

*“All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy, for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter another.”*

Anatole France



*“I Transform”*

## XIII DEATH

### **Divinatory Meaning:**

Change and deep personal transformation. Elimination of outworn ideas, relationships or beliefs based on revelation of truth. Disruption of old patterns or customs through abrupt or ruthless actions.

Clearing away old mental habits and emotional debris from obsolete way of thinking and living; stripping away of pretensions; spiritual cleansing in preparation for new beginning.

It is important to let go of, or release unhealthy attachments inhibiting personal or emotional growth; death or removal of limiting factors (or people) that stand in the way of experiencing life more fully.

### **Symbolism:**

Change, represented by the Death card is depicted wearing black armor, symbolic of absorption of all life; while the white horse and the white rose stand for desires purified, or the death of selfish or repressive needs. The four figures on the ground are symbolic of the various approaches to change. Lying on his back staring upward, the king represents collapse of a rigid ego from the inability to adapt to change. Standing to face Death directly is the priest, supported by stiff garments symbolizing spiritual beliefs that help to support and protect him during times of change. Turning her head to the look away, the maiden represents partial innocence, knowing that change is inevitable, yet afraid to meet it head on. Full acceptance and complete innocence is represented by the child who holds a bunch of flowers and directly faces the inevitable change that is coming. Through the middle of the card flows the river of change and eternity on which rides the boat that ferries the souls of the dead to a new life. Behind the river is the sun representing light and new life; and is seen rising between the towers of duality.

### **Practical Application:**

Carrying a message of transformation, this card announces the end of the old and beginning of something new through cycles of death and renewal. Death can signify the end of any number of things in any number of way by providing the opportunity to examine and discard outmoded ideas or situations that no longer work. Change may also be initiated through outside or external forces. Either by choice or by chance, the Death card heralds some type of irrefutable, unchallengeable, life changing experience.

Seasons and cycles bring changes in relationships, feelings, emotions, material possessions and spiritual understanding. Awareness and perception combined with accepting the need to clear out the old to make room for the new promotes ongoing personal growth and development.

The intensity of the mental and emotional pain experienced under the influence of Death directly corresponds to our willingness or unwillingness to face the inevitability of change.

*“The worst thing you can do is to try to cling to something that’s gone, or to try to recreate it”.*

*J. Napolitano*

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