

Copies are available from

The Bardo Group

Kagyu Samye Dzong, Cape Town

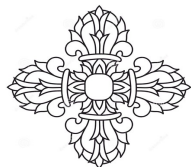
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[Revised and updated June 2019]



When I go...

*What I would like my family & friends
to do when I die*

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature & Witnesses

“The number one thing is that your death should not become a problem for others. That is the first thing, very simple.

After you die it shouldn't become the opening of Pandora's box. When you are about to die, before you die, you should turn every stone so that nothing negative or problematic will happen to the living as a result of your death. That is very important. All of us are going to die one day, and that one day can be anytime, we will never know. But all of us here are definitely going to do our best to live as long as possible because we are Buddhist and we believe in the precious human life, yet we don't know when our death will happen, So always do your best to make things clear and in order so that if you die tonight there is no Pandora's box left behind.

A Pandora's box (I'm not sure exactly what it is, it is not a Tibetan thing, it is a Western thing) is a box that when you open it all kinds of terrible things come out. It is something like a magicians' box or a cursed box and all kinds of unmanageable things come out of it. So if we do not prepare for our death, our children, our relatives, all kinds of people will fight with each other. That is the number one thing that will happen , everybody wants to grab what is left behind and that is a terrible thing, that shouldn't happen. Then many other things which only you know about, whatever there is to be taken care of, should be taken care of.

Therefore, write a will, call all your friends and make everything clear, so after your death the living people will not fight with each other”.

12th Tai Situ Rinpoche in the book *Primordial Essence Manifests*.

Signed at _____ on this _____ day of _____ 20 ____ in the presence of the under-signed witnesses, who have signed their names in my presence and in the presence of each other.

_____ Print name: _____

AS WITNESSES:

1) _____ Print name: _____

2) _____ Print name: _____

PLEASE NOTE: This document serves to convey your wishes, however it is extremely important that you ensure you have discussed your choices with your next-of-kin or significant others so there can be no confusion at the time of your death.

Lodgement of this Document

I have lodged a copy of this document with :

1. **Next of Kin:**
Contact details :
1. **Friend/Family member:**
Contact details :
2. **Family Doctor:**
Contact details :
3. **Spiritual Organisation:**
Contact details :
4. **Other:**.....
Contact details :
.....

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Service Arrangements

I would like the service to be held at :

.....

Person to officiate, if available :

.....

Alternatively:

My preferences are:

Readings/Poems:

.....

Pujas/Songs/Music :

.....

*Flowers: or
donations to:*

Pall Bearers :

.....

.....

Other:

.....

*(It is important that my loved ones left behind are comfortable with
all arrangements)*

Personal Details

Full Names:

Residential Address:.....

.....

Spiritual Belief:.....

Congregation / Centre:

Contact Details:

Next-of-Kin:

Contact Details:

.....

Spiritual belief of Next of Kin:

Will & Testament lodged with:

.....

Other information:

.....

.....



Letter to my Family

It is important to discuss your wishes with family, however if these relationships are difficult it may be beneficial to write a letter to be read after your death.

Example:

To my family,

In order to spare you unnecessary worry and difficult decisions with regard to arrangements at the time of my death, I have given the matter much thought and have recorded my preferences.

I ask that you abide by my wishes to the best of your ability.

You may not agree with some of the decisions I have made but please understand that this is an important time and my choices are based on my personal beliefs.

Know that I love and cherish all of you. I thank you for being a part of my life even if I did not always make my gratitude clear.

With love and affection

Information on how to initiate these difficult conversations can be found at the following website: <https://theconversationproject.org>

Financial Provisions

I have made provision for the funeral costs with:

Company:

.....

Policy/Contract No's:

.....

Other Source:

.....

.....

.....

My will has been lodged with :.....

.....

.....

.....

Funeral Arrangements

I wish to be buried

Cemetery:

Town:

I have a reserved grave. Yes / No Grave No:

There is/isn't an existing memorial stone on the grave.

Inscription to read :

.....

I wish to be cremated

My cremated remains are to be :

.....

.....

I have made other burial arrangements

.....

.....

.....

.....

It is my wish that my body is disposed of in the most environmentally friendly way available at the time of my death.

My Final Days

1. Unless I am totally incapacitated, please always first ask for my opinion before deciding on the best course of action in all things concerning my welfare.
2. Try to communicate with me even if this is difficult. It is my understanding that even in a coma, awareness and hearing are possible.
3. If possible do not leave me to die alone, let there be a witness to my passing; a quiet, loving presence.
4. If my last days are spent in hospital or a hospice please try to arrange a private room for my last hours.

Concerning Medical Treatment

While I understand that **Living Wills** are not legally binding, I would like my wishes to be known by both my family and medical care providers. It is hoped this will spare my family the anguish of having to make difficult decisions on my behalf.

Important Note

It cannot be stressed enough that you discuss your wishes for this time, with your family and next-of-kin as they will be tasked with making your wishes known, when you are not able to do this.

