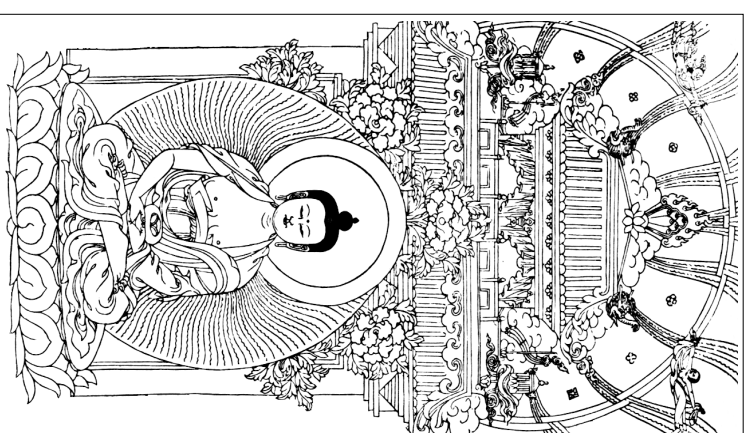


Amitaybha Phowa



Composed by Lama Thubten Yeshe



Amitabha Buddha
Artist unknown.

Amitabha Phowa



Contained herein is the technical method for transferring the consciousness to Guru Buddha Amitabha's Pristine Realm.

Preliminaries

Clean the place of meditation, set up an image of Amitabha, make many offerings, and face west (or visualize that you are doing so).

Refuge and Bodhicitta Motivation

Take refuge in the Triple Gem and generate a bodhicitta motivation while reciting the following prayer with single-pointed concentration and devotion.

I go for refuge until I am enlightened
To the Buddha, the Dharma, and the supreme assembly.
By my merit of giving and other perfections,
May I become a buddha to benefit all sentient beings. (3x)

Sang gyä chhö dang tshog kyi chhog nam la
jang chhub bar du dag ni kyab su chhi
Dag gi jin sog gyi päi sö nam kyi
Dro la phän chhir sang gyä drub par shog (3x)

The Four Immeasurable Thoughts

May all sentient beings have happiness and its cause.
May all sentient beings be free of suffering and its cause.
May all sentient beings attain that happiness without limits.
May all sentient beings be free of attachment and aversion, holding
some close and others distant.

Visualizing Guru Buddha Amitabha

Visualize the following with single-pointed clarity.

Above my crown on a lotus and a moon and sun throne sits Guru Buddha Amitabha in the vajra pose. His holy body is radiant and ruby red. He has one face and two hands that rest in the gesture of single-pointed contemplation. He holds a nectar bowl filled with the elixir of immortality and wears the saffron robes of moral purity. His crown is marked by a shining white OM, his throat by a radiant red AH, and his heart by a deep blue HUM. From the HUM in his heart boundless light shines forth filling all of space. This light penetrates especially Amitabha's Western Pristine Realm, invoking Buddha Amitabha, the eight great lion-like bodhisattvas, and the vast assembly of male and female bodhisattvas who reside in the Pristine Realm of the West. These all enter into Guru Amitabha's crown chakra, descend his central channel, and mingle with his heart. He and they are unified and of one essence.

Hold this thought with single-pointed concentration.

The Seven-Limb Prayer *Optional when short of time.*

This practice purifies the mind of poisonous imprints and their suffering results and empowers the mind with wholesome energy by cultivating extensive virtuous imprints and the dedication of their good results to the ultimate aim, the supreme happiness of enlightenment for all sentient beings.

I prostrate with body, speech and mind in heartfelt faith and admiration.

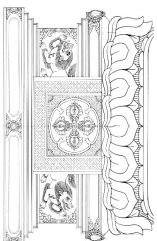
I make material offerings and fill the boundless sky with billions of exquisite offerings mentally transformed.

Every evil or deluded action done by me since beginningless time is declared and offered for purification.

I rejoice in all the countless virtuous actions done by ordinary beings and the inconceivable virtuous actions done by superior ones.

Please, Guru Buddha, remain within your present vajra form until samsara is utterly emptied.

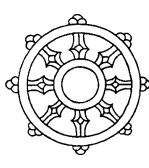
Visualize a jewelled throne marked by a crossed vajra.



And turn the wheel of the perfect Dharma for the sake of sentient beings.

