

The Death and Dying Process: Dissolving the Elements

a teaching by Lama Dawa Chodak

Many of our Rei Ki students work with people in the dying process. For this reason, we invited Lama Dawa Chodak, a Tibetan Buddhist Lama from Nepal to give a teaching to our Module 3 class on the death and dying process according to the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. The following is an excerpt from this teaching.

“Now our present body is made of the elements. What elements are contained in our body? Earth, water, fire, air, and space. That collection makes our body. So when we are dying then this energy of the five elements dissolves into one another. First the power of the earth element dissolves into the water. Then water’s energy dissolves into the fire. Then fire’s energy dissolves into the air. Then air’s energy, it dissolves into the space or sky. So then, causing death.

When death is first starting and the elements are dissolving into each other you will see many lightning flies around you. First you will feel that when all the elements like to finish their energy and dissolve into each other. Then after this, when the earth’s energy is going to dissolve into water, you will feel there is a very heavy bundle put on your body and you are being pressed down. At that time many people say, “Please put something behind me”, even when they are lying on the bed. Naturally they feel they are being pressed down. So no matter how much pillows you put under their head, they say they are uncomfortable. They want more to sit up. So this feeling comes when the energy of the earth’s power is dissolving into the water.

When it is complete, then the water’s energy starts to dissolve into fire. At that time you feel thirsty. Now, when our mouth and throat feels thirsty, we drink a little water and we feel satisfied. At the time of death, when the water energy is dissolving into fire, first the thirst comes from the tongue, then it spreads to the throat, then nose and eyes. Then it spreads through the whole body. The whole body becomes thirsty so no matter how much water you put in your mouth, it never helps because the energy of the water itself is dissolving. So all becomes dry.



Lama Dawa Chodak and the Module 3 class, Oct. 1998

When the fire’s energy dissolves into air, then the talking stops. You can only see, but you cannot see so clearly. We see the people’s face but we’re not able to pick up this mole. We cannot speak and describe and we are unable to catch the perfect image.

When the air’s energy dissolves into space, then your consciousness and body becomes separate. Your consciousness depends on the air and the air comes out of your body and then that air has no shape and it goes into space. It dissolves into space. So when the consciousness leaves the body you feel like have been thrown from high in the sky. You will feel like you are falling down. But actually you are not falling down, your body is on the bed. But your consciousness has left the body and it has no base. Now our consciousness is based in our body. So at death the base becomes baseless. No base, so it mixes with the sky. So at that time you will feel like you have been thrown down, far from the sky.

When you feel you have been thrown from the sky then your body and consciousness have become separated and the body’s function completely stops.”