

# Vajrayana Buddhism and the Life, Death, and Rebirth Bardos

February 6, 4–6 p.m. EST

**Doug Duncan Sensei and Catherine Pawasarat Sensei**

[Register via our online form.](#)

## Description

Buddhism is well known for its intricate mapping of consciousness and its manifestations. In this philosophical paradigm, life, death and rebirth are regarded as processes, not events.

Tibetan Buddhism observes these processes as six primary “Bardos” (Tibetan for “gap”): three are Living Bardos (life, meditation, sleeping) and three are Death Bardos (dying, moment of death, and moving towards the next rebirth). Bardos often describe the journey that we make after death, before taking a new birth, though they can also refer to any transformation in life and death.

In the Western Vajrayana tradition, caregiving for dying persons includes support from the community of practitioners, who say mantras considered helpful for this Bardo transition. Teachers can provide Bardo prayers for clear mind and a good rebirth. Practically speaking this includes just staying present and observing the body through the shutting down of functions and allowing the body to follow the natural, universal death process.

This presentation elaborates on the Tibetan Buddhist view of that process, how to support others going through it, and how to work with it as we go through it ourselves.

Experiential exercise: Buddhism’s *Nine-Point Meditation on Death and Dying*. We share this example of one Buddhist contemplative practice that helps us radically transform our relationship to death, and so live with greater ease and happiness.

## Texts

The Dying Bardos are written about extensively in the Tibetan Book of the Dead (translations by Sogyal Rinpoche or Robert Thurman). A more practical understanding of the Bardos can be found in Sogyal Rinpoche’s book on The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying.

## Teachers’ Centres/Temples

Clear Sky Meditation Centre in Cranbrook, BC <https://www.clearskycenter.org/>

Planet Dharma Virtual Spiritual Community <https://www.planetdharma.com/>

## Teachers’ Tradition

Vajrayana Buddhism, combined with numerous Western practices that support spiritual awakening

## Teachers' Bios

**Acharya Doug Duncan Sensei** studied with the Ven. Namgyal Rinpoche from 1974 until the latter's passing in 2003. He received lay ordination from Namgyal Rinpoche in 1978, and undertook numerous three-month solitary meditation retreats. He also received teachings from the 16th Karmapa and other Tibetan Rinpoches, as well as from the Ven. Sayadaw U Thila Wunta, and from a Master of the Western Mystery School.

**Catherine Pawasarat Sensei** was a student of metaphysics, Western spiritual traditions, and the Ayahuasca sacraments in the 1990s. She then began a 20+ year spiritual apprenticeship with Doug Sensei that is rare in the contemporary West. She received lay ordination from Namgyal Rinpoche in 2003.

Together Doug and Catherine Senseis co-founded and are resident teachers at Clear Sky Retreat Center in the British Columbia Rockies. There, Catherine has spearheaded an organizational culture based in innovative and generative service. They are both lineage holders of the teachings transmitted by the remarkable Namgyal Rinpoche.



*Catherine Pawasarat Sensei and Acharya Doug Duncan Sensei*

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