

The Quick Path of Transfer to the Pure Land:
An Outline of the Teachings on Transference
Relying on Lord Amitabha

A Translation done by

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At the request of Rev. Dr. L. Kawamura

On the occasion of the last wish of a person suffering from a terminal illness

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The Vajra Dharma is the secret of the undying word. [354]

Amitabha, Lord of the Land of Sukhavati,

Protects us, the followers of the Ever Present King,

Until we reach enlightenment

Through his compassion, which is without bias.

From a lake of playfulness
A hundred thousand ripple-rings of praise flow forth.
The Secret Dharma is the Sage's instruction.
Use this boat as a means of travel in Sukhavati
The faultless place, the supreme Pure Land.

The instructions of the teacher of Great Compassion discuss diverse aspects of the Dharma in a way that accords to the concerns of students. He points out that there is no escape from life's deteriorations into death. Transferring to Nirvana is the only way. To do this, however, one must first direct oneself away from Samsara. Moreover, it is necessary to eliminate the shadowy portals of bad rebirths (*durgati*). The so-called Advise on Transfer is an easy practice for completely removing demonic devices. You should take this extremely important meditation as your primary practice. Exertion is required.

The Advise on Transfer cannot be found in any clear form outside the Tantra Division called "Unexcelled Tantras" (*Anuttarayogatantra*), which includes the Summation of Secrets (*Guhyasamaja*). The ancient wise ones were aware of this, and summarized this vast resource. They made proclamations on the many traditions of Transfer that rely on Lord Amitabha, the Mighty Lord Manjusri, and others. [355] The Transfers based on the Victorious Amitabha are outstandingly profound and meaningful. The Victorious One Himself once made this prayer:

May any living being that hears my name
Always arrive in my Land.
When my aspiration for goodness is fulfilled
The domains of this sad world will be cleansed
And the living beings will arrive here.
Those who dwell in my Land
Will not return [to the world of sorrow] even once.

It is, therefore, easy to cultivate the causes for birth in this Land, and then your karma and emotions can be made the concern of someone else. After that, it is said, it is impossible to get involved in Samsara's concerns. For this reason the teacher, the Mightiest of Sages, [explained] in all the Sutras and Dharanis,

when discussing Benefits, that [the audience] would be born in Sukhavati. When we give primary consideration to [Sukhavati], from amongst all the Pure Lands, we can fully aspire to being born there. This is proclaimed in the Origin of Birth (*sKyes ba'i rGyu*), The Sutra on the Field's Array (*Zhing bKod Kyi mDo*, **Sukhavativyuha*), Opening the Door of the Finest Field (*Zhing mChog sGo 'Byed*), and other scriptures.

There are three things [356] you cannot do without: 1.) Faith with respect to the Victorious Amitabha, 2.) A sincere desire to be born in the finest land of Sukhavati, 3.) A dedication that all the virtuous intentions behind previous actions will transform into causes for birth in this Land.

There are two types of problematic [conditions] that students encounter: [generating Bodhicitta and removing attachment]. It is said that those born into the family of the Mahayana must generate the Enlightened Mind along with the above three requisites. These individuals must investigate their personal character to see if it is clean or unclean. They must establish a solid grounding that will end conditions that support problems. Attachment to this life's body, pleasures, friends, and associates is the primary obstruction to Transference to the Pure Land, according to Valaha, [an incarnation of Avalokitesvara mentioned in the *Karandavyuha*]. Remove yourself from all these unacceptable conditions. The instructions on Transfer are to engage in genuine meditation.

Start out by setting up a worthy support for your visualization. Use an image of Lord Amitabha along with a layout of Sukhavati. Set it up beautifully, with offerings that are clean and abundant. Position yourself on a comfortable seat. Do this with a positive attitude. Perform the applied Dharmas of Taking Refuge (*skyabs*) and the Generation of Bodhicitta (*sems*). It is generally advised that you should put your things in order.

