A short explanation by Lama Ivo

Who is Buddha Amitayus and what is this practice for?

Buddha Amitayus is an emanation of Buddha Amitaba and is usually called “The Buddha of Boundless Life”. The meditation practices connected to him bring the power of longevity, perfect health, inner content and outer prosperity. This particular sadhana is extracted from the “Primordial Space of Samantabhadra” treasure cycle and integrates the Anuyoga and Atiyoga approaches. It carries the special blessings of Guru Rinpoche, acts swiftly, strengthens the life force, dispels all unfavorable influences and has the power to pacify the environment.

Transmission requirements

The Nectar of Life belongs to a category of teachings which are usually transmitted in secret. However this particular practice has been specifically blessed for wider dissemination. The only requirement for transmission is that a request has to be made personally to the teacher who holds the lineage [i.e. Lama Ivo, in this case] and his approval has to be granted. The student is further required to receive the reading transmission (lung) at a later date, although he/she can do the practice in the meantime with full blessings. The students are not allowed to transmit the practice to others and everyone who does it without the blessing of the teacher will get no benefit.
Samaya

This practice does not carry heavy samaya commitments. The only requirement is that you do not disparage the Master who transmitted it to you and to regard him with pure perception.

Key points of practice

In this practice we use creative visualization and mantra. This approach is known to those who have a connection to the Vajrayana Buddhist tradition, but the practices from the new Dzogchen cycles have certain specific peculiarities. In the first place, the ‘visualizations’ are never static. The forms of the yidams are pure energy and they move and morph all the time. We connect to that and meditate accordingly. It s very important in this regard to know that we are not trying to create anything – we are only connecting with the Buddha energy which is already there. The whole process of ‘visualization’ and mantra recitation is there to create a bridge to this energy – to transform our awareness into the specific Buddha aspect, which is primordially in us already, albeit at a deep level. When this is done in a focused, but relaxed way, it will dawn by itself, without us creating anything, and our world will shift – our form, perception and action will become the energy form, awareness and action of the yidam. This is what we aim for.

Posture and motivation

This type of practice is better done with legs crossed, although sitting on a chair is permissible as long as the back is straight. You should be very comfortable and relaxed, but the back has to be straight, without straining. This is achieved easily if you put your butt higher than your knees (using pillows). It is also required that you are in a pleasant and quiet place, without distractions and without the risk of your practice being interrupted by others. You should not practice if you are tired, or from a feeling of duty – your approach should be light, calm and smiley. If these conditions are met you shouldn’t have any obstacles to good meditation.
The meditation instructions (sadhana)

You sit very comfortably, with back straight and you rest like that for several minutes, without doing anything in particular, letting the speed subside by itself. When you feel the first shift to calmness:

Clearing the stale prana

After the initial relaxation you should clear the stale pranas of the body. For those who have not received detailed methods and instruction on this, there is a simple and effective method. You just exhale slowly and fully, imagining that what comes out is a smoke-colored light, which consists of all heavy moods, impurities and confused emotions. We then inhale bright white light, which is the blessings of all enlightened beings in the universe and which permeates our body completely, cleansing and refreshing it. You repeat this cycle of exhalation and inhalation three times, keeping these visualizations. The key point is to feel strongly what is happening. After that:

Invocation and homage

We say softly the mantric invocation:

Namo Amitayus Guru Bye

Before us appears Buddha Amitayus, inseparable from our teacher. His body is entirely made of light, not solid. He is very pretty, smiling, shining brightly in all the colors of the rainbow, particularly in white, blue and green. His body changes hues all the time and is very bright. He has magnificent light scarves and he is sitting totally calm, his energy is very strong. He is immovable, and at the same time moving and morphing all the time, he is smiling and at the same time he has all kinds of expressions – he is never static. His hair is golden and tied in a knot, there is no loose hair. He has sparkling jewel earrings. He is sitting relaxed, not in the lotus position, but with the right leg slightly extended. His left hand is relaxed in his lap, holding a small sparkling jewel vase full of the magical nectar of immortality. His other arm is also relaxed at the side without holding anything - it is at the same time down with the palm up, and slightly raised, with the palm facing forward. Apart from the shining light, from the body of Buddha Amitayus flows nectar, like honey, only more yellow and fluid. It pours from his entire body, and fills the whole universe, permeating everywhere. Inside, his light body is filled with countless shining mantras and mantric syllables, although they can not be seen from the outside.

