

# BARDO THODOL

## THE MAIN VERSES OF THE SIX BARDOS



This poem of seven verses is found in the Bardo Thodol, sometimes known in English as *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, which was composed by the 8<sup>th</sup> century master Padmasambhava, transcribed by his consort Yeshe Tsogyal, and revealed by the 14<sup>th</sup> century teron Karma Lingpa. This translation of “The Main Verses of the Six Bardos” is that of Chogyam Trungpa and Francesca Fremantle.

### 1. THE BARDO OF LIVING (SHINAY BARDO)

*Now, when the bardo of living is dawning upon me,  
I will abandon laziness for which life has no time,  
Enter the undistracted path of study, reflection, and meditation,  
Making projections and mind the path, and realize the three Kayas;  
Now that I have attained a human body,  
There is no time on the path for mind to wander.*

### 2. THE BARDO OF DREAMS (MILAN BARDO)

*Now when the bardo of dreams is dawning upon me,  
I will abandon the corpse-like sleep of careless ignorance,  
And let my thoughts enter their natural state without distraction;  
Controlling and transforming dreams in luminosity,  
I will not sleep like any animal,  
But completely unify sleep and practice.*

### 3. THE BARDO OF SAMADHI-MEDITATION (SAMTEN BARDO)

*Now when the bardo of Samadhi-meditation dawns upon me,  
I will abandon the crowd of distractions and confusions,  
And rest in the boundless state without grasping or disturbance;  
Firm in the two practices; visualization and completion,  
At this time of meditation, one-pointed, free from activity,  
I will not fall into the power of confused emotions.*

### 4. THE BARDO OF THE MOMENT BEFORE DEATH (CHIKKAI BARDO)

*Now when the bardo of the moment before death dawns upon me,  
I will abandon all grasping, yearning, and attachment,  
Enter undistracted into clear awareness of the teaching,  
And eject my consciousness into the space of unborn mind;*

*As I leave this compound body of flesh and blood,  
I will know it to be a transitory illusion.*

#### **5. THE BARDO OF DHARMATA (CHÖNYID BARDO)**

*Now when the bardo of dharmata dawns upon me,  
I will abandon all thoughts of fear and terror,  
I will recognize whatever appears as my projection  
And know it to be a vision of the bardo;  
Now that I have reached this crucial point,  
I will not fear the peaceful and wrathful ones,  
My own projections.*

#### **6. THE BARDO OF BECOMING (SIDPA BARDO)**

*Now when the bardo of becoming dawns upon me,  
I will concentrate my mind one-pointedly,  
And strive to prolong the results of good karma,  
Close the womb-entrance and think of resistance;  
This is the time when perseverance and pure thought are needed,  
Abandon jealousy and meditate on the Guru with his consort.*

#### **7. THE PRESENT MOMENT**

*With mind far off, not thinking of death's coming,  
Performing these meaningless activities,  
Returning empty-handed now would be complete confusion.  
The need is recognition, Holy Dharma,  
So why not practice Dharma at this very moment?  
From the mouth of wise men come these words:  
If you do not keep your Guru's teaching in your heart,  
Will you not become your own deceiver?*