

Helping At The Time Of Death

by Lama Kathy Wesley, based on sources as quoted. Last revised 11/20/99

Ways to Practice for People Who Are Dying

From Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche (from his 10-Day teaching, 1999):

If there is a deity that you practice regularly (such as Chenrezig, Amitabha, Tara, etc) visualize this deity above the crown of the head of the person who is dying.

As the person is dying, visualize that the dying person's consciousness leaves the dying person's body through the top of the dying person's head and goes into the heart of that deity, merging with that deity completely.

Do this visualization again and again, while quietly saying the mantra of the deity to yourself and gently touching the crown of the dying person's head.

From Bokar Rinpoche's book, *Chenrezig, Lord of Love*:

When doing the meditation for a sick or dead person, think that light coming from Chenrezig's heart extends out to the person, relieves this person of suffering, purifies faults and karmic veils, and brings happiness.

"In this case, one can visualize Chenrezig above one's head or in space. At the end of the meditation, one imagines that Chenrezig's body melts into the body of the sick or dead person and their bodies, speech and minds become one."

Things to Do After Someone Has Died

From Tim Wolf, Hartford KTC

"Sue Palotti, a member of Hartford KTC, recently told me about her request to Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche and Bardor Rinpoche for information about what our sangha can and should do when a member, someone in their family, or a friend dies.

They told her that when a non-Buddhist dies, having the sangha dedicate the merit of individual and group practice is very good. Group Amitabha and Chenrezig practice were also mentioned. They also told her that recitation of the longer forms of the Amitabha and Chenrezig mantras were particularly good to do. She was told that the third day after the person died is a very beneficial time to do something.

Amitabha Long Mantra

NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA NAMO BHAGAWATAY
AMITHABHAYA TATHAGATAYA ARHATAY SAMYAK
SAMBUDDHAYA TAYATA OM AMITAY AMITOBHAWAY
AMITA SAMBHAWAY AMITA BITRENTAY AMITA GAMINI
GAGANAKIRTI KARAY SARVA KALESHA KSHA YAM KARI SOHA

Chenrezik Long Mantra

NAMO RATNA TRAYAYA NAMO ARYA JNANA SAGARA
BEROTSANA BAYUHA RADZAYA TATHAGATAYA ARHATEH
SAMYAK SAMBUDDHAYA NAMA SARWA TATHAGATEBEH
ARHATBAY SAMYAK SAMBUDDHEBEH NAMA ARYA
AWALOKITESHROYA BODHISATOYA MAHASATOYA
MAHAKARUNIKAYA TAYATA OM DHARA DHARA DHIRI DHIRI
DHURU DHURU EETAH WEETAH TSALEH TSALEH
TRATSALEH TRATSALEH KUSUME KUSAMA WAREY
EELEH MEELEH TSEETEHDZOLA MAPANAYA SOHA

From Lama Kathy Wesley:

Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche has said that on the 7-day anniversaries of the death (for example, if the person dies on a Saturday, for each Saturday afterward, until the end of 49 days) it's particularly good to do prayers for the deceased.

Khenpo Rinpoche also said that if people want to send money to the retreatants at the Three-Year Retreat Center at Karme Ling and request prayers or lamps dedicated to the deceased, it's very meritorious. When lamps are offered, the name of the person is placed next to that lamp on the shrine for the number of days that the lamp is offered. This name also is read before Mahakala puja each day that a lamp has been offered. To request prayers and lamps, write a note to the Karme Ling treasurer and send money along with your request (checks payable to Karme Ling). Your note should include the name of the person for whom you are requesting lamps, and whether you want lamps in the men's building, the women's building, or both. If you want lamps in just one building, the cost is \$1 per lamp per day. For both buildings, send \$2 per lamp per day.

Karma Lodro
c/o Karme Ling
315 Retreat Road
Delhi, NY 13753-9304

Short Prayer to Be Reborn in Dewachen

E MA HO
NGO TSAR SANG GYE NANG WA TA YE DANG
YE SU JO WO TUK JE CHEN PO DANG
YON DU SEM PA TU CHEN TOB NAM LA
SANG GYE CHANG SEM PA ME KOR GYI KHOR
DE KYI NGO TSAR PAK DU ME PA YI
DE WA CHEN SHE JA WAY SHING KHAM DER
DAK NI DI NE TSE PO GYUR MA TAK
KYE WA SHEN GYI BAR MA CHO PA RU
DE RU KYE NE NANG TAY SHAL TON SHOG
DE KE DA GYI MON LAM TAP PA DI
CHOK CHU SANG GYE CHANG SEM TAM CHE KYI
GEK ME DRUP PAR JIN GYI LAB TU SOL
TAYATA PENTSA DRIYA AWA BODHA NA YE SO HA

*In this pure realm known as De wa chen
There is undefineable splendor and bliss
Here is Amitabha the Lord of Boundless Light
On the right is Chenrezig, the Lord of Great Compassion
On the left is Vajrapani, the powerful bodhisattva
Here is the whole retinue of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.
When I pass from this world,
May I be transferred immediately
Without taking rebirth in any other realm,
To this Pure Land,
May I see the face of Amitabha!
By the power of this prayer and
the blessings of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas
In the ten directions,
May this be fulfilled without any hindrance.*

