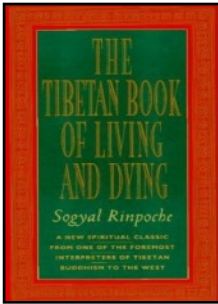


# Conscious spirituality in search of truth...



## **SOGYAL RINPOCHE: TIBETAN BOOK OF LIVING AND DYING**

*In the “Tibetan Book of Living and Dying,” Sogyal Rinpoche a Buddhist teacher provides seekers of Truth with a deep meaningful intentional insight into Buddhism. Culturally Rinpoche encourages individuals to look at Buddhism’s spiritual teachings through the ‘eyes’ of western thinking. In context, the literature provides, a religious, philosophical, and spiritual insight into the depth of Buddhism and human development experiences.*

*Rinpoche’s approach to Buddhism’s “Bardos of Becoming,” where he creates a Buddhist narrative outlining four realities of life’s stages as follows— dying, death, after-death and rebirth is particularly interesting. In recognition of these spiritual processes seekers of Truth or probers may find an inner awakening to a rich tapestry of deeper meanings to love and compassion for all living sentient beings. Once this is recognised the experiences could lead to more fulfilling relationships with others on a personal, community or global awareness basis. An extract from this meaningful, wisdom, gratitude book on Buddhist philosophy focusing on ‘True Spirituality and the Bardo of Becoming’ follows.*

*—Philip Crouch, Tasmania, 2020*

## **SOGYAL RINPOCHE: INTRODUCTION TIBETAN BOOK OF LIVING AND DYING**

“A magnificent achievement. In its power to touch the heart, to awaken consciousness, [The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying] is an inestimable gift.”--San Francisco Chronicle A newly revised and updated 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of the internationally best selling spiritual classic, The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying, written by Sogyal Rinpoche, is the ultimate introduction to Tibetan Buddhist wisdom. An enlightening, inspiring, and comforting manual for life and death that the New York Times calls, “The Tibetan equivalent of [Dante’s] The Divine Comedy,” this is the essential work that moved Huston Smith, author of The World’s Religions, to proclaim, “I have encountered no book on the interplay of life and death that is more comprehensive, practical, and wise.”

*[Cited: Book Depository, Introduction]*

## **SOGYAL RINPOCHE: TRUE SPIRITUALITY - BARDO OF BECOMING,**

### **[P:39] TRUE SPIRITUALITY**

‘True spirituality also is to be aware that if we are **interdependent with everything and everyone else**, even our smallest, least significant thought, word, and action have real consequences throughout the universe. Throw a pebble into a pond. It sends a shiver across the surface of the water. Ripples merge into one another and create new ones.



**Everything is inextricably interrelated:**The Tibetan Book of The Dead -Sogyal Rinpoche 1. We come to realize we are responsible for every we do, say, or think, responsible in fact for ourselves, everyone and everything else, and the entire universe.

### THE DALAI LAMA HAS SAID:

*“In today’s highly interdependent world, individuals and nations can no longer resolve many of their problems by themselves. We need one another. We must therefore develop a sense of universal responsibility...It is our collective and individual responsibility to protect and nurture the global family, to support its weaker members, and to preserve and tend to the environment in which we live.”*

### [P:90, Para 3] UNIVERSAL CAUSATION

‘.....Therefore there must be successive rebirths that allow continuum of mind to be there. Buddhism believes in universal causation, that everything is subject to change, and to causes and conditions. **So there is no place given to a divine creator, nor to beings who are self-created;** rather everything arises as a consequence of causes and conditions. So mind, or consciousness, too comes into being as a result of its previous instants.’

### [P:90, Para 5] CONSCIOUSNESS - REINCARNATION

‘Most people take the word “reincarnation” to imply there is some “thing ” that reincarnates, which travels from life to life. **But in Buddhism we do not believe in an independent and unchanging entity like a soul or ego** that survives the death of the body. What provides the continuity between lives is not an entity, we believe, but the ultimately **subtlest levels of consciousness.**’

### [PP:103-104, Para 5] BARDOS

‘We can divide the whole of our existence into four realities: life, dying, and death, after-death, and rebirth. These are the Four Bardos:

- the “natural” bardo of this life
- the “painful” bardo of dying
- the “luminous” bardo of dharmata, the “karmic” bardo of becoming
- rebirth, bardo of becoming

(1). The natural bardo of this life spans the entire period between birth and death. In our present state of knowledge, this may seem more than just a bardo, a transition.



