Truly what we want is to be well and in harmony with others, not being in actual conflict - because often, if we engage in the conflict, we get attached to the conflict and we don't want to let it go. What we want is to be peaceful and to move on and to take care. Very often when we are truly able to not be attached to the 'victory' when the point is having victory over our own selfishness and not having victory over the other person; this then this brings a very deep liberation. Again, this is not easy, we want to be the one who is 'right'; we want to be the one who has the victory; we want to see the defeat of the other person

and we often judge our own identity and self-esteem on this! When actually, the greatest of all victories, is the victory over our own negative defilements. So, in the moment that we are able to say that I am not going to be attached to being the one that has the victory - I will put my energy into whatever way is of greater benefit.

Again, imagine that we are having a strong discussion with someone, or there is someone who is treating us out of envy and aggression, with insults and so on. Then remember to think, 'I am in his service'. What can I do in the best way, to be of benefit? What is the best way of acting to bring greater benefit to all - to the other person, to myself and to everyone? Very often it is not being attached to having the victory and to stay in the conflict. This is interesting because when we are able to truly offer the victory, we somehow disarm the other person. It is like a fire that needs a fuel and, when we stop fuelling the fire, the fire goes out. If there is a fire, instead of putting on water, just take away the fuel and then it will naturally fade away. When there is someone coming with strong aggression and we are able truly to offer the victory and put ourselves into service, with love and respect, but keeping our position clear, then somehow the conflict is not able to sustain itself and after some time it just goes away.

I remember one time a person came to me, very angry - he came confronting me, looking into my eyes and speaking very strongly - it was a big man. I just remember looking in his eyes and I was so certain about my own way and what I was doing, and remember not entering into that, neither wanting to nor enter into the conflict and just remaining in position, being kind and at the same time, strong. Then I remember the feeling of seeing this person completely falling apart. After that, the conflict energy was completely gone. When we are able to be there with kindness and without entering into the conflict - it is not easy to do it, but when we do it is so powerful. We don't do it because it's powerful, we do it because it's the best way to train ourselves in the correct path. This is something that Geshe-la is bringing us here.

'Even if someone, whom I have helped and from whom I harbour great expectations were to harm me completely unfairly; may I revere him or her as a hallowed teacher'.

These things are getting more difficult! Why is this person my teacher? Because he is showing me my own expectations, my attachment of how I want things to be, how I want others to be - he is showing to me my own selfishness and, that is where I need to train myself with regard to these most difficult situations.



In short, may I offer to all my mothers, to all sentient beings, both actually and indirectly, whatever will benefit and bring them joy. I offer and dedicate to put myself in the service of all sentient beings whatever will bring them joy and benefit; I offer to all. May I quietly accept onto myself all my mothers' troubles and woes'. This does not mean that I want to take upon myself the suffering of others because, even if I wanted to do so, it is not possible. If I was able to take on oneself the suffering of others the buddhas would have already done it you know; it would be much more easy - we would just put ourselves in line and say, 'Please take my suffering'. But that is not possible. If even a buddha cannot take the sufferings and defilements away from someone, how can we do it? The problem is that we are in a position here in which we put ourselves in the service of sentient beings and we just say, 'I want to give you the best and it does not matter how difficult it may be; it does not matter what I need to go through; I will offer you the best and I am happy to suffer; whatever suffering you have, I wish I could take it upon myself, even though it is not truly possible. This brings up the whole practice of tonglen which we will not go into at this time. Again, this position that 'I am in the service of others, so please, may I be able to offer the best of anything I can offer to you'.

The last verse says, 'Through a mind untarnished by stains of conceptions concerning the 8 Mundane Dharmas, throughout all of this and that knows all phenomena as illusions, may I break free from my bondage without any clinging. May I break free from samsara, without attachment to samsara.'

"Because we are attached to samsara; we are attached to our identity in many ways. So, the main point here, which I will just go through very briefly, is that whatever I am doing on this whole path - this whole path of training myself and going through daily - may I be able to do it in a pure way, without allowing my practice and my path to be polluted by the 8 Mundane Dharmas. This, in essence means, what I do on my path, may it not be polluted by the attachment to recognition; by the attachment to power; by the attachment to material gain; by the attachment to physical pleasure. This is the main thing, because at one point if I start to see that what I am doing in my practice - I do it, yes, there is a good motivation but, there is attachment to power; there is attachment to recognition; there is attachment to for self-gratification basically. May I be able to follow a path that is free from that. When, for example we made the praises to Lama TsongKhapa - Lama TsongKhapa did so, many incredible things, not even possible to imagine. If we go through his life history, it is mind-blowing. For instance, the first teachings he gave, he was 3 years old. He was already talking about not being taken by mundane dharmas when he was 3 years old. When he was 8, he was doing self-initiation of Heruka and, he knew it all by heart. When he was 12, he had already learned everything about astrology, medicine and many other things. It is completely mind-blowing what Lama TsongKhapa did. But when we make a conclusion concerning all the great actions that Lama TsongKhapa did, to rejoice from his life, what do we say? We rejoice that he was able to overcome the 8 Mundane Dharmas; that is the gracious thing. Lama TsongKhapa himself said, 'It's not difficult to learn how to fly; it is not difficult to be able to gain mundane realisations and to be able to stay without eating for days and months; it is not difficult to be able to have clairvoyance and listen to other peoples' thoughts; it is not difficult to gain many of the different forms of mundane realisations. What is difficult is to develop true love and, to abandon the 8 Mundane Dharmas. So, put energy into what is truly necessary, because Atisha said that we have too many things to learn in this world and life is short'. So, where do we put our energy? As we follow the path, no one is forcing us to be here in Borobudur; no one is forcing us to follow the Buddha's teachings; we come from different cultures; we are free, any moment, to take a plane and go to the beach; we are free to choose what we want to do with our time, with our money - but for whatever reasons, here we are. So, we are not forced to do what we are doing, to follow our own path, So, let's protect our path from the stains that can very easily appear. It is not because we are negative, no - rather it is the natural way of ignorance and selfishness and so on. So, we try to do the best to keep our path purely and protected from the attachment to material things.

