

ANOTHER WAY OF LOOKING AT DEATH...

We are earth, water, fire, air and space.

Life energy and our very existence depends on these elements

When these elements disintegrate, we die.

There are external or physical signs we can observe as these elements are dissolving.

As Earth Disintegrates:

Will tend to lose connection with the ground.

Loss of strength. Drained of normal energy. Easily tired.

Unable to stand; loss of steadiness.

Feeling dizzy.

Tendency to drop things from hands.

May feel as if spinning, falling or sinking even while sitting or lying down.

Feel as if a great weight is upon the body.

The mind is spacey, wandering, and perhaps agitated.

Earth dissolves and is absorbed by water:

1st chakra (root) to 2nd chakra (abdomen).

As Water Disintegrates:

Begin to lose control of bodily fluids: incontinence: runny nose; watery eyes: mouth feels dry.

Require more fluids.

Experience edema and swelling

Feeling nauseous.

Feeling as if on water. This can include dreams of being in or floating on bodies of water such as floating down stream.

The mind becomes more confused, irritable and anxious from the loss of control.

Water dissolves and is absorbed into fire:

2nd chakra (abdomen) to 3rd chakra (solar plexus).

As Fire Disintegrates:

Body temperature fluctuates: the body thermostat fails

Warmth in the body seeps away from the hands and feet; numbness occurs.

The room temperature is hot but the patient feels cold.

Sweating occurs.

The breath is cold.

Eating is minimal, and when it occurs it becomes hard to swallow.

The electromagnetic field around the body shifts inward.

The mind begins to disconnect from the outside world.

Fire dissolves and is absorbed into air:

3rd chakra (solar plexus) to the chakra (heart).

As Air Disintegrates:

Breathing is more difficult, becomes shallow or need for increased respiration.

Generally loses speech and is no longer able to communicate.

Apnea: longer spaces between the in-breath and the out-breath.

May pick things out of mid-air or point to the ceiling.

Outer dissolution has taken place.

Air dissolves and is absorbed into ether.

4th chakra (heart) and upwards.

The inner dissolution of sights, sounds, thoughts, emotions, sensations and feelings take place.

The energy leaves the body through the heart or the top of the head.

*Concepts from: The Tibetan Book of Living & Dying, Sogyal Rinpoche (1992); Deceiving: an intelligent alternative for the final moments of life, Anya Foos-Graber (1989)