But if we think about it, it will become clear that, compared to enormous length and duration of our karmic history, **the time we spend in this life is in fact relatively short.** The teachings tell us emphatically that the bardo of this life is the only, and therefore the best, time to prepare for death: by becoming familiar with the teaching and stabilizing practice.

- (2). The painful bardo of dying lasts from the beginning of the process of dying right up until the end of what is known as the “inner respiration”; this, in turn, culminates in the dawning of the nature of mind, what we call the “Ground Luminosity,” at the moment of death.
  - (3). The luminous bardo of dharmata encompasses the after-death experience of the radiance of the the nature of mind, the luminosity of “Clear Light,” which manifests as sound, colour and light.
  - (4). **The karmic bardo of becoming** is what we generally call the Bardo or intermediate state, which lasts right up until the moment we take on a new birth.
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#### [P:209, Para 2] SPIRITUAL CARE

‘Spiritual care is not a luxury for a few; it is *the* essential right of every human being, as essential as political liberty, medical assistance, and equality of opportunity. **A real democratic ideal would include knowledgeable spiritual care for everyone as one of its most essential truths.**’

#### [P:290, Para 1] DEATH - THE BARDO OF BECOMING

‘In the bardo of becoming we relive all the experiences of our past life, reviewing minute details long lost to memory, and revisiting places, the masters say, “where we did no more than spit on the ground.’ Every seven days we are compelled to go through the experience of of death once again, with all its suffering.

If our death was peaceful, that peaceful state of mind is repeated; if it was tormented, however, that torment is repeated too. And remember that this is with a consciousness seven times more intense than that of life, and that in the fleeting period of the bardo becoming, all the negative karma of previous lives is returning, in a fiercely concentrated deranging way.’



## [P:292, Para 1] JUDGEMENT

Some accounts of the bardo describe a judgement scene, a kind of life review similar to the post-mortem judgement found in many of the world's cultures. Your good conscience, a white guardian angel, acts as your defence counsel, recounting the beneficial things you have done, while your bad conscience, a black demon, submits the case for the prosecution. Good and bad are totalled up as white and black pebbles. The “Lord of Death,” who presides, then consults the mirror of karma and makes his judgement. I feel that in this judgement scene there are some interesting parallels with the life-review of the near death experience.



*Ultimately all judgement takes place within our own mind. We are the judge and judged. Sogyal Rinpoche*

### 3. SPIRITUAL TRUTH IS COMMON SENSE'

“Spiritual truth is not something elaborate and esoteric, it is in fact profound common sense. When you realise the nature of mind, layers of confusion peel away. You don't actually “become” a Buddha, you simply cease, slowly, to be deluded. And being a Buddha is not being some omnipotent spiritual superman, but becoming at last a true human being.”

– Sogyal Rinpoche



#### Suggested resources:

The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying, Sogyal Rinpoche, San Francisco, America: 1992, Harper Collins Publisher, ISBN: 0 7126 5437.

[https://www.bookdepository.com/Tibetan-Book-Living-](https://www.bookdepository.com/Tibetan-Book-Living-Dying-Sogyal-Rinpoche/9780062508348?ref=grid-view&qid=1574200466215&sr=1-2)

[Dying-Sogyal-Rinpoche/9780062508348?ref=grid-view&qid=1574200466215&sr=1-2](https://www.bookdepository.com/Tibetan-Book-Living-Dying-Sogyal-Rinpoche/9780062508348?ref=grid-view&qid=1574200466215&sr=1-2)

Uplift Connect - Sogyal Rinpoche, Seven Teachings from The Tibetan Book of The Dead, <https://upliftconnect.com/tibetan-book-of-living-and-dying/>