The 8 Mundane Dharmas are:

- 1) to be happy when we gain material things - to gain the objects of desire;
- 2) to be unhappy when we do not gain the object of desire;
- 3) to be happy when we have a physical pleasure;

- 4) to be unhappy when we have a physical displeasure;  
 5) to be happy when we have a good recognition, when others think good about us;  
 6) to be unhappy when others think bad about us; 7) to be happy when we are praised;  
 8) to be unhappy when we are criticised.

These are the 8 Mundane Dharmas that we practice without effort. We need therefore, to go beyond them; for this we need constant awareness and to be very sincere with ourselves. It is not simple, it is not complicated but at the same time it is not easy; it needs a very strong sincerity with oneself. There is one point here, if you will allow me to share. It is that sometimes we are confronted with our own blockages; we are confronted with our own defilements - it may be fear; it may be attachment; it may be anger; it may be any strong mental defilement. We are confronted with these and they are so clearly there, so strong, so strong that we do not feel that we have the strength to truly overcome them. We create pretexts to put the blame somewhere else and constantly try to change the conditions and to escape from them in different ways. May we have the strength and courage for whenever we see our defilements manifest, not to follow them but to let them flow. Slowly slowly they will have less and less strength. May we have the clarity of our path; these 8 verses that we have just gone through (not really explained properly but mentioned briefly) are not here to teach us something but rather to show us the path, which is the direction we want to go in. It is the direction that Buddha taught us; that Atisha taught us; that Lama Tsongkhapa taught us; that Lama Gangchen Rinpoche taught us; that all our lineage has been showing us - this is the direction. Then it is up to us to check our daily actions and ask ourselves which direction we are really going in. We keep on and always bring our actions back to the same place with affection towards ourselves and with joy; that is very important. The joy comes from the love towards the guru; the joy comes from the love to sentient beings; the joy comes from gratitude; a lot of joy comes from each time we are able to go a little bit beyond self-gratification. The path is a joyful path; it is not a sad path. This does not mean that it is necessarily easy. These very simple 8 verses are not something we should keep as a beautiful text, rather as a direction to follow that we should apply daily in our lives - to remember every day and read as much as you can, to bring it back to your own consciousness until it is part of our lives. Then gradually we are able to apply it and give time also to understanding these verses better.

My request to everyone who is present here out of causes and conditions, through different types of relationships - friends, family, teachers, disciples - whatever; we have many different levels and we are here. The fact is that causes and conditions bring us here together. I wanted to share with you something that for me is truly important not by giving some technical explanation but by truly trying to share what for me is most precious. The fact is that we need to make good use of it. One important thing: do not worry too much about what you do in your life - 'Oh, I am a teacher', 'Oh I am a photographer', 'Oh I am working in the bank', 'Oh I am working', 'Oh I am not working' - whatever. Do not worry too much about what you do in your life; worry more about how you do it. The whole point of making our lives meaningful is not about what we do; it is about how we do it and what we do it for. Do not think that if you were in a monastery it would be much easier; that's not true. Sometimes people go to monasteries and hide behind this holy image - sorry to put it this way - something like, 'I don't need to deal with my own defilements because I am a monk and this for me is good enough'. Rather, practice is to be done everywhere no matter where we go and we can have a beautiful life without having to change our life; no need to give up family; no need to change job; no need to go and live somewhere else. What we need to do is to apply the teachings in our daily lives - that's all. Naturally our lives will change. In the teachings of Lojong, it says: 'Change your mind, but do not change your external behaviour'. This means not to change on purpose the external part; you should change the inside and then naturally the outside will change.

Someone may be touched by dharma and say, 'Oh now what do I do with my life, I have a meaningless life; I am doing stupid things; I don't have a job that is meaningful; I don't have a life that is meaningful', - that's not true! Everything is meaningful as long as you make it meaningful. You can be by the side of the guru for 24 hours and still be there without meaning. If you are at the side of the guru for 24 hours and your main worry is if the guru is smiling to you or not - then I'm sorry, but you are wasting your time. If we are in the most

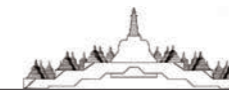


mundane job but we are putting into practice the Dharma, we are taking Refuge, we are applying love and kindness and really doing all this in the best way, then we are making our lives meaningful and for sure, if we are near to the guru and making it meaningful, even better!

Therefore, the point is not what we do, but how we do it, how we familiarise ourselves with what we do, how we become out of what we do; that is the final thing. Okay, once again it is not important so much what we do, but how we do it and the objective is not how we do but what we become.

Now let's make our final dedications. May the mind become the Dharma; may the Dharma become the Path; may the Path be free from interferences; may the interferences be transformed into the Path. Tashi delek, thank you very much everyone.





Good health depends on good education: ‘  
from health-care to self-care’

We live in a rushed world. Everything seems to go faster and faster. We often feel like we do not have enough time. We try to do things as quick as possible, rushing to get things done, even literally. Research shows that in several Western cities in different countries, we now walk 10% faster in the streets than 10 years ago. Many of us suffer from chronic stress, insomnia and burn out. We live in an information era: constant interaction with social media, news and the internet. Smart phones are sometimes our closest companion. This constant stimulation increases our stress even more.

At the end of the day we have difficulty cooling down. We feel stressed and cannot relax. Our stress system is too active. This gives rise to high levels of cortisol and epinephrine (adrenaline) (see figure 1).