After that:

In the sky before me there is a throne made of precious jewels. It is supported by Peacocks. Upon it is a seat made of a lotus flower and the moon. There [sits] the Victorious Amitabha, his body the red color of coral. His arms rest in the mudra of tranquility. He holds a begging bowl filled with ambrosia. He wears saffron robes upon his body. His brow is marked with

an Usnisha. He sits in the Vajra position. The three points of his body [Head, Throat, and Heart] are marked with the three syllables [Om, Ah, Hum]:

At his heart is a HUM. [357] Light glows forth from it toward the West and invites Lord Amitabha's Wisdom [aspect], which then dissolves into the Amitabha in front of you.

Another way is not to invite the Wisdom [aspect] but to invite [Amitabha] after the manner of an invocation of the gods. This is done in accord with the understanding and recitation tradition from Magadha. This in the invocation:

The Two Accumulations [of merit and wisdom]
Have been acquired from the Land of Jewels.
The Blessed Lord Amitabha
Along with his attendants
Has come in gladness
From the excellent land of Sukhavati
Which has none of the faults of the living world.
He is sitting in the sky before me!

Offer the Seven Branches with the following words to bring together all the factors related to the practice of virtue:

I reverently prostrate
Without opening the three doors [of desire, hatred and ignorance].
I offer up heaps of real offerings
Along with an ocean of imaginary ones.
I admit all of my beginningless accumulation of evils and failures
I take pleasure in the collections of virtue:
My own and that of others.

I beg you not to pass into Nirvana
But to always remain, through a hundred eons,
And to turn the wheel of the profound and vast Dharma!
I dedicate every good deed to supreme enlightenment.

In the next part, your own body is bright and transparent like crystal from which the dust has been blown off. At its center, near the back, there is the central channel, about the size of an arrow-reed. On the outside it is white; on the inside red. It has none of the problems that nerve channels may have. The lower part is minute; the bottom of it is three finger-widths down. The upper part is thick; it is near the opening of the Braminical aperture. Inside the lower end of it there is the letter for essential consciousness, or the White Seed (*thig le*), which has the nature of light. [358] Its red luminescence escalates desire. It propels one directly into the clarity of one's own being, as consciousness is essentially the thing that is propelled. You can practice whatever you want to, but if you cling to some defining factor of your individuality you will not reach the point of Transfer. This has been proclaimed.

Act as if this external body were a house in which to live. You yourself are inside the Middle Channel as the essence of the wind of the mind, which is most subtle. Consider the way in which the Seed and its Essence are indivisible, and remain in equipoise. It is pleasant to apply this along with an oral recitation of verses:

Beneath the navel
Of my straight erect body
Removed by three finger-widths
My Central Channel is the size of an arrow-reed.
It connects with
The hole of my Braminical Aperture,
Near to the center of the stream.
Its shape is that of a brass trumpet:
The lower part is minute
The upper part is huge.

My consciousness is a letter
Inside it's lower end.
Or,
The white seed of light
Is propelled into the interior
Of the shining chamber.
I concentrate on this alone,
And [see] my teacher in front of me as a god.
I put forth this request with my heart's blood and my bones:

Submit your request as if staking a claim, with these words:

O Root Teacher!
Single Quintessence of,
And Indivisible from,
The good qualities of all the Victorious Ones
Of the three times and ten directions,
I present my requests to you,
O Lord of Protection,
O Treasure of Compassion!
Protect me from the fear
Of bad incarnation!

Then the Amitabha that is in front of you appears personally, on top of your head.

Another way is that a duplicate appears. Trust in this and recite:

I have presented my request.
A double splits off of

The Amitabha before me!
He sits at the top of the opening
Of my Brahminical Aperture.
He sits like a Family Lord (Kulapati).
There is a vertical mountain
Right in front of my heart.
Inside of its lower end
There is the Central Channel
In the shape of a brass trumpet.
Its mouth has a passage
Reaching up to my Brahminical Aperture.
No one can define its boundaries.
I think that inside the Dhuti,
In front of the Heart of Amitabha,
There is the letter HRI
Red in color and most dazzling.
I continue to meditate,
And put forth the following request:

Relax your breathing and recite the words from memory. Pay attention to both [your and Amitabha's] Central Channels. Next pay attention to the upper part of your own Central Channel. It is no different than the Heart of the Amitabha on your Brahminical aperture: the letter HRI is the center of this wisdom. While you pay attention to this, maintain a sincere desire that you will Transfer into it. Immerse yourself in this with furious energy. Next pay attention to the way everything depends on the compassionate blessings of the Victorious One. Apply this [consideration] uniformly to the burdensome hopes and attitudes that are formed as the mind hunts for things.