His whole energy is electrifying, everything everywhere is filled with energy and life, everything is buzzing, there is a ticklish feeling, light and joyful.

Mantra and Activity

Keeping this awareness we start chanting the mantra softly, with our own melody. You can also just recite it.

Ala Atana Itta Charya Bhumpala Attasvana Arita Charya Ishvasana Bhandaravasini Itti Kuruyava
Abhidana Svaha

We chant the mantra for a long time. While we do that we are constantly receiving the blessings of the Guru Buddha Amitayus and simultaneously our whole world comes to life and starts renewing itself. Everything starts shining brightly, is full of energy; all dead and dry trees and plants come to life and start blooming, all dirty places become clean and shining and start functioning. The air becomes pristine and clear with little shiny points of light. You can
hear soft melodies ringing everywhere. In the place of all that is broken and ruined appear new and beautiful things, green grass is growing everywhere, everything starts blooming and becomes pretty, all the stale water becomes clear and alive. All sick beings heal and become happy and light. All which is sad in the world dissolves and serenity and joy dawn in the minds of all beings. You can hear birds, melodies and mantras everywhere. The whole universe becomes a pure dimension, comes to life, bright and new.

The mantra is not part of the visualization as something concrete or visible, it is the essence of Guru Amitayus and our way of communicating with him. In the beginning he is before us, but by the magic power of the mantra the whole world gradually becomes his emanation. We gradually dissolve in him and become Buddha Amitayus ourselves. Everything is Amitayus and his mantra. Everything which is apparently "outer" is in fact his emanation.

We keep this awareness as long as the practice is stable and powerful. This can be 20 minutes, it can be one, two or several hours if you are an accomplished meditator. You should never push the practice, but at the same time you should be aware that it needs time to gather power and for your awareness to transform.

**Ending the session**

When we realize that we have started to get distracted too much it is time to gradually stop the mantra recitation, imagining that the whole world melts and absorbs in Amitayus (ourselves) and then the light body itself dissolves in the myriad mantras living inside. Then the mantras themselves coalesce into a single brightly white letter A, and at the same time we say softly, like a sigh “Aaaa….”. Then the A explodes in light and everything vanishes. We relax without reference.

When thoughts begin to dawn, we arise again in the form of Buddha Amitayus and dedicate the merit with:

**Namo Ratna Bodhichitta A A**

This mantra simultaneously blesses all beings, activates the compassion of all Buddhas, and Bodhichitta (the compassionate heart of Enlightenment) dawns in us and in every single being.

We conclude the session with this and we can start living our daily lives, keeping the blessing of Buddha Amitayus in our heart.

*The “Nectar of Life” practice from the “Primordial Space of Samantabhadra” was written down by Ivo, in accordance with the detailed instructions of Guru Padmasambhava, in the spring of 2013 in Yucatan, Mexico. May it bring benefit to all living beings!*
Additional notes

Signs of success

This practice can not be done erroneously. However you do it, it will bring benefit, although this may not always be obvious. The only thing you should not do is to turn against the teacher who bestowed it.

The common signs of success are all kinds of auspicious dreams, as well as dreams which are very bright and lucid. The signs which can appear in the everyday consciousness are better health, improved living conditions, great joy and strength, the attraction of favorable conditions and the spontaneous settlement of conflicts. If you use the practice to heal somebody else this can be successful, although you should be aware that sometimes there may not be visible improvement, since the causes for any given illness can be very diverse and things can just be unavoidable. In any case the best way to practice is without any expectations – this way the meditation has the necessary space to live and grow.

Length of the practice sessions

There is no requirement for the length of a practice session, but everything shorter than 20-30 minutes is too weak and limited. “The Nectar of Life” can be practiced also as a main daily practice.

For all other questions, please contact Lama Ivo directly.