

THE BOOK OF THE DEAD

Understanding death as a key factor to successful living

1. All source of suffering comes from ignorance of death.
2. Attitudes towards death in our modern culture.
3. The dual mind.
4. Meditation and dream yoga: practices that prepare us for death.
5. Fear of death is related to the lack of Being.
6. The three intermediate states of death.

The six *Bardos* or intermediate states:

- 1- **Intermediate state of living:** begins at the time of birth and continues until the time of death. Offers the opportunity to recognize our actual condition, to adopt a way of life and to engage in the practices that lead to Buddhahood (awakened consciousness).
- 2- **Intermediate state of dreams:** begins from the moment of falling asleep and ends when we awake. Offers the opportunity to recognize the similarity between the illusory nature of dreams and that of our waking state. This practice is cultivated in the context of **dream yoga**, where the ability to maintain awareness during both deep sleep and dreaming is refined.
- 3- **Intermediate state of meditative concentration:** entered during the waking state. Provides the opportunity to cultivate concentration and to achieve stability in meditation, thus prepares for the intermediate state of the time of death.
- 4- **Intermediate state of the time of death:** entered at the time when the process of dying definitely begins, and ends with the onset of the intermediate state of reality. It includes the gradual dissolution of the five elements, associated to the five senses.
- 5- **Intermediate state of Reality:** arises after the intermediate state of the time of death and before the intermediate state of rebirth. Offers the opportunity, based on the practices adopted during one's lifetime, to recognize the natural purity and natural transformative qualities of the ultimate nature of the mind in the form of luminosities, rays, sounds and meditational deities.
- 6- **Intermediate state of Rebirth:** entered after the intermediate state of reality, when the consciousness arises in the form of a mental body, conditioned by the individual's inheritance of past actions. If liberation from cyclic existence is not achieved during this intermediate state, it ends at the moment of conception.