



The root verses of the six bardos

About the Retreat

On this retreat we will combine meditation practice, study and ritual to enter the world of Padmasambhava, bringing ourselves alive as practitioners in every moment. We will be focusing our practice around the root verses of the six bardos (recommended by Sangharakshita as an insight reflection and the antidote to conceit) reflecting on and reciting these essential teachings. We will be using the retreat context to relax into our experience and learn to see all phenomena as ephemeral, within the great drama of the unfolding of existence.

This retreat is appropriate for people with an established meditation practice within the Triratna Buddhist Community, and basic familiarity with the mindfulness of breathing and the metta bhavana will be assumed, as will some experience of puja and Buddhist ritual. However, the retreat team will also be drawing on other traditional sources and the mythic landscape of Dhanaksoa to support the retreat.

Is there anything special I need to bring?

Loose clothing to meditate in. Warm clothes to be outdoors in.

What can you expect from the programme?

The retreat day will start at 6.30am with a rising bell and there will be a double period of meditation at 7.00am. Mid-morning and afternoon there will be further meditation sessions, which will include some teaching input and short study sessions. The evening will involve meditation, chanting and rituals invoking Padmasambhava.

The retreat will be mostly in silence from the second full day to the last full day (except for teaching / group sessions). There will be an opportunity to discuss your meditation practice with the retreat team individually.

About the retreat team

Amoghavira, Upekshanandi and Nayaka are all members of the Dhanakosa teaching team with many years' experience of leading retreats, and a deep connection with the landscape of Dhanaksoa and Padmasambhava.

Root Verses of the Six Bardos

Now, when the bardo of birth is dawning upon me,
I will abandon laziness for which life has no time,
Enter the undistracted path of study, reflection, and meditation,
Making projections and mind the path, and realize the three Kayas;
Now that I have attained a human body,
There is no time on the path for mind to wander.

Now when the bardo of dreams is dawning upon me,
I will abandon the corpse-like sleep of careless ignorance,
And let my thoughts enter their natural state without distraction;
Controlling and transforming dreams in luminosity,
I will not sleep like any animal,
But completely unify sleep and practice.

Now when the bardo of samadhi-meditation dawns upon me,
I will abandon the crowd of distractions and confusions,
And rest in the boundless state without grasping or disturbance;
Firm in the two practices: visualization and completion,
At this time of meditation, one-pointed, free from activity,
I will not fall into the power of confused emotions.

Now when the bardo of the moment before death dawns upon me,
I will abandon all grasping, yearning, and attachment,
Enter undistracted into clear awareness of the teaching,
And eject my consciousness into the space of unborn mind;
As I leave this compound body of flesh and blood,
I will know it to be a transitory illusion.

Now when the bardo of dharmata dawns upon me,
I will abandon all thoughts of fear and terror,
I will recognize whatever appears as my projection
And know it to be a vision of the bardo;
Now that I have reached this crucial point,
I will not fear the peaceful and wrathful ones,
My own projections.

Now when the bardo of becoming dawns upon me,
I will concentrate my mind one-pointedly,
And strive to prolong the results of good karma,
Close the womb-entrance and think of resistance;
This is the time when perseverance and pure thought are needed,
Abandon jealousy and meditate on the Guru with his consort.