

## **Step-by-step procedure to follow within 8 hours after death**

---

### **Immediately after the last breath:**

Immediately after the last breath, don't recite Amitofo yet, whisper into the deceased's ear:

“Mom, please recognize the Buddha's and Bodhisattva's images and follow the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Mom, please recognize the light, follow the light, become the light and achieve immediate liberation.”

Repeat the above several times, then speak softly:

“Mom, please listen to the sound of the Buddha's name. Please become one with the sound.”

Then, recite the Buddha's name: “Namo Amitofo.”

There's no need for bells or gongs. Just chant softly. Your concentration, love and gentleness will help your mom be at peace and ascend easily.

### **About ten minutes after the last breath:**

Children (and loved ones) take turns at the bed, softly say farewell into the deceased's ear:

“Dear Mom, please forgive me for any wrongdoings I've done in the past, any occasions that I've failed my filial duties to you. For example, the time I had done this and this. Please forgive me.”

“You’ve made numerous sacrifices to raise and nurture us over the years. You’ve been the model mother to us, and a devoted wife to Dad. Your life in this world has been perfect and exemplary. You have no regrets.”

*(Farewell speech): “Today you’re going with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; to learn the Dharma with Kwan Yin, Manjushri, Universal Virtue Bodhisattvas. Now is the time to let worldliness return to the world, dust returns to dust; please open up and let your luminosity lit up, let your light become one with the Light, your mind become one with that of the Buddhas.*

*Please let this body return to Earth, Water, Wind, Fire; let your mind and emotion be as light as a breeze. Please refrain from returning to this body, don’t return to the superficial, the impermanence.*

*Please let us walk our path, the path of the causal realm. Please go on your path, the path of the non-conditioned, non-causal realm. Please let all worries and concerns dissolve, all afflictions and attachments fall away.*

*Please listen to the sound of our chanting, so that your true nature could also chant the infinite sound of Buddha Nature. Please focus your thoughts, let yourself be one with the unhindered light of the Buddhas in the ten directions. Right now, please be the light, the ever-present and indestructible light of Buddha Nature.’*

*‘We wish you a light journey, free from all karmic burdens, free from all afflictions caused by illness, free from all worries for those who stay behind. We wish you to always keep in mind the Bodhisattvas’ vows to help all beings, to bring peace to all. We wish you to leave behind all baggage, take with you only the vows of the Universal Virtue Bodhisattva to pay reverence to all the Buddhas, praise all the Tathagatas, always make offerings, repent and reform all karmic hindrances,*

*rejoice in merits and virtues, request the turning of the Dharma Wheel, request the Buddhas dwell in the world, always follow the Buddha's teachings, always live in accord with beings, transfer all merits and virtues. We wish you to always keep open the pure mind, keep open the light, keep open the sacrifice mind, keep open the unhindered mind, keep open the Buddha mind.'*

Then everyone chant the Buddha's name for a while. Afterward, ask several loved ones (children, grandchildren, relatives, siblings) to repeat the farewell speech.

Then alternate with the chanting again. The goal is for the relatives to connect with Mom's mind.

Asking Mom for forgiveness is to open Mom's heart. When Mom forgives, her heart is in sync with her true nature and her ever-present light will illuminate.

### **About half an hour after the last breath**

About half an hour after the last breath, alternate between chanting the Buddha's name with meditation. Chanting the Buddha's name is very effective, but it needs a calm, clear mind. The purpose of meditation is to calm the mind. Keep in mind that the recently deceased is very sensitive to the subtlest emotion of loved ones who are present. If you're calm and your mind is clear then you will bring about calmness and clarity to Mom. If you're at ease and unburdened, then you will attract Mom's mind to be at ease and unburdened. So, it's best if you could sit and calm your mind down.

You might want to divide into two groups. One group stays by the bed and chants the Buddha's name. The other group meditates in an adjacent room.

Meditate as follows:

Sit cross legged, half-lotus is ok too. Inhale, focus in the center of the chest (the heart chakra), while silently recite “Amitofo”. Exhale, focus at the heart chakra, silently recite “Amitofo”. Breathe deeply. It’s easier to connect to the realm of the deceased when you breath and focus on the heart chakra.

**Within one to eight hours:**

Keep chanting, meditating and repeating the farewell speech.

At this time, give visiting friends or acquaintances the farewell speech so they too can say it. Don’t let them be idle, with nothing to do. Encourage them to recite the Buddha’s name, meditate with you, etc...

**After 8 hours (this section could be skipped if no monk or nun is available to perform.)**

Do the followings:

1. Ask a sibling to wipe Mom’s body with a wet towel. While doing so, think of Mom’s love and sacrifices all those years. Appreciate her care and her love that has nurtured you in the past.
2. Everybody else recite the Great Compassion Mantra in an adjacent room. In the meanwhile, a monk or nun recites the Great Compassion Mantra at least 21 times, holding a vase of water in one hand.
3. After wiping Mom’s body, invite the monk or nun into the room where Mom lies. Using a flower dipped into the vase, the monk or nun sprinkles Mom’s body starting with the head, then move to the chest, tummy, and feet. While this is

going on, everybody else keep chanting the Great Compassion Mantra. This Compassion water will help Mom let go of her physical body.

4. After the blessing, if need to, dry the body. When the body is dry, put clothes back on. Personnel from the funeral home should arrive by that time. Everyone recites “Namo Amitofo”.

5. You should set up an altar for the Amitabha Buddha, Kwan Yin Bodhisattva or the Earth Store Bodhisattva, with a picture of Mom in front of the Buddha. When the funeral home’s staff moves Mom’s body from the room, everyone either stands or kneels to see her out of the door. After that, invite everyone to return to the altar, kneel and recite the Amitabha Buddha Sutra, and transfer all merits to her. When done, sit in silence or meditate for 10 minutes before leaving.

### **Your mentality before and after Mom’s passing**

1. An emotional relationship links your mom and you. If you’re free of worries, then she is free of worries. If you’re caring and express your love, then she feels your care and your love. If you ask her for forgiveness, then she opens her heart and forgives. Your mind affects her mind.

2. Two keys in any ascension are clarity and love.

The first key is clarity, manifested by the illumination of the true mind.

Illumination or lights is usually the manifestation of a focused mind. Lights communicate and harmonize with each other, hence, avoid quarrel, fight and disagreement. Avoid quarrel, being stubborn, being obstinate, refusing to accept a sibling’s idea...

The second key is love; love that is not possessive, not stubborn or non-obstinate; but love is usually possessive and clinging. Express gentleness, forgiveness, care

and love for each other. If you can express these two keys, then you've created an environment fertile for the bodhi tree, the tree of liberation to grow.

3. If you seek help from the Buddha, then first seek help from your self, which means to establish a certain amount of peace in your mind. You should close your eyes and keep yourself quiet, relax all muscles, all organs so you can be receptive to goodness. Too much stress can't be of any help. The Buddha who comes might be stressed out with you! Relax the body, and relax the mind. If your mind is relaxed, then Mom's mind might be relaxed too.

4. Within 8 hours, be extra gentle in your behavior and actions. Keep in mind that "this is the most crucial time for Mom. We should be very refined, peaceful to see Mom off to the Buddha's realm. We can't be coarse or full of afflictions. If we're noisy, vicious, angry, or tired, or go through the motions in a superficial way, then we're not worthy of Mom's sacrifices over the years. We should be vigilant, try our best to see Mom off to the Buddha's realm."

Source: <http://blog.compassheart.com/>