

# Preparing for Death and Helping the Dying



# Main Points to be Covered

- Buddhist Perspectives on Death and Dying
- The Truth of Impermanence
- Meditating on Death
- How to Prepare for Death
- How to Help Others Who are Dying

# Buddhist Perspectives on Death

- Death is a natural, inevitable part of life.
- It is important to accept and be aware of it.
- Death is not necessarily a bad experience. It depends on how we prepare ourselves.
- Death is not a final end, but a gateway into another life.
- We can become free from death and rebirth.

REBIRTH  
IN EARLY BUDDHISM  
& CURRENT RESEARCH



Bhikkhū Analayo

FOREWORD BY HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA

# The Truth of Impermanence

*What is born will die,*

*What has been gathered will be dispersed,*

*What has been accumulated will be exhausted,*

*What has been built up will collapse,*

*And what has been high will be brought low.*

The Buddha

# The Truth of Impermanence

*This existence of ours is as transient as autumn clouds.*

*To watch the birth and death of beings is like looking at the movements of a dance.*

*A lifetime is like a flash of lightning in the sky,*

*Rushing by, like a torrent down a steep mountain.*

The Buddha, *Extensive Sport Sutra*

# Meditating on Death

## The 9-Point Meditation on Death

- The First Root: Death is Definite
  - 1) Everyone has to die
  - 2) Our lifespan is always decreasing
  - 3) We have a limited amount of time for spiritual practice





# Meditating on Death

- The Second Root: The Time of Death is Uncertain
  - 1) Our lifespan is uncertain
  - 2) There are many causes of death
  - 3) Our human body is very fragile





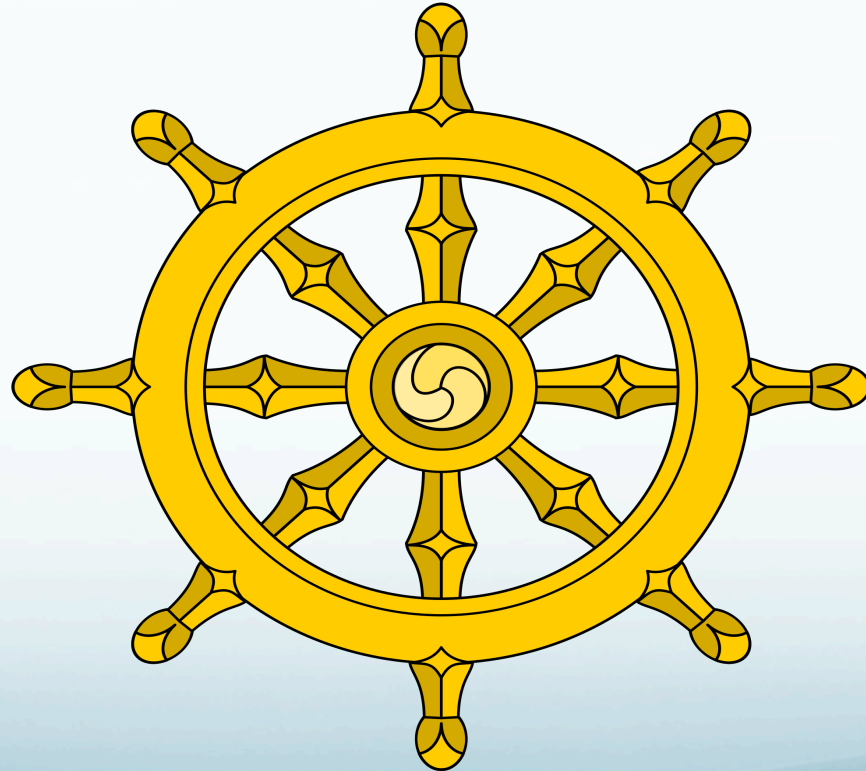
# Meditating on Death

- The Third Root: What Helps at the Time of Death?
  - 1) Can loved ones help us?
  - 2) Can wealth and possessions help us?
  - 3) Can our body help us?



# Meditating on Death

- What *will* help us at the time of death: Dharma, i.e. spiritual practice.