O Mighty One!
Genuine Essence of the Three Jewels!

Deliverer me from the fear of bad rebirths!

Supreme Commander!

Escort me to the Pure Land!

I present my request to Lord Amitabha!

Recite this either three or seven times. Then present your requests this way:

I request that you henceforth deliver me

From the fear of the Place Between! (Bar do)

I request that you protect me

From the labyrinths of mirage images in the Place Between!

I request that you pull me out

From the intolerable abyss of bad rebirths!

I request that you sever

My holding on to attitudes about what now appears!

Bless me that I be successful in the profound pathway of Transfer!

Bless me that I be led to the Pure Land! [360]

There is no other hope!

Look [on me] with Compassion!

Light rays shaped like hooks steadily burst forth from the HRI at the Heart of the Amitabha who is on your Brahminical aperture. They contact the seed of your own mind. This visualization can also be applied to the energy that pushes the wild lower winds, forcing them to move upward. You say “HIK” and [the visualized seed letter] is pushed upward. Say “KA” and it goes back down to its own abode. This must be done about three times. In the real application of this practice the last “HIK” melts indivisibly into Amitabha’s Heart.

Say “PHAT” and you will go to Sukhavati.

Fix your body and mind to the stem of the lotus emerging from his heart. You long to enjoy the elixir of

the Victorious One’s Speech. After a while the Amitabha [crowning your head] dissolves and melts [into you] right to the top of your Brahminical aperture. This is a profound instruction (*man ngag, upadesa*) for acquiring special blessings and life force.

The beautifully formed White Lotus

Is the result of perseverance.

The three perfect fragrances

From the garden of the gods’ delight:

Are natural honey!

In the most excellent Land of Sukhavati

May I find delight in the presence of Amitabha!

This brief practice of Transfer by Relying on Lord Amitabha is praiseworthy. [361] It has been highly praised for its many good qualities. The revered dKon mChog bsTan pa’i sGron me wrote this down at the personal request of rGa Sho’u sPrul sKu bLo bZang dbAng Grags rGyal mTshan at the Fortress of Kaju [Ka Ju’i mKhar]. May it bring benefit to all living beings! [361.2]

I summon my own Root Guru,

Indistinguishable from the Holy Protector Amitabha,

Along with his retinue,

Who fill the sky,

Here before me!

He sits there happily!

I pay faithful homage

Through the three avenues [of body, speech, and mind]!

I present external and internal offerings!

I admit my evils and failures!

I rejoice in my own virtues
And those of others!
Turn the Wheel of Dharma!
Do not leave behind those of us in pain!
Stay forever!
I dedicate all virtue!

I pay homage to, present offerings to, and take refuge in
My Guru, my Teacher, the Blessed One, Thus Gone One, Arhat,
Completely Perfected Buddha,
Amitabha
And his Retinue:
The oceanic assembly of the descendants of the Victorious One!

Recite this about seven times.

I present my request to you,
O Lord of Refuge, Treasure of Compassion,
For you are not different from
My own Root Guru!
You are the unification of the good qualities
Of all the Victorious Ones of the three times and the ten directions!
Protect me from the fear of bad rebirth!
I present my request to Lord Amitabha
The indubitable nature of the Three Jewels,
The hero that delivers [beings]
From fears of bad rebirth!

Three Times.

The Supreme Commander
Directing us to the Pure Land!

Please deliver me hereafter [362]
From fears of the Place Between!
Please protect me from
The intolerable crevasses of bad rebirth!
Bless me that I see you with my mind
In this lifetime!
Bless me in my practice of
The profound path of Transfer!
Bless me that I be led to the Pure Land!
There is no other hope!
Look [upon me] with Compassion!