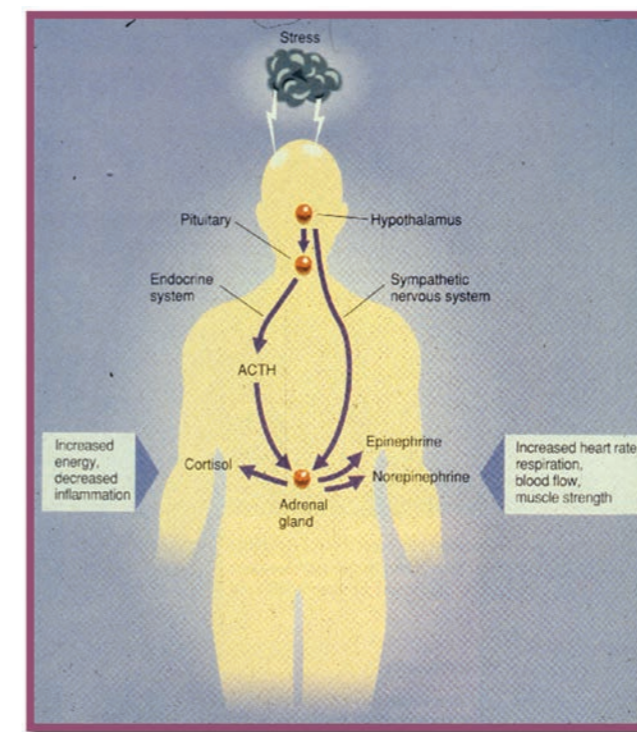


Figure 1: the human stress response

When our stress is too high, for too long, it is difficult to relax. It is also a very unpleasant sensation. When we cannot find relaxation, often we try to force relaxation, by numbing ourselves with alcohol, drugs or medication. The use of tranquilizers and sleeping pills keeps is high and still rising: 15% of the population uses them. These medicines do help us on the short run a bit to relax and to sleep. However, on the long run we can become addicted to them. Also, the quality of our sleep diminishes with these medicines (also with the use of drugs and alcohol). Even if we do sleep 7 or 8 hours, we often do not feel energized or refreshed, because the quality of our sleep is low. By using drugs, alcohol and medication, we get less REM sleep (this is when we dream) and fase 3 and 4 sleep, which are needed to feel refreshed in the morning. Figure 2 shows a normal sleeping pattern.

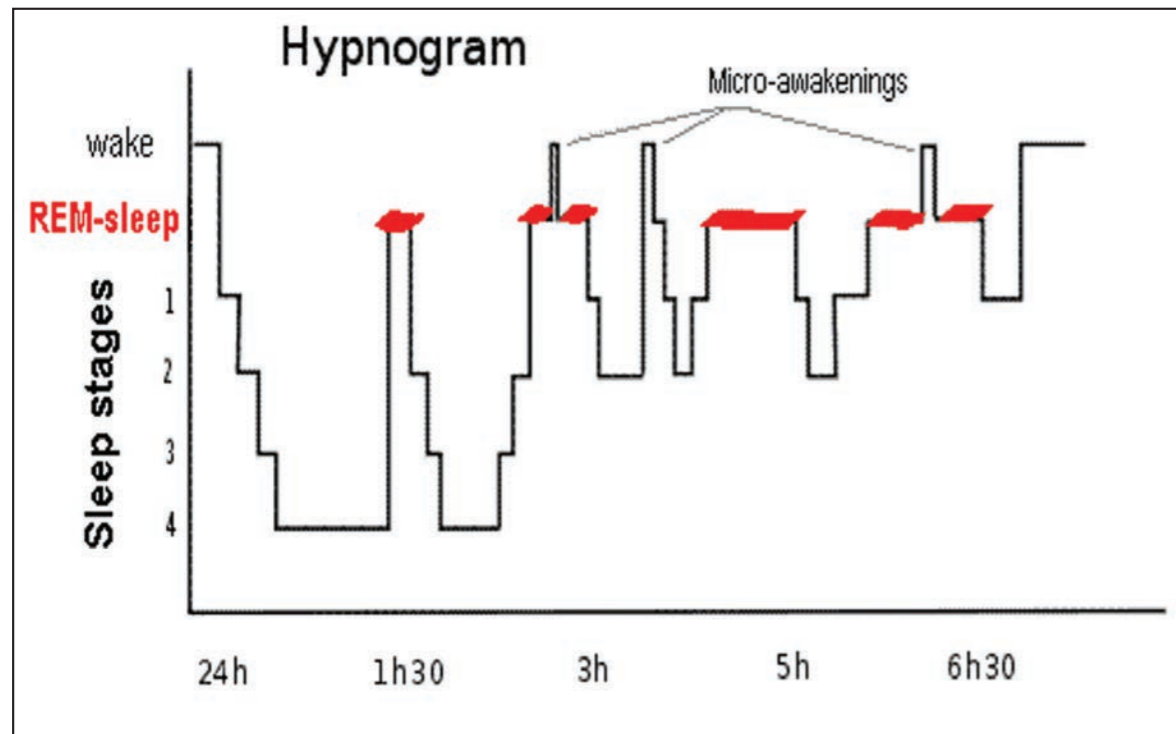


Figure 2: a normal sleeping pattern

Figure 2 also shows that faze 3 and 4 are most prevalent in the early part of the night, between midnight and 3 am. So if we go to bed too late, we also have less opportunity to experience faze 3 and 4 sleep. That combined with the use of substances and medicine, leads to a lack of REM sleep (Rapid Eye Movement; dreaming) and faze 3 and 4 which make us feel without energy.

So, in the morning we need coffee to get going. By using coffee we do feel a bit more energy, but it also increases our stress level, so we have even more difficulty to cool down at night. Then we need more sleeping pills, alcohol or drugs, then the quality of our sleep is even lower, then we are more tired, need more coffee, and so on. It is a vicious circle.

Another aspect of this state over being over-stressed and too busy, is that we try to put aside everthing that does not seem a priority. On the short run this leads to more efficient use of time. However, on the long run, we close ourselves and we become disconnected. This happens at different levels (see table 1).

The first level is the present moment (now). When we get disconnected from the present moment, we behave automatically without awareness (like brushing teeth or driving the car at a road you know very well). This might work sometimes, but it has an important downside. When we are unaware, we do things automatically, based on our habbits.

Unfortunately, not all our habits are healthy and auspicious. So we end up doing unhealthy inauspicious things that harm us, others and the environment, without us even noticing it! To solve this, we first need to become more aware, for instance by practicing minfulness.



