

Home Service Guide



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Note about Romanized Kana in this booklet: Jo and Jō represent two slightly different sets of characters in Japanese. In Hiragana, we write them as じょ and じょう. When you are typing these on a English keyboard, these are written as Jo and Jou. Similarly, Sho, Shō, Do, Dō, etc. These may sometimes be pronounced the same. but the differences are not trivial, and they are often incorrect in Romanized versions of Japanese text, including in many versions of chants and sutras found in many places.

Booklet written for my own private use, with my own favorite texts which may not be representative. Subject to change at any time.

1 Setting the Location

To begin, you need only a relatively peaceful location. You may have an image of Amida, or even of another Buddha if that is what is available. You may have a scroll of Namu Amida Butsu, 南無阿弥陀仏, if that is available. You may light incense or a candle if that is safe and available. You may have flowers. You may have a more elaborate Butsudan or shrine, as is described in other places. The important thing is that your location should be as clean and as respectful as you are able to make it in your situation right now.

2 Begin

To begin, sit or stand alertly in front of your chosen representation of Amida, with your Onenju, or beads, on your left wrist. Slip your right hand in the Onenju with your left with your palms together. Bow deeply, then recite:

Namo Amida Butsu

Namo Amida Butsu

Namo Amida Butsu

3 Juseige

◎	◎			
GA	GON	CHŌ	SE	GAN
HI	SHI	MU	JŌ	DŌ
SHI	GAN	FU	MAN	ZOKU
SEI	FU	JŌ	SHŌ	GAKU

Dharmakara vows to Lokeshvararaja to complete his vows and become a Buddha.
(12th vow)

In these verses, every time that you hear "GAN", it reprints 願, vow.

◎ denotes a bell ring. A bell is very nice, but it is okay if you do not have a bell.

GA	O	MU	RYŌ	KŌ
FI	I	DAI	SE	SHU
FU	SAI	SHO	BIN	GU
SEI	FU	JŌ	SHŌ	GAKU

Dharmakara vows to save all of the impoverished and suffering. (13th vow)

GA	SHI	JŌ	BUTSU	DŌ
MYŌ	SHŌ	CHŌ	JI	PŌ
KU	KYŌ	MI	SHO	MON
SEI	FU	JŌ	SHŌ	GAKU

Dharmakara vows that when he attains enlightenment, his voice shall be heard in all of the ten quarters of the universe. (17th vow)

Listen to people chanting. This is the first place where there is a stylization that many people do where the Tsu becomes an N'. So instead of Butsu, we hear Butn'. (I love these places in chants, and I look forward to the spots where they arrive.)

RI	YOKU	JIN	SHŌ	NEN
JŌ	E	SHŌ	BON	GYŌ
SHI	GU	MU	JŌ	DŌ
I	SHO	TEN	NIN	SHI

Dharmakara will perform practices and
become the teacher of devas and humans.

JIN	RIKI	EN	DAI	KŌ
FU	SHŌ	MU	SAI	DO
SHŌ	JO	SAN	KU	MYŌ
KŌ	SAI	SHU	YAKU	NAN

Dharmakara's great light will illuminate all
and eliminate suffering.

KAI	HI	CHI	E	GEN
ME	SHI	KON	MO	AN
HEI	SOKU	SHO	AKU	DŌ
TSU	DATSU	ZEN	SHU	MON

Dharmakara will use wise eye to remove blind passion, block evil realms, and open good realms.

KO	SO	JŌ	MAN	ZOKU
I	YŌ	RŌ	JI	PŌ
NICHI	GATSU	SHŪ	JŪ	KI
TEN	KŌ	ON	FU	GEN

Dharmakara will outshine the sun and the moon.

I	SHU	KAI	HŌ	ZŌ
KŌ	SE	KU	DOKU	HŌ
JŌ	O	DAI	SHU	CHŪ
SE	PŌ	SHI	SHI	KU

Dharmakara will open the Dharma storehouse, and preach the Dharma with a lions roar. This is my favorite part! Shishi is a lion! Shi Shi Ku is a lion's roar. Also, ShiShi is the left liondog at the entrance to a Shinto shrine.