HIK !

Say this three times, then say:

PHAT !

If you are still alive, continue with the Seven Branches. [See above, page 1]

Stiffen your body into an erect position
Measure three finger widths below your navel
The Middle Channel is the size of an arrow reed.
It is near the middle of the back
And touches the Brahminical Aperture.
It is miniscule at the bottom end
And huge at the top end

With the shape of a brass trumpet.
From inside its very bottom
Your consciousness is rapidly propelled
As a letter or a blazing white seed of light.
Meditate only on this!
Since your Guru, right in front of you,
Is a god,
You will receive just what you have asked for
With your heart's blood and your bones.

**Recite the section that begins “The three times and the ten directions” up to the point where it says
“protect me from fear.” [The verse is presented below.]**

“I present my request to you,
O Lord of Refuge, Treasure of Compassion,
For you are not different from
My own Root Guru!
You are the Unification of the good qualities
Of all the Victorious Ones of the three times and the ten directions!
Protect me from the fear of evil rebirth!”

By virtue of making your request in this way
Amitabha, who is in front of you,
Splits into two.
One of them sits down on top of
Your Brahminical Aperture.
He sits in the style of a Family Lord.
Directly in front of his heart is

The Central Channel
In the shape of a brass trumpet.
Inside the bottom end
Is an unobstructed opening.
This connects to your own Brahminical Aperture
At the Central Channel.
Consider that it is impossible to separate
The point where they connect.
Inside the Dhuti.
Beside Amitabha's Heart
A red letter HRI glows fiercely.

**Meditate on this,
Thus will you achieve your desires!**

Continue with the part that says “Without question” [presented here]

“I present my request to Lord Amitabha
The indubitable nature of the Three Jewels,
The Hero that Delivers [beings]
From fears of bad rebirth!
The Supreme Commander
Directing us to the Pure Land!”

**Say
“HIK” and “KA” together, three times.**

The Mandala of the Victorious One
Is a Fine Land of Bliss and Delight!

Recite this. Do dedication prayers to conclude the session. [362.6]

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Homage to Guru Amitabha!

[363]

This is how to conduct the performance of the Transfer ceremony for a dead person.

It will be sufficient when done together with practices such as *The Life Force* [*Tse Srog* (provisional reading)].

If [the life] is gone it is essential that the consciousness of the dead person be captured before the life can be transferred. Speak out the truths of the Three Jewels, and make them real. Even though [the life] is gone, pray for him or her in your mind. It is most important to look out for the motives by which you invite and compel someone to go to a heavenly land (*mDar sBrin Zhing* [alt. *gNas mDar Zhing*] handwritten gloss reads *Dag Zhing du bTang ba*). Start out with a motivation of compassion toward the dead person, and have trust in the objects of refuge.

I invite my Root Guru,
Indistinguishable from the Holy Protector Amitabha,
In the company of his retinue
To come from Sukhavati
And live here in love and happiness.
For the times of old are in the skies ahead!

Then motivate yourself with the Seven Branches:

I pay faithful homage
Through the three doors [of body, speech, and mind]!
I offer external and internal offerings!

I admit my evils and failures!

I rejoice in the virtues of myself and others!

I encourage the wheel of the Dharma!

Do not leave behind those in pain!

Stay forever!

I dedicate my virtues!

Say this, then:

I pay homage to, present offerings to, and take refuge in
My Teacher, the Blessed One, Thus Gone One, Arhat,
Completely Perfected Buddha,
Amitabha!

You should recite this prayer as many times as possible [end each recitation with]

“O”

In this world the things we call “impermanence” and “death”
Fall indiscriminately upon the lofty and the meek.
This time they have fallen on you!
You are now living in The Place Between Existences (*srid pa'i bar do*).
Examine yourself carefully!
Your going and coming, actions and efforts, and the way you appear
Are all different than they were before. [364]
These are the signs that you are living in the Between Place.
Any pleasant or unpleasant visions that you have at this point
Are all similar to the dreams you had
In the time you were alive.

