

Spiritual Beliefs and Rituals

For many, death is the end, it is so final that nothing else happens after death. However, for others, death is a deeply spiritual event, hence it is only natural that some spiritual beliefs and rituals are infused into after-death care, funerals and burials. Here I will share what I have learned, and hopefully it is interesting, intriguing and informative.

Many ancient cultures believe we have energy bodies infused with our physical bodies. We call it soul, aura, light body, etc. Chakras have become a popular concept in recent years, and they are believed to be key connection points between the energy body and the physical body.

Though called differently, ancient cultures such as Indian, Chinese, Japanese and more all believe such energy centers exist all over our bodies. Yoga, Tai-chi, Reiki are all energy works that aim to align our physical bodies with our energy bodies, and bring forth well being. When our physical bodies die, even after our heart stops or breathing stops, the energy bodies take a while longer to disengage from our physical bodies.

When people die of old age or natural causes, their physical bodies are worn out, so the energy bodies leave more easily because it is time. For

younger people who die suddenly of accidents, suicides or other unnatural causes, their life energy is still strong, so their energy bodies will take longer to fully leave.

Based on this belief, it could be ritualistic and spiritually comforting to do a couple things. Now that they are in the state of pure consciousness, the first few moments can be disorienting. Hence, it can be helpful to verbally state "you have died, and we are now going to clean and prepare your body for the funeral. You are welcome to stay close. We are going to leave your body here for 3 days so your loved ones can come and say goodbye from near and far."

Before preparing the body, we can close out the 7 major chakras by making counter clockwise motion on each of the 7 chakras. This way we acknowledge that this physical body has died, the energy centers are closing, and it's time to completely exit. You can even add a few words of gratitude for the service these chakras have performed for this life experience.

For example, for the root chakra, we can say "thank you for enabling the soul to experience the vitality of life". For the sacral chakra, "thank you for enabling the soul to experience the rich emotions of life" etc. For the crown chakra, "thank you for enabling the soul to experience letting go and rebirth, we now invite you to let go, close the sacred center as you leave this physical body"

In Shamanic cultures, the Shamans would sometimes do a death spiral which is a counter clock motion that starts from the heart chakra and expands to the entire body. This signifies the collection of all remaining life energy and sending it back to the universe.

If a death is sudden and not much time is left before the body gets taken away, we can administer a condensed version of the ritual – quickly state that they have passed, and it's time to leave their physical bodies; then quickly close out the Chakras with crosses from root to crown.

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