Table 1: disconnection at different levels

Level	Manifestations of the problem	Possible solutions
Now	Automatic responses in unawareness	Mindfulness, awareness
Self	Alienation from the self, mental health problems, suicide	Vision quest, meditation, journalling, creative expression, psychotherapy
Other	Alienation from others, hostility, tribal, us first, homicide	Deep listening, insight dialogue, conflict resolution, compassion, tonglen
Environment	Exploitation of the environment, ecocide, from the illusion of seperateness	Exposure to nature, awareness of climate issues, nature retreat
Transcendent	Materialism, ratio, ego	Meditation, prayer, rituals, fasting, psychedelics

Being in this over-stressed disconnected state, acting automatically based on our habbits without awareness for too long, can also lead to a disconnection from the more subtle parts of our own minds. When this happens, we feel unhappy, confused, dissatisfied and alienated. We feel we are not (fully) ourselves anymore. We may question who we are, and what is the use of our lives. This may also lead to mental health problems, such as anxiety, depression, addiction and finally even suicide.

Possible solutions on this level are about getting in touch again with the deeper parts of ourselves by using meditation practices such as NgalSo Selfhealing, creative expression, psychotherapy or a vision quest.

Being over-stressed and disconnected from ourselves, we can also get disconnected from others, even those who are dear to us. We loose an interest in others, we even lose flexibility and tolerance. We put our own interests and the interests of our family, group, tribe, state or race, before others. In this over-stressed state, the ability to recognise who is our friend and who is our enemy diminishes. We might even feel constantly threatened: every other being seems like an enemy. We become guarded and hostile to others. This situation can easily escalate into conflict, fights and even homicide.

Possible solutions at this level are learning to put ourselves into the perspective and needs of the other, for instance by conflict resolution, or meditative practices such as compassion, tonglen and deep listening.

In our over-stressed disconnected state we may also lose the awareness that as humans we are integral part of nature. We may feel we need to control our environment, and we may want to possess many things for sensory pleasure and avoidance of suffering. By collecting many material things we enter into the collective exploitation and degradation of nature and natural resources. This leads to pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity. In such a state we loose the realization that by destroying nature we are threatening our own very survival. This even leads to a situation that can be characterized as ecocide (collective suicide by destroying our habitat, our ecosystem), from the illusion of seperateness (not realizing we are part of that which we try to possess and exploit).

To prevent and repair this, we need to reconnect to Mother Earth. We need to regain our realization of being interconnected. We need to realize that if we destroy nature, we destroy ourselves. We can do this by going on nature retreats and feeling the awe and wonder of our precious earth. Also by reading about climate change and by debating about what we can do on an individual level and on a larger scale. NgalSo Selfhealing for the environment is a fundamental practice on this level.

Finally we get disconnected from the transcendent, the spiritual level. In our over-stressed disconnected state we tend to get hooked into the material aspect of reality, losing the ability to experience transcendent states.

Traditional cultures around the world have always stressed the importance of the spiritual part of our lives. They have developed many different methods and practices to open our mind to this level. Examples are: prayer, meditation, dancing, singing, music, fasting, rituals and the use of mind altering substances (psychedelics).

So we see that we can easily get trapped into a state of too much stress and disconnection on five different levels. Luckily there are many methods on all levels that can help us to get out of this state. These are very effective self-help therapies. These practices help us to improve our lives, above and beyond the healthcare system.

Sure, we need access to a good functioning affordable integrated healthcare system. But even the best system will not be enough to help us to solve all problems mentioned above. We need to move 'from health-care to self-care'. Therefore in our clinic for integrative psychiatry, we teach patient many aspects of living a healthy lifestyle. Here are the 13 principles ('Bhumi's') of our method:

- Exercise at least 30 min in daily life and regularly spent time outside (nature)
- Daily meditation and stress reduction and minimum 7 to 8 hours sleep
- Nutrition: varied, 50-25-25, with attention and occasionally fasting
- Eat more fruit and vegetables (non-starchy)
- Eat local foods seasonal, pescovegetarian and don't throw food away
- A small amount of red wine at dinner (1 glass)
- Invest in family, community and social relationships
- Avoid smoking, drugs, junkfood and sugar
- Avoid sitting too much, limit screentime and social media
- Lead a simple life with few possessions and keep clean
- Don't work too much, don't delay important things and remember death
- Leave an auspicious legacy
- Stay on your spiritual path and follow your bliss

Besides this, prevention is better than curing. Now we are mopping the floor while the tap is still open. In other words: we are trying to find solutions after the problem has already arisen. If we do not change our habits, our lifestyle, then physical, mental and societal problems will keep engulfing our lives, our world, and thousands of healing practices may not be enough to solve our problems. When is the best moment to change habits and lifestyle behavior? At the moment we are learning them! So we need not only look at healthcare, but also at our education system.



From health-care, to selfcare, to education: as the twig is bent the tree is inclined.

We need to learn healthy sustainable habits at an early age, that will really help us to solve our problems of health, conflict, climate change and many more. Therefore our educational system is so important.

As a psychiatrist I am not working in the formal education system, but I can try to make a contribution to the change of education, by offering lifestyle training to medical specialists and mental healthcare workers. I like to share two examples of what we are doing on this level.

Together with my wife Elkana and our doctor friend Raymond (figure 3) since 4 years we organise every spring and every fall a 5 day lifestyle training program for medical specialists in the mountains near Monta Rosa. Afterwards some of the doctors then visit Albagnano. Many of them make important changes after finishing the training program.



Figure 3: Raymond, Elkana and Rogier at Monta Rosa



Figure 4: Medical specialists in training at Monta Rosa



Finally, it was Rinpoche's wish that Self-Healing would also be introduced into mainstream healthcare. So after a lot of preparation, this year we did a pilot study on the effects of NgalSo Selfhealing on the wellbeing of mindfulness meditation trainers (see figure 5) and mental healthcare workers with no experience in Varjayana practices.

