

# A Buddhist Wedding Ceremony

## Introduction

*Notes from the creator of this ceremony that you might like to include in your introduction of this ceremony to guests.*

- A few words about Buddhist marriages
  - Buddhism is a path of transformation of one's inner potential
  - It is a path dedicated to serving others, helping them awaken their potential
  - Marriage is the vehicle to practice serving others. It is a practice ground.
  - Love is wishing others happiness
  - Marriage is the equal commitment to the happiness of your partner, toward their awakening.
  - Our inner potential is developed through taking on challenges, not just through joy.
  - We need people in order to practice compassion
- Since their marriage is dedicated toward the happiness of all living beings, those gathered here are the representatives of all living beings.
- Marriage is not usually performed by monks/nuns (if the ceremony is being performed by a monk or nun)
- The creator of this ceremony was married by Lama Yeshe and put this ceremony together in order to further this lineage.

# *Buddhist Wedding Prayer*

Today we promise to dedicate ourselves completely to each other, with body, speech, and mind.

In this life, in every situation, in wealth or poverty, in health or sickness, in happiness or difficulty, we will work to help each other perfectly.

The purpose of our relationship will be to attain enlightenment by perfecting our kindness and compassion toward all sentient beings.

*Lama Thubten Yeshe  
December 1979*

## *Vows*

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, are happy today not only because they can share the joy of their love for each other with friends and family, but also because they have the opportunity to express their aspirations for the future.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, do you pledge to help each other to develop your hearts and minds, cultivating compassion, generosity, ethics, patience, enthusiasm, concentration and wisdom as you age and undergo the various ups and downs of life and to transform them into the path of love, compassion, joy and equanimity?

*“We do”*

Recognizing that the external conditions in life will not always be smooth and that internally your own minds and emotions will sometimes get stuck in negativity. Do you pledge to see all these circumstances as a challenge to help you grow, to open your hearts, to accept yourselves, and each other; and to generate compassion for others who are suffering? Do you pledge to avoid becoming narrow, closed or opinionated, and to help each other to see various sides of situations?

*“We do”*

Understanding that just as we are a mystery to ourselves, each other person is also a mystery to us. Do you pledge to seek to understand yourselves, each other, and all living beings, to examine your own minds continually and to regard all the mysteries of life with curiosity and joy?

*“We do”*

Do you pledge to preserve and enrich your affection for each other, and to share it with all beings? To take the loving feelings you have for one another and your vision of each other's potential and inner beauty as an example and rather than spiraling inwards and becoming self absorbed, to radiate this love outwards to all beings?

*"We do"*

When it comes time to part, do you pledge to look back at your time together with joy-joy that you met and shared what you have-and acceptance that we cannot hold on to anything forever?

*"We do"*

Do you pledge to remember the disadvantages of ignorance, anger and clinging attachment, to apply antidotes when these arise in your minds, and to remember the kindness of all other beings and your connection to them? Do you pledge to work for the welfare of others, with all of your compassion, wisdom and skill?

*"We do"*

Do you pledge to work to develop the wisdom understanding the relative functioning nature of things and the wisdom knowing their deeper way of existence—that they are empty of inherent existence? And to remember the laws of cause and effect?

*"We do"*

Do you pledge day to day, to be patient with yourselves and others, knowing that change comes slowly and gradually, and to seek inspiration from your teachers not to become discouraged?

*"We do"*

Do you pledge to continuously strive to remember your own Buddha nature, as well as the Buddha nature of all living beings? To maintain the awareness that all things are temporary, and to remain optimistic that you can achieve your greatest potential and lasting happiness.

*"We do"*

## *Exchanging of Rings*

“The wedding ring is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual bond which unites two loyal hearts in partnership.”

## *Pronouncement*

“By the power vested in me through the wishes of Bonnie and Robert, as well as the blessing of the lineage of their Spiritual Friends, I now pronounce you Husband and Wife.” (*Offer katags to the couple, or one long katag over both of them together*)

## *Presenting and Congratulating the Couple*

“Ladies and Gentlemen please join me in congratulating Mr. and Mrs.  
\_\_\_\_\_.”

## *Colophon*

Created by John Karuna Cayton for the wedding ceremony of Bonnie Le Boeuf and Robert Baptist, May 2002. Inspired by Lama Thubten Yeshe when he performed the wedding ceremony for Karuna and Pam Cayton.