Visualize a golden 1000-spoked wheel.

I dedicate all past, present, and future merits to the full enlightenment of all sentient beings.



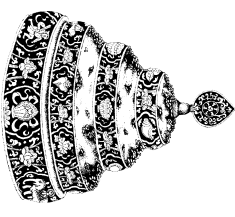
Go sum gū pāi go nā chhag tshāl lo
Ngö sham yi trül chhō trin ma lü bül
Thog me nā sag dig tung than chā shag
Kye phag ge wa nam la je yi rang
Khor wa ma tong bar du leg zhug nā
Dro la chhō kyī khor lo kor wa dang
Dag zhān ge nam jang chhub chhen por ngo

Offering the Universal Mandala

Optional when short of time.

This ground, anointed with perfume, strewn with flowers
Adorned with Mount Meru, four continents, the sun, and the moon
I imagine this as a buddha-field and offer it.
May all living beings enjoy this pure land!

Sa zhi pö kyī jug shing me tog tram
Ri rab ling zhi nyi dā gyān pa di
Sang gyā zhing du mig te ūl wa yi
Dro kün nam dag zhing la chō par shog



IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYATAYAMI

Include the following requests:

May I be able to practice phowa at the time of death and to be able to do this for others;
May all sentient beings will be liberated from the suffering of the lower realms and be lifted up to higher realms;
And with your hook, please bring me to your blissful realm.



Prostrations*Optional when short of time.*

Guru, invincible one beyond all evil, endowed with all virtues, tathagata, foe destroyer, fully complete and perfect buddha, magnificent king, Guru Amitabha of boundless light, I prostrate, make offerings, and take refuge in you. Please bestow upon me your countless blessings. (21x)

La ma tön pa chom dân dä de zhin shég pa dra chom pa yang dag
par dzog päi sang gyä päi gyäl wa lama ö pag me la chhag tsäl lo
chhö dö kyab su chhi wo jin gyi lab tu söl (21x)

Then in heartfelt devotion I concentrate single-pointedly on Guru Amitabha. From his holy body five-colored nectar light streams down through my central channel. From here it flows through all the other channels of my body completely filling it with blissful nectar-light. All hindrances, such as illness and an untimely death, are completely purified. All negative forces utterly disappear, especially the grasping at mundane existence. The power to be successful in transferring consciousness and taking rebirth in the Pristine Realm of the West [Skt. *Sukhavati*/Tib. *Deachen*] is granted. My body becomes crystal clear and translucent like a rainbow.

Prayer of Bodhicitta Motivation and Dedication

All past, present, and future gurus, buddhas, and bodhisattvas dwelling in the ten directions of space, especially Buddha Amitabha and the eight great lion-like bodhisattvas, please pay attention to me. Wishing to liberate all mother sentient beings from the vast ocean of samsaric suffering and to lead them all to the supreme joy of full enlightenment, I realize that I myself must become a buddha. Thus, I determine to take rebirth in the Pristine Realm of the West and to hear teachings directly from Buddha Amitabha himself. Therefore, by the force of all my past, present, and future merits collected together and the immutable promise of all the tathagatas, and by the power of wisdom and absolute truth, may I, at the very moment of death, take immediate and spontaneous rebirth upon a fully opened lotus flower face to face with Buddha Amitabha's shining form. May I obtain without difficulty the ability to hear teachings directly from the mouth of Buddha Amitabha. May I develop the six transcending perfections to their ultimate completion, and may I accomplish the ten stages of the bodhisattva's path. May I attain all the wisdom, love, and

power of myriads of buddhas in countless buddha-fields more numerous than all the atoms of the boundless universe.

With clarity, visualize the following:

The consciousness principle (the very subtle mind of clear light) is seen as a brilliantly bright white-red energy drop in the center of my heart channel-wheel inside the central channel. From here I can look upward into Guru Amitabha's heart, the wisdom of non-duality, which is vividly clear like the surface of a mirror, yet having a five-colored radiance. Guru Amitabha, looking down and seeing the radiant energy-drop in my heart says, "Please, my son (or daughter), arise." With joyful expectation, I look forward to going.