- 17 participants started, 2 stopped after 1 or 2 sessions
- Of the 15 that completed the training, on average 10-12 were present at each session (2 men, 13 women)
- During 3 months, they did on average 2 to 3 times a week the practice
- Two of them came to Rinpoche workshop in Mani Bahdra last december
- None of them had previous experience with Varjayana, but almost all of them some form of meditation:
- Mindfulness, compassion, yoga, tai chi, Vipassana, Thich Ngat Than

During the training:

- First session already 3 felt 'resistance' to do it: 'too confronting' or 'too good, am i worth to receive this?'
- Another three said it felt perfect, this is my destiny, felt carried by love, flow
- 4 others felt 'nothing' (i am doing it right? What on earth am i doing?)
- More emotional or more stability in emotions / Stronger sensitivity to the senses/ Ability to visualize increases strongly
- Many felt more energy, but difficulty sleeping
- Some felt it to be too dogmatic, too religious
- Impressed by the power of chanting mantra's / Something is with me all day, some kind of presence/protection
- Many felt more clarity of mind (5), in some old emotions came back / anger increased, then decreased again.
- Some felt uncomfortable chanting prayers and making movement while not understanding what they were doing

At the end:

- Very gratefull (8), Inspired (5), Confronting (5), Good feeling (3)
- Problem in my right schoulder is gone, also the tumor of fat is now gone!
- Some like to continue, so from now on we do every month



Difficulties and solutions:

- How to do when you do not understand? -> put on waiting list, just experience and feel, check like you would check gold
- How to combine with my own practice? Not enough time -> make small steps
- Nothing happened for many weeks -> keep low expecations and just continue
- Too religious / too dogmatic ->depends on your perspective, just experience and do research for yourself if it works, you do not have to become a Buddhist

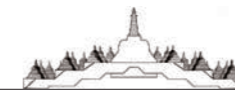


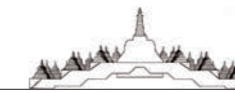
Figure 5: mindfulness meditation trainers experiencing Selfhealing

So i think it was very succesfull. Many of them were very touched and had intense experiences. They asked many many questions and we talked a lot about the diffenrences and similarities between mindfulness and Selfhealing. This is a first very small step to introduce Selfhealing in our healthcare system. I hope many steps may follow.



I want to thank Rinpoche from the bottom of my heart for his precious teachings, healing, blessings and guidance. Also may thanks to Lama Michel and Lama Caroline for their beautiful explanations.





Julie Gifford, USA

## Reconsidering the Borobudur Mandala

First and foremost, I'd like to thank TYS Lama Gangchen, the World Healer, for his incredible transformative teachings on the Borobudur mandala. I am standing here today not because I have any realizations or great insights, but simply because Lama Gangchen asked me to speak. So, I will do my best. I would also like to thank Lama Michel for leading the Borobudur practices so beautifully and for his teachings that have already helped me so much. My thanks to Lama Caroline for inviting me to Albagnano this last December, and for her incredible kindness in Bloomington, IN, where I first met her. And of course, thanks to Isthara for her patience with me as I put this together over the last few weeks, and for her friendship.

When something uncanny happens, my teacher in Cincinnati Ohio, the Ven. Geshe Kuten Lama says, "Life is funny." Our meeting here today is a bit uncanny - or we could say, "weird." Most of you have come to Borobudur through meeting Lama Gangchen; I have come to Lama Gangchen through studying Borobudur. I gave my first paper on Borobudur in 1995 at a conference held at the University of Chicago called "Mandalas on the Move." At the time, I was a graduate student in the Divinity School studying the History of Religions in general, and Buddhism in particular. Under the direction of Dr. Frank E. Reynolds, I had spent several years tooling up to become part of his academic lineage of students who specialize in Theravada Buddhism. I had studied Sanskrit and Pali; I had traveled in Sri Lanka and spent a Fulbright year in Thailand; I had studied Theravada seriously, Mahayana a tiny bit, and Tantra not at all. So, you might be wondering what sort of business I thought I had in giving a paper on Borobudur!

The truth is, I would never have thought of it on my own. At Frank's urging, I had taken a course on the development of transoceanic shipping and its influence on the spread of Buddhism from Dr. R.A.L.H. (Leslie) Gunawardana, a Sri Lankan politician and professor of history who had come to Chicago for a year to do research and teach. Dr. Gunawardana loved the beautiful carvings of boats that appear on some of the relief panels on Borobudur, and he knew that there was a historical connection between the Abhayagiri Vihara in Sri Lanka and the Shailendra kingdom, so he expressed a strong wish that some student would write a paper on Borobudur. So. The paper I wrote for that class became the conference paper, which became several more papers, which turned into a dissertation, which turned eventually into a book called *Buddhist Practice and Visual Culture: The Visual Rhetoric of Borobudur*, published by Routledge in 2011.

Along the way, what had started as a professional academic project became my personal spiritual journey. That first conference paper contained the kernel of what most scholars consider to be the pivotal argument of the book. Essentially, I said that the Maitreya relief panels on the fourth, fifth, and sixth levels picture the images of and techniques for visualizing a purified Buddha field, or pure land, and for visualizing the activities of bodhisattvas who dwell there. To make this argument, I located as many pre-8th century sources as I could that deal with visualizing Maitreya in his purified field at the center of the Tushita heaven. Because there are only a few such sources, I also used materials that deal with visualizing Amitabha Buddha in Sukhavati, and the Medicine Buddha in his purified field. As I worked with the texts and pictures, in the same way that any visual material that I spend a lot of time with will do, the images started appearing in my mind spontaneously while I was relaxing or spacing out or sleeping. At that point, I started to think that maybe I could actually do visualization meditation, which led me to think, "Hey, maybe I should check out these Tibetans; they do visualization, do they not?" All that led me eventually to Gaden Samdrupling Monastery in Cincinnati (Ohio), where I have been a student since 2003. So, what began as a project on some Borobudur relief panels and the practice of visualizing Maitreya's pure land in Tushita heaven - or in Tibetan, "Gaden," - led me to the Gaden Ear Whisper lineage, and eventually to meet Lama Gangchen. So, when Lama Gangchen says that Borobudur is powerful, that it works on people in some deep way, I can say that that is exactly my experience. Life is funny.

