

**When I Go: What I Would Like My Friends and Family to do When I Die**

**How to Use this Document**

This information was compiled in conjunction with the 'When a Buddhist Dies' document. Having considered your choices, it's hoped that this will help you to record your wishes clearly and alleviate anxiety for you and those left behind.

Once completed and signed it can be given to next of kin and copies made for friends, executors, hospital staff etc..

Please consider it as a prototype and use whatever parts of it are suitable for your particular needs and circumstances.



*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. I have recorded my preferences here, which are based on my beliefs as a Buddhist in the Tibetan tradition.*

*The areas highlighted with an asterisk \* indicate aspects that are really important to me and I would ask that you abide by my wishes to the best of your ability. For the rest, they are simply preferences.*

*You may not agree with some of the decisions I have made, but please know that the prayers and spiritual care during the dying process and immediately following death, are believed to be a supremely important time for Buddhists. These are the choices I have made based on my personal beliefs.*

*As I go, know that I love and cherish all of you and thank you for being a part of my life even if I never made that clear enough to you.*

*With love and affection*

*Signature..... Date .....*

**Before the final days**

Unless I am totally incapacitated, please always ask me first before deciding what is best for me.

Do try to communicate with me however difficult this may be. It is my understanding that even in a coma, awareness and hearing are possible.

If at all possible do not leave me to die alone, let there be a witness to my passing, a loving quiet presence.

Please contact my Buddhist Centre to request prayers.

Please ensure that my body is not touched for 4 hours after I die. If this is impossible, or I have agreed to be an organ donor, (see page 5), please make sure that the crown of my head is touched first.

**Prayer arrangements**

When I am dying, or as soon as possible after my death, please contact my Buddhist Centre:

.....  
.....

Please arrange for the following if available (tick where applicable):

- CD of Akong Rinpoche reciting the Bardo prayers, to be played during my last hours
- My bedside to be kept as quiet as possible with minimum disturbance.
- An experienced Buddhist practitioner to say prayers at my death bed.
- Mandala blanket to be placed on my body as soon as possible after my death.
- Prayer dedication at my Buddhist centre.
- Prayers by Lineage Holders.
- Buddhist funeral service (see page 6)
- Amitabha puja on the 49th day following my death.
- I would like to donate £..... for prayers, in addition to fixed costs.

**Organ donation**

I do not want to donate my organs

I want to donate my organs

Please note: If organ donation is requested, please ignore all advice about non-disturbance of my body! Information for nurses caring for a Buddhist in the Tibetan tradition at the end of their life

**The following is based on the Buddhist belief that consciousness continues after the body dies.**

The first 3 days following death are considered to be particularly important, whereby the subtle process of the mind disengaging from the body is taking place.

We would be most grateful if you could bear the following points in mind:

Please contact the patient’s Tibetan Buddhist Centre for prayers to be said, if death is known to be close, or as soon as possible after death. The ideal is to have prayers done at the bedside as soon as possible.

Please leave the body undisturbed for 4 hours.

We understand that a doctor has to touch the body to certify death, but request that the nurses delay laying out the body until prayers have been said. Once prayers are said, the body can be laid out and moved. Only the minimum should be done and the crown of the head should be touched first.

If paper mandalas or a blanket have been placed on the body, please replace them in the correct positions.

Buddhists believe that it is possible to help the person who has just died by maintaining a tranquil and compassionate environment around them wherever possible. Friends and family may want to sit by the body to pray, so facilitating this would be very much appreciated.

If a post-mortem is required, please ask for it to be postponed for 3 ½ days.

Where there is no family to organize a funeral, please inform social services that the undertaker should just lift the body into the coffin (assuming that you have washed it already) and that there should be no embalming. Cremation should not take place until 3 ½ days have elapsed.

Thank you

**Information for Undertakers who are arranging the funeral of a Buddhist in the Tibetan tradition**

The following is based on the Buddhist belief that consciousness continues after the body dies. The first 3 days following death are considered to be particularly important, whereby the subtle process of the mind disengaging from the body is taking place.

We would be grateful if you could bear the following points in mind:

Where the body has been washed and dressed by the nurses, please just lift the body into the coffin and avoid unnecessary contact or movement. If the body does need to be washed, please just do the absolute minimum.

If paper prayers or a mandala blanket have been placed on the body, please replace them after putting the deceased in the coffin. There may also be additional pieces to be placed on the coffin.

Please refrigerate the body rather than embalm it.

Because Buddhists would prefer not to be embalmed, requesting the speedy completion of the cremation forms would be very much appreciated.

Buddhists believe that it is possible to help the person who has just died, by trying to maintain a tranquil and compassionate environment around them. Friends and family may want to sit by the body to pray, so facilitating this would be very much appreciated.

Cremation or burial should not take place until 3 ½ days have elapsed.

Thank you

**Practical arrangements**

- I wish to be cremated at .....Crematorium
- I wish to be buried, green / regular at .....Cemetery
- I have a pre-paid funeral plan with.....

Ref. ....Tel. ....

- No pre-paid funeral plan but a preferred funeral director:

.....

.....Tel. ....

- Body not to be embalmed
- Prior to funeral, body to rest at:.....

My preferred coffin is:.....

My ashes to be scattered..... My

ashes to be interred at.....

**Funeral Service**

I would like the funeral service to be held at:.....

.....

Person to officiate if available:.....

To include these prayers.....

.....

.....

Poems / Readings .....

.....

Music .....

Flowers

Donations to .....

Funeral tea afterwards at .....

**Other useful information**

Where to find my:

Birth certificate .....

Marriage certificate.....

Bank account details.....

Pensions.....

Address book.....

My email address is .....

Password = .....

**Personal details that will be useful when registering my death**

Full name

.....

Address:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Date & place of birth.....

.....

Occupation.....Religion.....

Marital status .....

Spouse's name, d.o.b. & occupation .....

.....

Mother's name inc. maiden name & occupation.....

.....

Father's name & occupation.....

.....

Nat. Insurance no. ....

NHS Doctor & Address .....

Next of kin.....

.....

**Lodgement of the document**

I have lodged a copy of this document with:

1. ....

.....

2. ....

.....

3. ....

.....

4. ....

.....

Signature .....

Date .....

**Acknowledgements**

Deep appreciation to Choje Akong Tulku Rinpoche for all his guidance and inspiration

**Thanks to**

The Bardo Group, Samye Dzong, Capetown, South Africa

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