Do not follow them!

Do not listen [to them]!

You must now pray to the Precious Jewels,

For the present is a time in which you could easily come to great misfortune.

I have summoned the Teacher who is your Lord of Protection, Amitabha.

He is here.

Echo on the words I speak in prayer

And we will accomplish this as one!

I present my request to you,

O Lord of Refuge, Treasure of Compassion,

For you are not different from

My own Root Guru!

You are the unification of the good qualities

Of all the Victorious Ones of the three times and the ten directions!

Protect me from the fear of bad rebirth!

Present the request in this way. Amitabha will appear and sit down on top of the Brahminical Aperture of the dead person. The lower end of his Central Channel will then be inseparably joined with the upper end of the dead person's Central Channel. The consciousness will transfer upwards along this route.

After this, repeat:

I present my request to Lord Amitabha

The indubitable nature of the Three Jewels,

The Hero that Delivers [beings]

From fears of bad rebirth!

The Supreme Commander

Directing us to the Pure Land!

Please deliver me hereafter [362]

From fears of the Place Between!

Please protect me from

The intolerable crevasses of bad rebirth!

Bless me that I see you with my mind

In this lifetime!

Bless me in my practice

Of The profound path of Transfer!

Bless me that I be led to the Pure Land!

There is no other hope!

Look [upon me] with Compassion!

Pray in this way. Light, like a hook that scoops things up, emanates from the HRI at his heart. The consciousness of the dead person rises upward through the path of the Central Channel. [365] It dissolves into the HRI. Concentrate on this and say “HIK” three times. Say “PHAT” and the [dead person's] consciousness will leap out into the Heart of the One who came from Sukhavati and go there together with him. He or she will gain birth in the hallow of a lotus flower. Consider that he or she has become a mighty descendant of Lord Amitabha.

Recite the verse beginning with “The Victorious One's Mandala” until the end of the session.

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The beginning and end of the dedication are in accord with all the generalities.

You should open your eyes widely for the sake of the dead person. The object of your visualization is envisioned to benefit the one who has left this life behind. If there are friends and relatives that have stayed behind or have just arrived, they should make offerings to the Precious Jewels by means of three perfect circumambulations [of the representative image]. Donate to the poor and outcast. Recite the

profound mantras of *dharani*. Read the Sutras aloud. Engage yourself in the Mandala. Transmit the Empowerments. Engage in every source of virtue possible. Involve yourself and do all these things for the sake of the individual who has passed from life, just as anyone within the three realms or six classes [of living beings] would. Let the grace and power of this ensure that you will never, from this life and in any future life, be born in a birthplace that has fallen into perversion, a bad rebirth or as an evil being. May you always attain the Eighteen Dharmas of ease and luxury and be firmly supported by all Seven of the Good Qualities of the Lofty Realms. May these things support your entrance into the monastic order at a young age, may you be taught according to both the theory and methods a Good Friend of the Supreme Vehicle, and may you follow in his footsteps with joy! [366] May you sharpen your mind well with the three most important aspects of the path as ordinarily taught to you by your Good Friend, according to his instructions, and also The Stages of the Path (*Lam Rim*) for the three kinds of individuals. May you first prepare yourself with a study of the ordinary path, then come to know the extra-ordinary path of the Vajrayana, which is the Great Secret, the entrance to which is the Four Pure Empowerments. Keep your vows and the commitments you accept at the time of the empowerment as you should. May you move steadfastly through the two stages of Generation, the path of ripening, and Perfection, the path of deliverance, and, realizing the Severn Branches from your recitation, may you be one so fortunate as to quickly gain enlightenment as a genuine Buddha, the Great Vajradhara! You are similar to others” [who went before you].

You should mentally separate the way you perform the Transference of the dead person from the dedications.

Urged by the pages from the Halahaaja Gag Tuhaana, the faithful monk bLo-bzang Nyi-ma commissioned the scribe Bhikshu Ratna Ananda to write down this teaching of the revered dKon mChog bsTan pa'i sGron me. [366.4]

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Homage to my Guru,
Indistinguishable from Lord Amitabha!