Now, I am very new to this sangha. I just spoke with Lama Gangchen for the first time a few weeks ago, and this is my first time doing the Ngalso practice at Borobudur, so nearly all of you have a much deeper

experience of it than I do. But from the little that I do understand, I can say with conviction that the way in which Lama Gangchen identifies the various Buddhas of the Borobudur mandala and the upper levels and explains the Tantric practices related to them makes more sense than anything I have seen in my academic career, ever. In fact, in *Buddhist Practice and Visual Culture*, I largely set aside the question of how to identify the Buddhas because I found the existing interpretations to be so unsatisfying. Without going into too many details, there are two basic types of what I consider to be flawed interpretations. The first type is vague and sometimes fanciful. These works often have titles that include the words "mystery," "secret," "riddle," etc. and routinely introduce information that comes in part or in whole from the authors' imaginations. In other words, they appear to be at least partly making it up. The second type is more rigorous, but ultimately falls short. In these works, the author compares Borobudur to a known Tantric text or mandala and claims that they are the same: "This looks like that." Except that it never really quite does; they always have to fudge it. "Well, it looks like that except for this part, and we can explain that with something I made up." I find this sort of argument to be less than completely convincing. And if you look carefully at the scholarly conversation, you will quickly see that this is not just my opinion, but the general consensus, because new attempts to find a match are always being made. If a truly convincing interpretation had already emerged, that wouldn't happen.

I have already said that I do find Lama Gangchen's explanation to be truly convincing. So, the question here is: why have academics - including me - failed to formulate a similar interpretation? Well, speaking for myself, the easy answer is that I am not a realized master. Since I do not know the minds of others, I'll leave it to other scholars to say whether they are realized masters or not. But I can say that there are also intellectual reasons why scholars have not been able to produce anything like Lama Gangchen's interpretation.

At this point, I would like to say that if you have faith in Lama Gangchen and you are doing the NgalSo practices at Borobudur as his disciples, then you do not need to worry one bit about the problems that academics are having. You just do your practice. You have good faith; you do what Lama Gangchen says and that is the proper way to do as a student. But it might be helpful for others to explain Lama Gangchen's vision to academics in a way that is in keeping with Western standards of scholarly discourse. So, with that in mind, I will now begin speaking with my skeptical scholar hat on.

The attempt to identify Borobudur with a known Tantric mandala is part of the broader historical project of uncovering the character of Shailendra Buddhism. As you know from Lama Caroline's teaching, no Javanese Buddhist texts of any kind - Tantric or otherwise - survive from the time that Borobudur was built. And, although the archaeological record is a bit better and still improving, the smaller statues, inscriptions, and implements that can be securely dated to the 8th century are currently fairly few. The best evidence that we have for the nature of Shailendra Buddhism is Borobudur itself and the other Buddhist temples of the period. The problem for academics is how to interpret them. And since the evidence is so thin, we scholars inevitably end up filling in the blanks with what we think we already know. It is a little bit like reading a xerox copy that has been made on a machine that is nearly out of ink, so that the writing is very faint. And maybe the original wasn't centered properly so that one side of the text is cut off and every line is missing the last five or six words. If you are very familiar with the language of the document and the topic it discusses, you can read a xerox like that even though it is faint and parts of it are missing. But if you are not very familiar with the language or the topic and you begin with some mistaken assumptions about what the xerox will say, then you may not be able to read it at all. Or, you may make some sense of it, but fill in the blanks incorrectly so that the meaning is changed. In my opinion, this is what has been happening: the academic community has been operating with some mistaken assumptions. I'd like to discuss two of the most important ones here.

First, scholars have generally assumed that Borobudur could not reflect the teachings of Highest Yoga Tantra. In part, this is because Western methods of textual dating and interpretation do not apply very well to Tantric traditions in which teachings are passed down orally and in secret from master to disciple. Because oral transmission by design leaves very few if any traces in the historical record, scholars may be mistaken about the origins of texts such as the Guyusamaya Tantra and the Chakrasamvara Tantra. Here, we are talking about the situation even in medieval India. For example, Western scholars often date the Chakrasamvara Tantra to the late 8th or early 9th century CE, which is cutting it pretty close if we think the text informed the design of Borobudur. But there may be an issue with the method of dating the Tantric texts. These texts only show up on the academic radar, as it were, at the point that the teachings are becoming open enough to



leave written, iconographic, or architectural footprints. Recently, at least some Western scholars have begun to revise their methods of dating Tantric texts to account for the near certainty that the teachings existed orally well before discernible historical traces begin to emerge. My colleagues who specialize in Sanskrit textual studies would be much more specific about this, but I think the date of the Guyusamaya Tantra has been moved back by about 200 years, which would mean that it existed well before Borobudur was built. In this regard, then, things are improving.



However, even scholars who accept the earlier dates for Highest Yoga Tantra texts may not accept the idea that they had been disseminated in Java by the 8th century. Especially in the early days of Borobudur scholarship, academics routinely underestimated the sophistication of Shailendra Buddhists. The assumption was that Java was at the periphery of the Buddhist world and that the Sailendras were somewhat ill-informed and prone to mistakes. Hmmm ... projection? Recently, this too has been improving. For example, there's a book called *Esoteric Buddhism in Medieval Maritime Asia: Networks of Masters, Texts, Icons*, published in 2016. It is a collection of articles, and the quality of them is a bit uneven, but the introduction does an excellent job of explaining that Java was actually much more central than early scholars had assumed, and that the Sailendras were full participants in the vibrant Buddhist world of the 8th century. So, it is more likely than not that they knew about Highest Yoga Tantra texts and the latest methods connected with them. One of the articles, by Hudaya Kandahjaya, is particularly interesting in this regard. In it, he finds similarities between a Javanese Tantric text called the Sang Hyang Kamahayanikan and the Guyusamaya Tantra. The Sang Hyang Kamahayanikan is usually dated to the 10th century CE, and I do not know how to evaluate Kandahjaya's argument for moving the date back to the time before Borobudur was built. (Also, there are some problems with his main argument that I can't go into detail about here. Essentially, he wants the Sang Hyang Kamahayanikan to be the source text for Borobudur, and I just do not think that is possible.) Still, his assertion that the Sang Hyang Kamahayanikan and the Guyusamaya Tantra contain substantially similar passages is intriguing, and I look forward to hearing more about this from the heavyweight Sanskritists. In any case, as newer methods of dating Highest Yoga Tantra texts become more widely used, and as scholars become less

prejudiced toward medieval Indonesian Buddhists, I think we will see more academic interpretations of Borobudur as a Highest Yoga Tantra mandala.

