

Padmasambhava's Teachings on the Six Bardos: A Guide to the Transitional States of Life and Death

Padmasambhava, also known as Guru Rinpoche, was a renowned Buddhist master who is revered as the founder of Tibetan Buddhism. His teachings on the six bardos provide invaluable guidance on the nature of existence and the transitional states we experience throughout our lives and at the time of death.



Natural Liberation: Padmasambhava's Teachings on the Six Bardos by B. Alan Wallace

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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The six bardos refer to the six intermediate states we pass through during life and death:

- The bardo of this life
- The bardo of dying
- The bardo of luminosity

- The bardo of karmic becoming
- The bardo of experiencing reality
- The bardo of the dharmakaya

Padmasambhava's teachings on these bardos offer a profound understanding of the nature of reality and provide practical guidance on how to navigate these transitional states with awareness and compassion.

The Bardo of This Life

The bardo of this life refers to the present moment, the state of being alive. Padmasambhava teaches that this bardo is a precious opportunity to practice mindfulness, cultivate compassion, and develop spiritual insights.

By recognizing the transient nature of existence, we can let go of attachments and live in the present moment. By cultivating compassion, we can extend our love and kindness to all beings, creating a more harmonious and peaceful world.

The Bardo of Dying

The bardo of dying begins when the process of death commences and lasts until the moment of physical death. Padmasambhava teaches that this bardo is a time for letting go and accepting the transition that is taking place.

By practicing meditation and visualization, we can prepare for the bardo of dying and face the unknown with courage and grace. By recognizing the impermanence of all things, we can let go of fear and embrace the liberation that comes with death.

The Bardo of Luminosity

The bardo of luminosity begins immediately after physical death and lasts for up to seven weeks. During this bardo, the mind experiences the pure light of the dharmakaya, the true nature of reality.

Padmasambhava teaches that this bardo is a time for recognizing our true nature and letting go of all attachments. By embracing the luminosity of the dharmakaya, we can experience the ultimate liberation that comes with enlightenment.

The Bardo of Karmic Becoming

The bardo of karmic becoming begins after the bardo of luminosity and lasts for up to six months. During this bardo, the mind experiences visions of past lives and the consequences of its actions.

Padmasambhava teaches that this bardo is a time for contemplating our past actions and making amends for any negative karma. By understanding the law of karma, we can create a more positive and beneficial future for ourselves and others.

The Bardo of Experiencing Reality

The bardo of experiencing reality begins after the bardo of karmic becoming and lasts until the moment of rebirth. During this bardo, the mind experiences the various realms of existence and the consequences of its past actions.

Padmasambhava teaches that this bardo is a time for learning from our past experiences and making wise choices for the future. By cultivating

wisdom and compassion, we can create a more fulfilling and meaningful life for ourselves and others.

The Bardo of the Dharmakaya

The bardo of the dharmakaya is the final bardo and represents the ultimate liberation from the cycle of birth and death. During this bardo, the mind experiences the pure light of the dharmakaya and merges with the infinite ocean of truth.

Padmasambhava teaches that this bardo is the ultimate goal of spiritual practice and represents the culmination of all our efforts on the path to enlightenment. By practicing the teachings on the six bardos, we can prepare ourselves for this final liberation and experience the eternal bliss of the dharmakaya.

Padmasambhava's teachings on the six bardos provide a profound understanding of the nature of existence and the transitional states we experience throughout our lives and at the time of death. By studying and practicing these teachings, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the preciousness of life and prepare ourselves for the journey beyond.

May the teachings of Padmasambhava guide us all on our path to enlightenment and liberation.



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