Then recite the following:

Since time without beginning I have been in constant confusion and have been circling in samsaric existence. Bound by grasping and longing attachment, I have experienced continuing misery. Unless I give up this deluded and grasping mind, no buddhas or bodhisattvas can be of ultimate benefit to me. Nothing in samsara is certain except that all mundane pleasures die away. This grasping and ignorant mind is the noose that binds me to the relentless turning of the wheel of conditioned existence. I yearn to go to Amitabha's Pristine Realm where even the word 'suffering' does not exist and from where I can never fall again into samsara's misery. With the power of perfect conviction, I prepare to go and dwell in Amitabha's enlightened realm.

Praise

You are like the sun dispelling all darkness
And the panacea curing all illness and disease.
You are the perfect guide that leads all beings to blissful freedom
By the radiant red hook emanating from your heart.

Prayer for the Time of Death *Optional when short of time.*

At the moment the messenger of death arrives
Please come instantaneously from your Pristine Realm.
Advise me to give up grasping at mundane existence
And invite me to come to your Pristine Realm.

When earth sinks into water
And the mirage-like appearance is perceived,
And my mouth becomes dry and foul-tasting,
Please come and tell me not to be afraid and inspire me with true courage.

When water sinks into fire
And the smoke-like appearance is perceived,
And my tongue gets thick and my speech is lost,
Please show me your shining face and give me solace and peaceful joy.

When fire sinks into air
And the firefly-like appearance is perceived,
And my body heat and the light of my eyes rapidly fade away,
Please come and fill my mind with the sound of Dharma wisdom.

When air sinks into consciousness
And the burning like a butter lamp appearance is perceived,
And my body becomes like the earth and my breathing altogether
ceases,
Please draw me to your pristine realm with the radiant light of your
shining face.

And then may the radiant red hook
Emanating from your pristine heart
Enter my crown, then descend my central channel,
Hook my very subtle clear light mind, and bring it to your Pristine
Realm.

Yet if I must go into the intermediate state by the force of my negative
karma,
May all the buddhas and bodhisattvas rescue me with the power of
Dharma
And inspire me with the pure view that sees all beings as utterly pure,
Hears all sounds as Dharma teaching, and sees all places as your
Pristine Realm.

Then with clarity visualize the following:

From Guru Amitabha's heart a reed of radiant white light descends to
my crown and forms there an indestructible and cohesive bond. There is
now an unobstructed passageway between my very subtle mind, the

white-red clear light energy-drop in the center of my heart, and the clear
mirror-like heart of Guru Amitabha. Then suddenly a radiant hook of
red light emanates from Guru Amitabha's heart, descends through the
passageway, and securely hooks the delicate and pure clear light energy-
drop in my heart.

Or you can visualize that Guru Amitabha's heart draws the energy-drop
upward just as a magnet attracts iron filings.
Contemplate this with single-pointed concentration.

The Prayer for Accomplishment

Guru Buddha Amitabha, essence of the perfect truth of the Triple Gem,
courageous one who liberates all sentient beings from the bondage of
mundane existence and delivers them to the supremely blissful realm of
buddhahood, please release me and all others from the difficulties and
fears of the death process and the intermediate state of the after-death
plane. Easily guide me to your wisdom heart by inspiring me to thor-
oughly renounce the grasping at mundane existence and to achieve suc-
cess in transferring my consciousness. You are my only liberator. Please
with great compassion take me to your Pristine Realm.

The Technical Method

Now with crystal clarity and vivid concentration, visualize your very subtle
mind of clear light in the form of the very blissful and radiant white-red
energy-drop in your heart, the reed of radiant white light, and Guru
Amitabha's clear and radiant heart. See the energy-drop as the traveller,
the white light reed as the path, and Guru Amitabha's heart as the desti-
nation.

Then reverse the flow of the downward-moving energy-winds and bring
the other energy-winds into and up through the central channel by means
of holding the vase breath. As you hold the breath, focus your concentra-
tion single-pointedly upon the very blissful white-red energy-drop in your
heart. When you feel that it is time to go, the very subtle mind, which is
lighter than a feather, determines to go to Guru Amitabha's heart. As you
exhale, recite the mantra HIC.

Your consciousness as the blissful energy-drop, by the force of concen-
tration and the upward flowing energy-winds, flies like an arrow to

meet and mingle with the clear, non-dual, and radiant wisdom of Guru Amitabha's heart. Remain there in single-pointed concentration for as long as you like.