Legally your next of kin is:

1. Spouse
2. Descendants (i.e. children, male first)
3. Ascendants (i.e. parents, male first)
4. Ascendants descendants (i.e. siblings)

Advance Directives

(Please indicate those which are applicable)

- ☐ I have signed a '**Living Will**' which is lodged with:
- ☐ I have not signed a '**Living Will**' but wish the following decisions around treatment to be known and any decisions made to be in keeping with the underlying ethos.
- ☐ Life-support equipment like ventilators and other costly medical techniques to be used prudently and **only when there is a reasonable chance of a meaningful recovery** and not simply to delay the moment of my death.
- ☐ In the event of terminal illness or where there is no imminent and reasonable chance of recovery, I request that no artificial means are used to sustain or prolong my life.
- ☐ Should the above occur, it is my wish that death be allowed to take place naturally in a humane and acceptable way, through the withholding or withdrawal of treatment. It is my understanding that such action will not affect any life insurance policy, and is accepted by major religions worldwide.
- ☐ I do not want any medication that may render me confused or incapable of clear thought.
- ☐ I reserve the right to change my mind on this matter.

Organ Donation

In the event of my being certified brainstem dead and considered suitable for organ donation, please use the following organs:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cornea | <input type="checkbox"/> Kidneys |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heart | <input type="checkbox"/> Liver |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lungs | <input type="checkbox"/> Skin & bone |

Final Arrangements

(Please indicate those which are applicable)

- ☐ Play **Bardo Thodol*** before, as I die, and immediately after my death.
- ☐ Ensure my bedside is as calm, quiet and peaceful as possible.
- ☐ My body must be left untouched for **4 hours** after my death. If this is not possible touch the crown of my head first.

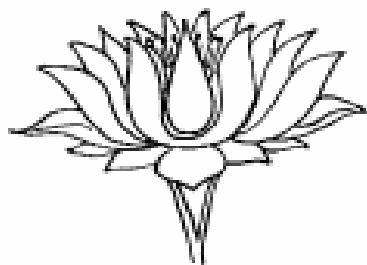
Please contact the **Cape Town Kagyu Samye Dzong** to request the following, if available:

- ☐ A Buddhist practitioner say prayers at my death bed.
- ☐ Samye Ling (Scotland) be informed of my death so prayers can immediately be offered.
- ☐ My body is to be wrapped in a saffron-dyed shroud*
- ☐ Mandalas* to be placed on my body and coffin, 4 hours after death.
- ☐ An Amitabha puja ** to be performed on my behalf.
- ☐ Chenrezig pujas ** to be performed on my behalf.
- ☐ A 12 hour vigil ** to be performed on my behalf.

** In the Bardo Kit, purchased from Kagyu Samye Dzong, Cape Town*

** **Free** service for members or can be provided for a fee for non-members
(Contact Kagyu Samye Dzong for charges)*

- ☐ My body must not be buried or cremated until 4 days after death.
- ☐ No embalming to be used, and please ensure an environmentally friendly coffin.



Information for Doctors and Nurses

Information about caring for a Vajrayana Buddhist at the end of life.

Buddhists believe that consciousness continues after the body dies. The first 4 days after death are considered to be particularly important, as this is when the subtle process of mind disengaging from body takes place.

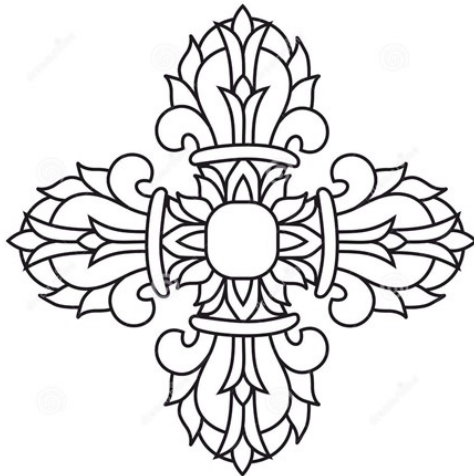
Please consider the following:

- Contact The Bardo Group, Kagyu Samye Dzong Cape Town for prayers to be said if death looks imminent, or as soon as possible after death. Or alternatively:

Phone:)

- If possible do not disturb or move my body during the first four (4) hours after death.
- If my body needs to be disturbed during this time, please touch the crown of my head before touching anywhere else.
- It is very important that a calm, stable, quiet and compassionate environment be maintained around my body at all times during the dying process and immediately after death.
- If an autopsy is required, please ask if this can be postponed for 4 days.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Please contact a member of The Bardo Group at 021 761 2978 or email: capetown@kagyu.org.za



Information for Undertakers

Funeral Information for a Vajrayana Buddhist

Buddhists believe that consciousness continues after the body dies. The first 4 days following death are particularly important, as the subtle process of the mind disengaging from the body takes place during this time.

Please bear the following points in mind:

1. The body must be disturbed as little as possible.
2. Where the body has been washed and dressed, please simply lift it into the coffin and avoid unnecessary contact or movement.
3. If the body does need to be washed, please do the absolute minimum.
4. Where a saffron dyed shroud has been provided, use this to line the coffin and wrap around the body.
5. Keep the paper prayers which have been placed on the body in place, when moving the body. (Same applies to the prayers and photograph placed on the outside of the coffin).
6. Where no specific instruction has been given, please refrigerate the body.
7. Ensure paperwork is completed as quickly as possible if the body is to be taken to a Buddhist centre prior to disposal.
8. Always maintain a stable, calm, quiet and loving attitude when in the presence of the body. Friends and family may want to spend time in the presence of the body; please facilitate this process.
9. Cremation or burial should not take place before 4 days after death.