TRENDING

Death Becomes more Sustainable with the Launch of the First Human Composting Centre

By bestfolkmedicine · 09/12/2019 · 3 min read



One of the most enigmatic and profound questions in life is definitely 'what happens to us when we die?'

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Even though we don't have any insights on afterlife, we do have news about what can be done with our body after we die.

The after-death centre Recompose offers a new way of managing our bodies on earth after death, i.e. composting.

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The facility, which is expected to open up in the spring of 2021 in Seattle, is designed with the reconnection of human death rituals and nature in mind and to help provide a more sustainable option to existing and conventional burial and cremation.

Organic Way to Create New Life after Our Death

Nowadays, conventional burial includes chemical-laden embalming and cremation requires eight times more energy, claim the architects at Olson Kundig who designed the new facility.

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Recompose will give a natural organic reduction service that will help convert the human remains into soil in around a month and create a new life after death.

The idea for this sustainable way of managing human bodies after death appeared as an idea back in 2016 when founder and CEO of Recompose Katrina Spade and her current team collaborated with architects on a prototype facility during a Creative Exchange Residency at a global design practice that happened in Seattle.

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Now, with the passing of the new bill for human remains in Washington State, this prototype is now a reality.

In May this year, Washington became the first state to recognize natural organic reduction as an alternative method to a burial or cremation. The law will come into effect as of May, 2020.

Deathbed Now Has a whole New Meaning

With the idea of Recompose, the architects have given an entirely new meaning to what we think of when we say deathbed.

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In a typical funeral, deathbeds are the coffins; on the other hand, in this sustainable burial, the person's remains are put in the designated vessel and covered with woodchips.

Afterwards, the remains are aerated to make the environment for the development of the thermophilic bacteria which further breaks the human body into usable soil.

What Are the Benefits of Recompose?

The company claims that the advantages of the human remains conversion into soil helps decrease waste, prevents groundwater pollution, and averts the CO2 emission common in cremation and the manufacturing of headstones, caskets, and grave liners.

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Moreover, with the organic processes transforming our bodies into useful soil, we make the connection with the natural cycles stronger and help enrich the earth.

Despite Recompose's claims that they're the first facility providing organic reduction services, they're not alone in the death positivity movement.

Namely, Caitlin Doughty is a co-owner of Clarity Funerals that provide eco-friendly services like tree planting memories, carbon neutral cremation, usage of natural products, and locally-sourced urns and caskets.

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She's also the founder of the Order of the Good Death which is a team of professionals from the world of funeral industry, as well as academics and artists who're exploring methods to create a death-phobic culture for their mortality which is inevitable.

Sources:

FAST COMPANY

SEATTLE TIMES

NEW YORKER

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