As this process unfolds, academics will still need the help of advanced practitioners to interpret the texts and the visual symbolism connected with them. Because again, the teachings are secret and protected by “twilight language” from even quite determined professional snoopers. Not only the texts, but also the visual symbolism of Tantric art cannot really be interpreted properly without insider knowledge. Scholars understand, for example, that yab-yum figures indicate Highest Yoga Tantra. But we usually do not recognize that the special mudra of the Buddha figures on the upper levels of Borobudur is a subtler way of indicating the same thing. The few scholars who have started to write about this have clearly had the mudra explained to them by a qualified practitioner. In recent years, some of the high lamas, including Lama Gangchen, have begun to open the Tantric traditions a bit more, and this is an amazing opportunity to correct some of the misconceptions that exist in the scholarly literature.

The second unwarranted assumption that every scholar of Borobudur that I know of has made - with the obvious exception of Lama Caroline - is that if Borobudur is a Tantric mandala, then it must be a single mandala focused on a single central deity and drawn from a single Tantric text or cycle of texts. As I've said earlier, I find the academic attempts to match Borobudur with other single mandalas to be generally unconvincing. There is always something that does not match, and a strained attempt to explain why. If we assume instead that Borobudur is comprehensive - that it is not focused solely on a single deity but built instead to foster a variety of yidam practices - then we would look for the match in a fundamentally different way. What makes Lama Gangchen's interpretation of Borobudur so compelling for me as a scholar, is that his vision of it as an “ocean of mandalas” that incorporates the practices of at least three Anuttarayoga Tantra texts, leads to a much more precise and convincing match. You do not have to fudge it; it actually works. It solves a number of puzzles that academics have struggled with from the beginning.

For example: why are there 72 Buddha statues in latticed stupas on the top levels? Until now, scholars have tried to answer this question with reference to the Vajradhatu and Garbhadhatu mandalas of Japanese Shingon. Now, this is a plausible way to approach the problem because the Shingon tradition is a Japanese Tantric tradition and could, through a series of historical connections, preserve elements of the Tantric teachings of Borobudur. But in the articles that I have seen, the authors begin with the Vajradhatu mandala, which has 36 figures arranged in sub-mandalas in a 9-square grid. So right away, it looks completely different from the top of Borobudur, where the figures are arranged in three concentric rings. Next, the articles argue for one reason or another that the 36 figures of the Vajradhatu mandala are doubled on Borobudur, resulting in the 72 Buddha statues in the latticed stupas. But even if the reason given for doubling the number makes some sense, the Buddha statues on Borobudur are not arranged in a way that suggests 36 x 2. Rather, they are arranged in rings of 32, 24, and 16.

Lama Gangchen's vision, as I understand it, is that each ring corresponds to a different Highest Yoga Tantra in which that particular number is highly significant. So, for example, as you know, the middle ring - the highest one that we've been able to access in these last few days - is related to the Chakrasamvara Tantra, in which the 24 outer and inner sacred places are an essential part of the practice. The other rings match up to other Highest Yoga Tantras in a similar way. This is simply a much better match for the configuration that we see on the upper terraces of Borobudur. I do not know if this is part of Lama Gangchen's teaching or not. [To Lama Michel and Lama Caroline:] You can let me know, since you are here, but it also occurs to me that we might be able to explain why the uppermost ring of stupas has square holes rather than the diamond-shaped ones that the stupas on the lower two rings have. The change of shape could indicate that the relevant practice develops the Clear Light and the Illusory Body equally, rather than emphasizing one realization over the other.

*Lama Michel:* I have not heard Lama Gangchen say that, but it makes sense.

*Julie Gifford:* So that is in my mind and may not be correct. Also, just as an aside: Lama Caroline, am I correct in thinking that there are 72,000 channels in the internal, subtle body?



*Lama Caroline:* Yes.

*Julie Gifford:* So, there is a 72 for you, which also helps to explain why the top of the mandala might be about Completion Stage practice. The Completion Stage works with the inner channels and chakras, so you would expect to have some reference to them at the top of Borobudur if it was built with those practices in mind. That reference might be a fairly subtle one - 72 (x 1,000).



*Lama Michel:* Or, the rest of the channels branch out from there.

*Julie Gifford:* Yes. We could also say that another question that scholars have had is: why is there no identifiable deity at the center of the Borobudur mandala? For example, if you are looking at the Chakrasamvara mandala, then you will see Chakrasamvara in the middle. This is what scholars expect to see; they expect to be able to look at Borobudur and be able to see in the center the deity to whom the mandala is dedicated. But instead, we do not have that. This may just be because the central stupa was looted, and we just do not know what was in there. But it could also be because the architects wanted to leave the monument open for a variety of what we could call “imputations.” Whatever deity you might be practicing - whatever ring you are dealing with most directly - then you impute that deity in the center. So, the indeterminate center makes it more user-friendly for a variety of different yidam practices, since it is clear that they wanted this to be comprehensive. You do not build something like that and then think that you will build another one for this other deity; there's not the time and resources to do that. It makes sense to me that the top might be a little bit fill-in-the-blank: Insert your deity here.

