

Buddhist Wedding Ceremony

We are gathered here together, <bride first name> & <groom first name>, family & friends. We are witnesses to <bride first name> and <groom first name> marriage vows. We are their support in keeping those vows. In a way, we are married together with them.

Please each of you here breathe deeply and put your hearts full attention to this ceremony of taking the marriage vows, and look and listen with your whole being. In this way you can continue to fulfill your friendship and express your gratitude to <bride first name> and <groom first name> by making this ceremony sacred with the gift of your knowledge, attention and intention.

It is truly a great and joyous occasion when two people choose each other wholeheartedly, accepting both the fullness and the limitation of each other. This benefit extends to everyone, not only themselves and those who are here today, but also to everyone they touch as they move forward together.

Nothing happens without cause. An old oriental saying goes, “even the chance brushing of one’s sleeve against a stranger’s sleeve on a ferry, may be the cause of their future encounters.” The union of <bride first name> and <bride first name> is not accidental. Indeed, due to the law of karma, the inexorable unfolding of the truth of interdependence, it is the inevitable consequences of all of the actions of their lives. They, from their very beginning, have been coming together to this sacred moment. Therefore, this union must never be broken or dissolved, especially now that it is going to be formally declared with the purity of all of our minds, the action from all of our hearts, and witnessed before all beings known and unknown.

(Incense ceremony)

(Three Bells)

Om nama Buddha Om, (bell) repeat (bell) repeat

(Three Bells)

Om Nama Tara, Om, (bell) repeat (bell) repeat

(Three Bells)

Om Buddha Tara Om, (bell) repeat (bell) repeat

(Three Bells)

Refuge and Precepts

<bride first name> and <groom first name> I will now give you the Threefold Refuge and the Ten Pure Precepts which is the path traditionally taken in a Buddhist Marriage.

Now, will you take the Threefold Refuge and the Ten Pure Precepts?

(Yes, We will)

Please repeat after me:

We take refuge in the absolute purity of Awakened Mind, called Buddha and Tara, the original source and manifestation of all that is. This is the unconditioned nature of all beings.

We take refuge in the truth of Dharma, the universal truth and a life of wisdom and compassion. This is the hearts innermost quest and practice of loving kindness.

We take refuge in the Sangha, our family and community. This is the boundless interconnection of all beings.

Dear <bride first name> and <groom first name> Marriage is a journey of your deepest expression of intimacy. Where intimacy is nurtured, trust is conveyed subtly, widely, deeply, with and without words. The language of intimacy is sincere, inner, and direct. When we are completely intimate with one person, we can meet ourselves in others wherever we go. So, marriage, is not only for your being together, but actually, marriage is your lifelong commitment and true spiritual practice. According to the Buddhist tradition these precepts can guide you in the inevitable days of difficulty and challenge. Therefore, <bride first name> and <groom first name> please recite these precepts with your whole heart.

Precepts

Affirm Life! Do not kill.

We will respect all sentient and insentient beings and act with compassion toward them. In order to live it is necessary for us to take life. We will do so with reverence for the life being taken.

Be giving! Do not steal.

We will act with generosity and open handedness. We will receive only things that are freely given to us. We will remember that clinging and attachment to things is the root of suffering.

Honor the body! Do not misuse sexuality.

We will be conscious and loving in all relationships. In sexuality, we will discern the difference between love and lust and will not use another human being. We will transform the arising of lust into true loving.

Manifest Truth! Do not deceive.

We will honor honesty and truth. We will speak with integrity from the depth of our hearts.

Proceed clearly! Do not cloud the mind.

We will at all times act with mindfulness and clarity. We will not abuse our hearts, bodies and minds with intoxicants or drugs.

See the Perfection! Do not speak of others errors and faults. We will remember the preciousness of silence. We will see the perfection in others and will refrain from gossip or frivolous conversation. We will remain thoughtful and mindful of the quality and effects of our speech.

Realize self and other as one! Do not elevate self and blame others.

We will rejoice in the good fortune of others. We will not, through our thoughts, words or actions, separate ourselves from others through coveting, envy or jealousy.

Give Generously! Do not be withholding.

We will take responsibility for our own greed, anger and ignorance. We will refrain from anger towards, and blaming of others. We will not act out of our negative emotions. Instead, we will remember the vow of , Ahimsa, and will act to the best of our ability with equanimity, sympathetic joy, compassion and loving kindness.

Experience the intimacy of things! Do not defile the Three Treasures. We will hold precious:

The absolute Purity of Awakened Mind called Buddha and Tara.

The Life of Wisdom and Compassion based in Insight, called Dharma.

The mysterious and marvelous appearance and disappearance of all sentient and insentient beings called Sangha.

(BELL)

In a Buddhist Wedding we are married heart to heart, mind to mind, body to body, nature to nature, True Nature to True Nature. Give up your small selves and take loving refuge in each other. Take loving refuge in all things. This attitude in Marriage becomes a living spiritual practice together.

Beloved <bride first name> and <groom first name> do remember that your marriage is a sacred and blessed undertaking, being witnessed by your family, friends, and all beings. Do not forget what is happening right here in your life. And feel the responsibility of this commitment called “Marriage.” This practice, “Marriage Practice,” is your treasure throughout your lives. When things go smoothly and joyously, practice loving mindfulness. When things are difficult and challenging, practice loving mindfulness. This loving mindfulness practice will always be with you and will guide you.

And now <bride first name> and <groom first name> it is time for your Marriage Vows.

(Exchange of Vows)

Do you <bride first name>/ <groom first name> take <groom first name> /<bride first name> to be your husband/wife....

To support in every way that you can?

To be faithful to him/her and worthy of his/her trust?

To be there for him/her?

To be simply yourself?

To share your gifts, your resources, your heart and all of yourself?

To support and respect his/her spiritual process and accept his/her support of yours?

To communicate as clearly, openly and honestly as you can about all things connected to your relationship?

To work with him/her to sustain this family and to love and enjoy him/her?

To be here when he/she hurts and needs you?

To bring your tears and laughter to him/her?

To promise to preserve the magic of your relationship and uphold it's sacredness?

(I WILL)

(Purify with incense) (<bride first name> <groom first name> and Roshi)

Ring Ceremony

(Three Bells) Exchange of Rings... (Three Bells)

(if double ring ceremony)

<bride first name> and <groom first name> it is now time to exchange rings. Will the person (best man) holding the rings please step forward. (Take the bride's/groom's ring and give it to the groom/bride). Say to groom/bride repeat after me:

With this ring I vow to honor and cherish you in sickness and in health, for better or worse, for richer or poorer for all the days of my life.

Pronouncement

Now witnessing that you have both agreed to marry, according to the wisdom of the Buddha, and by the authentic rights vested in me, I joyously pronounce you Husband and Wife.

<groom first name> you may now kiss your <bride first name>!

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I present the newly married
Mr. and Mrs. <groom first name> <groom last name>.