When you feel that it is time to return the consciousness principle to the body, visualize the white-red energy-drop in the center of the clear and radiant space of Guru Amitabha's heart. As you bring the energy-drop back to your heart, recite the mantra KAAH.

For the first 3 repetitions, visualize the drop going to Amitabha's heart, then 21 times to your crown only, then 3 more times to Amitabha's heart.

Amitabha then transforms into Amitayus. As you recite the mantra of Amitayus (OM AMARAN JIVAN TYE SVAHA) visualize the following:

From Guru Amitayus' nectar bowl an inexhaustible flow of the clear and blissful elixir of immortality streams down my central channel and completely fills my vajra body. It renews the life force and bestows the power of longevity.

Then the reed, lotus, moon, sun, and Guru Amitabha all melt into light and dissolve into my central channel. Guru Amitabha and my heart-sense become indestructibly one. My crown is sealed by a vajra seal.

Think: I have received the undying life realization.

Then, if there is time, repeat the prayer of bodhicitta motivation and dedication.

Dedication

Through the merits of these virtuous actions

May I quickly attain the enlightened state of Amitabha

And lead all living beings, without exception,

Into that enlightened state.

May I and all the sentient beings, due to our merits of the three times, be born from a beautiful lotus in the joyful pure mandala of the conqueror, and may we receive the prediction directly from the Conqueror of Infinite Light.



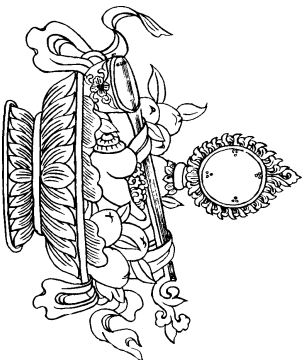
*Amitayus
Artist unknown.*

Colophon:

This technical method for accomplishment was composed on 3 February 1981 at Tushita Retreat Centre by Lama Thubten Yeshe in accordance with the scriptures and oral transmission. It has come about in response to a request by Gelong Stefano Piovella and was originally edited by Ngawang Chotok.

Subsequently, some sections were added by Gelong Pende Hawter for the sake of clarification from an oral commentary by Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

It has been lightly edited and reformatted by Ven. Constance Miller for the FPMT Education Department, November 1997. Revised edition, July 2001.
© FPMT, Inc., 2001



Care of Dharma Books



Dharma books contain the teachings of the Buddha; they have the power to protect against lower rebirth and to point the way to liberation. Therefore, they should be treated with respect – kept off the floor and places where people sit or walk – and not stepped over. They should be covered or protected for transporting and kept in a high, clean place separate from more mundane materials. Other objects should not be placed on top of Dharma books and materials. Licking the fingers to turn pages is considered bad form as well as negative karma. If it is necessary to dispose of written Dharma materials, they should be burned rather than thrown in the trash. When burning Dharma texts, it is taught to first recite a prayer or mantra, such as OM, AH, HUM. Then, you can visualize the letters of the texts (to be burned) absorbing into the AH and the AH absorbing into you, transmitting their wisdom to your mindstream. After that, as you continue to recite OM, AH, HUM, you can burn the texts.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche has recommended that photos or images of holy beings, deities, or other holy objects not be burned. Instead, they should be placed with respect in a stupa, tree, or other high, clean place. It has been suggested to put them into a small structure like a bird house and then seal the house. In this way, the holy images do not end up on the ground.

FPMT Education Department



The aim of the Education Department at FPMT International Office is to serve the needs of Dharma centers and individuals in the area of Tibetan Buddhist educational and spiritual materials. This includes prayers and practice texts, retreat sahanas and other practice materials, a variety of study texts and translations, deity images for meditation, and curricular materials for study programs in FPMT Dharma centers.

One of our principal objectives is to serve as a repository for a wide variety of practice texts primarily within the Gelug tradition, especially those authored or translated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Lama Thubten Yeshe. We work in close collaboration with the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive, Boston, Massachusetts, which serves as a repository for the commentaries and transcripts of teachings by Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Lama Yeshe.

If we can be of service to you in any way, please contact us at:

Education Department
FPMT International Office
125B La Posta Road
Taos, New Mexico 87571 USA
Tel: (505)758-7766
Email: materials@fpmt.org



Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition
Education Services