An individual who wishes to be born in Sukhavati must have three things: faith in Lord Amitabha, a sincere desire to be born in that realm, and a dedication that any sources of virtue one has produced transform into causes for birth in the [Pure] Land. These should be continually brought to mind. The causes [for birth in Sukhavati] are the primary thing to pursue.

The way to observe the actual practice follows:

Set up a support [for meditation]
With Amitabha and the [Pure] Land on it.

Arrange the offerings nicely
Face to the West
Go for Refuge to begin,
Then generate Bodhicitta.

Off to the West of our intolerable world
Past the Pure Lands of
Precisely one hundred thousand ten millions of Buddhas [367]
Is that land known as
The Miraculous Sukhavati!

The names of sorrow are not proclaimed there!
Its glory is its undefiled luxury!
Amitabha and his descendants are also there!
I pray that all of them consider me with love!

Dense ignorance has darkened
What is to be acquired and what is to be left behind.

The Weapon of malice robs us
Of life in the higher conditions.
The ropes of lust and desire
Bind us in the prison of Samsara.

The river of karma
Carries us to the ocean of existence.
So many waves
Of the pains of sickness and old age
Toss us about.

The intolerable Lord of Death
Throws us into the crocodile's mouth!

We are crushed by the load
Of undesired pain!
I am without shelter
And roar in misery
To the Mighty One

Who makes wishes come true!

Savior Amitabha!

You are the sole friend of the bereft!
I pray to you and your retinue with faith!

Through uncountable eons,
For our sake,

You have given birth to the supreme concern: [Bodhicitta]!

Do not forget your promise!
The most important flowers
Are on the path of the gods.

Come hither through your love;

Use your magical powers!

You build the bridge of deliverance
Over the crevasse of the Place Between!

Shelter us escapees from
The intolerable fear of bad rebirths!

You are the supreme teacher
Of emancipation from the lake of worldly existence!
I pay homage to you, Lord Amitabha!

I faithfully offer up
All the offerings
Whether actually presented or imaginary [368]
And any item of virtue at all
From the three times [past, present, and future]!
May they transform into causes for my birth
In the supreme Pure Land of Sukhavati!

Take away
All the intolerably great burdens
Of evils and failures,
Along with
All my clinging to desirous appearances
With the Compassionate Hand of Truth!
Take me to your Land
Quickly and speedily!

The time will come
When the compounded things of this life are torn apart
Amitabha, surrounded by an oceanic host of retinues,
Will clearly see us on our envisioned roads.

Please fill me with faith and compassion!
I am a compounded thing that will die.
I am cleansing my obscurations, and will later remove them.
Amitabha will see the reality of this,
And I will blissfully go to the Pure Land of Sukhavati!

After I have gone there
May all these prayers come true!

The Mandala of the Victorious One
Is good and delightful!
Amitabha appears there
Upon a most beautiful lotus flower.
May the Victorious One personally
Prophecy my attainment of it!

You are, in brief, a Protector for me:
Someone with no Protector!
Without you
There is no refuge to hope for!
When there is the distinct wailing of horrible grief
Please take me in your compassionate hands
And lead me away!

Bless me that I cut off my attachment
To present appearances!
Bless me that the pain of losing my life

Is pacified!
Bless me that the fear and horror of death
Is removed!
Bless me that the apparent delusions of the Place Between
Are minimized!
Bless me that the evils and obstructions of bad karma
Are removed!
Bless me that I be born
In a Pure Land!
Bless me that I be born
Comprehending the good road!
Lord,
Bless me that your heart and my mind
Mix together into an indistinguishable unity!

Now do the visualization for Transferring into the Heart of Lord Amitabha. The main thing is the great importance of practicing belief and faith with ferocious strength, for these get weighed down by the mind's hunting [for things].

At the end, complete the session with the dedication of merit and whatever is fit.

This was written down by the revered dKon mChog bsTan pa'i sGron me at the request of the intelligent general Rab 'Byams pa Chos rGya mTsho. [369.3]

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