KU	YŌ	I	SAI	BUTSU
GU	SOKU	SHU	TOKU	HON
GAN	NE	SHITSU	JŌ	MAN
TOKU	I	SAN	GAI	O

Dharmakara will gain wisdom by making offerings to all Buddhas.

NYO	BUTSU	MU	GE	CHI
TSŪ	DATSU	MI	FU	SHŌ
GAN	GA	KU	E	RIKI
TŌ	SHI	SAI	SHŌ	SON

Dharmakara will become as wise and
luminous as Lokeshvararaja.

SHI GAN NYA KO KA
DAI SEN Ō KAN DŌ
KO KŪ SHO TEN NIN
TŌ U CHIN MYŌ KE



All of the thousands of worlds will shake,
and Devas will rain down flowers if these
vows are fulfilled.

NA MAN DA BU



NA MAN DA BU

NA MAN DA BU

NA MAN DA BU

NA MAN DA BU

NA MAN DA BU



GAN	NI	SHI	KU	DOKU
BYO	DO	SEI	I	SAI
DO	HOTSU	BO	DAI	SHIN
Ō	JŌ	AAN	RAKU	KOKU
		◎	◎	◎

This last verse is the Eko, or the Ekoku. In our tradition, it represents Amida bestowing merit on all beings.

Frequently, it is sung in a highly stylized way. Listen to many recordings and sing along to learn it.

4 Quiet Time

This is the perfect time to simply sit or stand in a stable position and breath and listen. I find that the few minutes after I chant are some of my most treasured moments of my day. Because we are Jodo Shinshu, we know that our salvation or enlightenment or whatever it is, is not dependent upon practices such as meditation or mindfulness. So, we can partake in these practices without the heavy burden of expecting something miraculous from them. :-)

5 Some Readings

5.1 The Golden Chain, D. Hunt, 1927, with later revisions

I am a link in Amida Buddha's Golden Chain of Love that stretches around the world.

I must keep my link bright and strong.

I will try to be kind and gentle to every living thing and protect all who are weaker than myself.

I will try to think pure and beautiful thoughts, to say pure and beautiful words, and to do pure and beautiful deeds, knowing on what I do now depends not only my happiness or unhappiness but also that of others.

May every link in Amida Buddha's Golden Chain of Love be bright and strong, and may we all attain perfect peace.

5.2 From Gotoku's Hymns of Lament and Reflection

Though I seek my refuge in the true faith of the
Pure Land,

Yet hath not mine heart been truly sincere.

Deceit and untruth are in my flesh,

And in my soul is no clear shining.

In their outward seeming

All are diligent and truth speaking,

But in their souls are greed and eager and unjust
deceitfulness,

And in their flesh do lying and cunning triumph.

Too strong for me is the evil of my heart. I cannot
overcome it.

Therefore is my soul like unto the poison of serpents,
Even my righteous deeds, being mingled with this
poison,

Must be named the deeds of deceitfulness.

Shameless though I be
And having no truth in my soul,
Yet the virtue of the Nembutsu, the gift of Amida,
Is spread throughout the ten quarters of the
universe.

There is no mercy in my soul.
The good of my fellow-man is not dear in mine eyes.
If it were not for the Ark of Mercy, Amida's great
vow,
How should I cross the Ocean of Misery?

5.3 Shoshige, verse 6

Sakumuni Tathagata appeared in this world
Solely to teach the ocean-like Primal Vow of Amida.
We, an ocean of beings in an evil age of five
defilements,
Should entrust ourselves to the Tathagatas words of
truth.

5.4 Ondokusan, Beck tr., 1921

It is very meet that our souls rejoice exceedingly in
the grace of the great compassion of the Buddha.
Yea, even to the extinction of the body. And for the
gracious giving of our spiritual teachers we must in
like manner rejoice, yea, though our very bones be
broken.

5.5 Hisako Nakamura, Conway tr., 2011

I am always so overjoyed when I remember the fact
that I was not born an animal or hungry ghost.
Because I am a human being,
I have a spirit that cannot be worn down,
That doesn't get smaller,
However much I use it.

6 End

Slip your right hand in the Onenju with
your left with your palms together.
Bow deeply, then recite:

Namo Amida Butsu

Namo Amida Butsu

Namo Amida Butsu



Another little book by Coneko Press