# The Four Tasks of Living and Dying

1. Understanding and transforming suffering
2. Making a connection, healing relationships, and letting go
3. Preparing spiritually for death
4. Finding meaning in life

# Preparing for Death

- Live ethically



# Preparing for Death

- Practise Meditation



# Preparing for Death

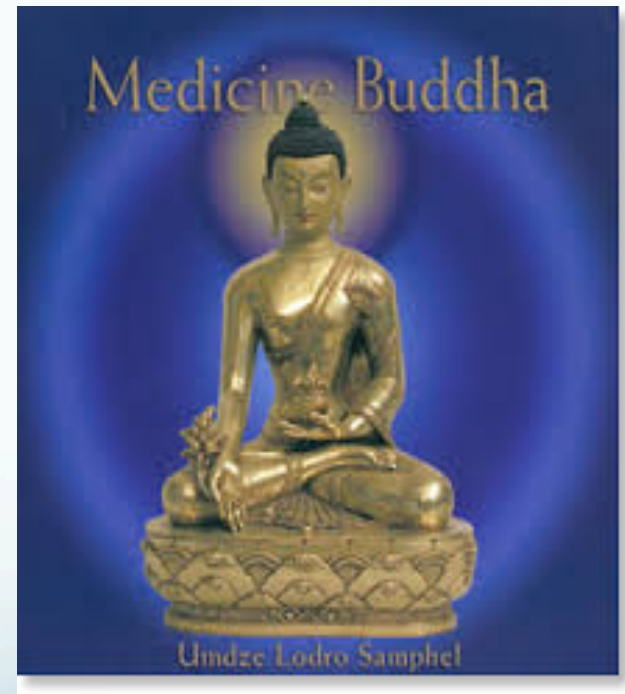
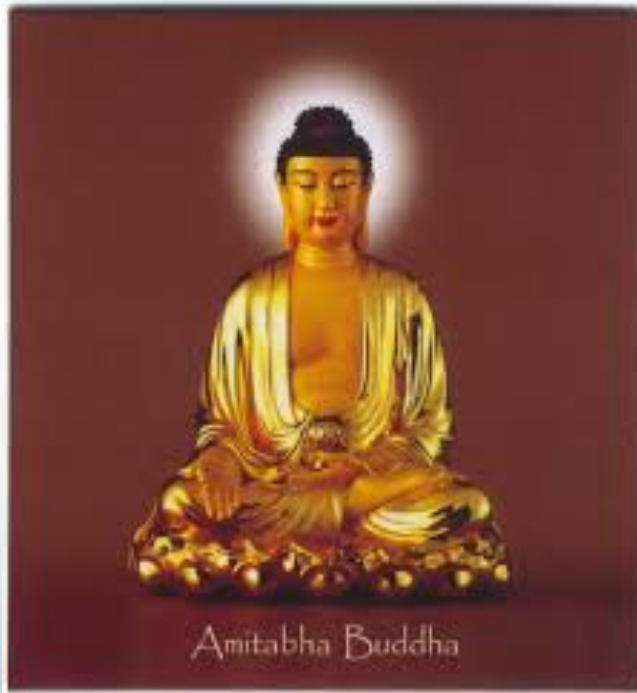
- Cultivate loving-kindness and compassion





# Preparing for Death

- Take refuge, pray, recite mantras, etc.



# Preparing for Death

- Study Spiritual Teachings



# Preparing for Death

- The Five Powers:
  - 1) The Power of the White Seed
  - 2) The Power of Intention
  - 3) The Power of Countering Negativity
  - 4) The Power of Prayer
  - 5) The Power of Familiarity

# Helping Others Who are Dying

- Prepare for your own death
- Learn to manage your disturbing emotions
- Giving hope and finding forgiveness
- Peaceful environment
- Help the person remember and practice spiritual teachings and practices, according to their faith
- You can continue to meditate, pray, recite mantras, etc. during and after the person's death

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HOW TO HELP  
YOUR LOVED  
ONES ENJOY  
DEATH AND  
GO HAPPILY  
TO THEIR  
NEXT REBIRTH



A HANDBOOK BY  
LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE

Thank you!