Another problem is that scholars have had trouble figuring out is how the Buddha figures at the top of the monument might fit with the Buddha figures of the galleries in a single mandala. We are all familiar with the five-Buddha mandala, but if we consider all the Buddha statues on Borobudur together, there are six different mudras. Plus, some scholars also count the “unfinished Buddha” found in the central stupa as part of the mandala. So we would need to find a mandala with six, or possibly seven, different Buddhas. But what if the space is divided into two, so that you are doing Generation Stage practices in the galleries and Completion Stage practices at the top? In that case, you might not have quite the same set of difficulties. I'd like to look into this more carefully before I say more about it.

I would like to say that at the end of July, an academic conference is scheduled, entitled "Borobudur: The Unanswered Questions," to be held here at Borobudur. I am happy to announce that Lama Caroline has been invited to speak, and I look forward to hearing much more about Lama Gangchen's teachings from her at that time. There is going to be an opportunity to present Lama Gangchen's teachings there, and I am thrilled to be a part of that. I am also looking forward to revising my own scholarly work in light of what I am learning now. I'd like to conclude by saying that I rejoice in the incredible merit of this sangha, that has brought you to the right place, at the right time, to learn about Borobudur from an amazing master. May we all continue to put the teachings into practice for the benefit of all sentient beings. Thank you.



*Lama Caroline:* Regarding the Vajrasattvas in the latticed stupas: In what we call early Buddhism - that means early Tibetan Buddhism/late Indian Buddhism - Vajrasattva is what we now consider to be like Vajradhara. Vajradhara for us is the Tantric form of awakening - Buddha Shakyamuni's form. And so in that early period, actually that was Vajrasattva, and in the Nyingmapa Tantras and the other Tantras, it is very much that Vajrasattva is showing the highest form of enlightenment. So, there are many Vajrasattvas showing Tantric enlightenment, and then there are many manifestations of these different deities. I think they put everything all the same so we could then do many different practices. Just my opinion.

*Julie Gifford:* That is another way of putting it; that is great. We should make sure to say that!

*Lama Michel:* One other aspect, just sharing: One aspect for me on a personal level is very clear. It is very important the work that you do in order to make it so that other people can read and understand better the meaning of Borobudur. One thing for us as practitioners: who cares what other people think or not, they will just follow their practice. Even if you believe this is just a mandala of one deity and nothing more - if it works for you, that is fine! But it is important to have this, how to say? Rinpoche has been doing amazing work of understanding the Mandala and I think very grateful that people like you can help to put it into words that a greater community of international academics and so on can actually understand it. You are perhaps using different words, but we need this new translation also.

*Julie Gifford:* Well it is really in my heart to do that; I would love to do that.



*Lama Michel:* One thing only, regarding the part that for me from a personal level it is very clear that when we go through the practice .... There was a question that I brought to Trijang Rinpoche, because it is my own perception and I never saw it written anywhere, but it is my own understanding. Borobudur shows me this very clearly, and it is connected to what you were saying before. When we go into Tantric practices, we start first with the Generation Stage, which is basically a moment in which we are changing our own ordinary appearance and the grasping at that ordinary appearance. This is the first level, but it is still on a sort of gross level. Then, as we go to the Completion Stage with empowerments, we start first with the Vase empowerment.

The Vase empowerment is divided into 6 parts (5 + 1).

The first 5 are the Dhyani Buddhas as we go here. And the part of the vase empowerment is actually purifying and transforming the 5 aggregates, which are the basis of the identity of self. While the Vajra Master empowerment is actually having an identity: "I am the union of the 5 Dhyani Buddhas." So basically, it is like first you change and purify the basis of imputation, then you create the correct imputation of self in the Vajra Master empowerment, which is still on not gross, but still somehow on the gross level. When we go into the Secret empowerment, it is about basically dealing with our subtle energies. We have the male energy, the female energy, and then there is the absorption of the male and female together. So, bringing up to Clear Light, which is the Word empowerment, the union of Clear Light and Illusory Body, which means a very subtle state of mind and body. This is also being shown on Borobudur: it starts with the gross and goes to the more subtle. But basically, it is a way of purifying and transforming ourselves - especially our ordinary appearance - from a gross level, to a subtle, and then a very subtle level. That is the process that the whole thing goes through. Because when we go through this empowerment and so on, it is important to understand what is behind the symbology.

So, if we look from this perspective - that actually it is a process of first changing our external, more gross level - that is why we need so much form and shape. Because we need to symbolize things that have no particular shape - the 5 Dhyani Buddhas, for example. But as we go deeper, it is more and more without form. We are actually talking here about the very subtle body and mind. So when we get to the center of the Stupa, which is when we think about the 72 + 1, it is precisely about the central channel and then all the other channels that surround it. The more you go deeper into it, the less you need shape; the more you are just entering into the very subtle state of Dharmakaya which goes beyond form. In a way I would say that the top part of Borobudur is showing this process of the Word empowerment, which is actually beyond form. I would base this possibility, as you stated, that it is like a multi-use - you can put whatever deity, which I agree also, but also there is another way that is also showing that as you go deeper, you go beyond the need of form. The state of the Dharmakaya is actually beyond that. This is my own perception.

*Julie Gifford:* Well, you will be happy to hear, then, that a version of that is already in the scholarly literature. They do not explain it by talking about Completion Stage practices, but it is very clear in the scholarly literature that people accept that the central stupa is really about the Dharmakaya, and about dissolving into that on the way up, and emanating out of it on the way down. So that is there, but to explain it in terms of Highest Yoga Tantra is a bit more, and yes, that part needs to be there.

*Lama Michel:* The central one and the 72 needs to be very clear.

*Lama Caroline:* Also, Lama Michel, previously there was a big channel that went 37 meters down, by the way, that has been cemented off. The stupa central channel has a chamber inside and there is a long-life channel that goes all the way to the bottom. When the Dutch and British found it, there was a hole in the side of the top stupa; it was open. This channel was already emptied - they found some empty relic boxes at the bottom. Then when they reconstructed it, they cemented it over like a capping well because they were really worried that someone would fall down it. Therefore, this shaft does represent the central channel.

*Julie Gifford:* Maybe I can take this opportunity to say that when I spoke, I think it was last year, at Harvard, I knew some of these things already. I had acquired some information from one of the monks who regularly