



HELPING OUR EARTHLY HUMAN & ANIMAL LOVED ONES

“The departure of life eclipses everything. When a death is good, the room is filled with peace, and all the pain that went before it is forgotten. Where there was mystery, there is knowledge; where there was fear, there is love.”

~ *Call The Midwife* (television drama) ~

The following Risen guidance is for the grief emerging from human transition and also for those who are bereft of their animal loved ones.

One of the most difficult things on Earth—if not *the* most difficult—is to watch someone we love while they’re in pain, whether it’s physical or emotional suffering. Things get even more complicated when we’re not only witnessing a loved one making their transition, but also the pain and suffering of those gathered around the event or connected to it in some way.

Robert, a Risen friend, once shared the following about the transition of our animal friends—all that he says about the animal experience is equally relevant to the human experience.

“Your pain has not been just yours alone. Many of you have had to observe and share, contrary to your will, the terrible discomfort into which your beloved furry, feathery, and leathery children inevitably grow. I say ‘grow’ because that is how they perceive their transition—as a natural part of their lives. Most of them do not have tears as you do and so their messiness becomes even more pronounced and profound as they also must express the ultimate balance, which is a return of the body to that from whence it originally arose. Your struggle to keep the water in their bodies, which in turn struggle against your efforts, results in a conflict that eventually and inevitably strips everyone concerned of all personal dignity.

“Turn your inner perception toward the Great Truth that your children are still alive. Even more alive, for they now enjoy the perfect health and peace that will eventually be yours.

“And they *will* be by your side. Their moments of pain and messiness are over and so it will be for you. The fragments of your former selves, seemingly and utterly heartbroken and separated forever, will slowly and surely begin to draw back together, guided by a Great Hand that possesses the Intelligence to gently join them into your New Self, deeply changed and somehow bigger than you were before. Just as your children have experienced a transition, so have you by the very nature of your loving bonds with them. You will achieve a transition beyond any dream that you have ever had, for you will no longer think it a dream, but will recognize it as a Reality.

“Therefore let this place where we come to share our pain, fear, and loneliness also become the beginning of the Greatest Journey, which is that of Going Home. Upon your arrival, you will immediately be greeted in great joy by your animals, who never have and never will stop loving you in their sacred and shameless adoration.”

The foundation of this book’s intent is to guide us to recognize, acknowledge, and feel our feelings—*all* of them, including worry. But we don’t have to worry if we’re feeling too much or not enough, as there is no space and time when it comes to feelings. Although there’s nothing that says we *should* worry, when it’s there it’s still ok to feel it—at least just enough to recognize that it’s not helping. But after such a recognition, what then can we do?

The Risen would like us to completely absorb and then emit the radiance of the understanding, once and for always, of Creative Source’s never-ending assurance, “Don’t worry, be happy.” There is also a primary suggestion often heard in various ways and in various traditions: “Live and let live.” This suggestion enfolds three key things which are about being, rather than doing, and about living, rather than dying. They are: be here, be still, and be happy.

BE HERE

This is one of many ways of mindfully saying “be and stay present.” Our presence is life, and the feeling of life is living. Whether they are the transitioning person or animal, or not, just sitting with someone brings life into the space and then expands that space. This space becomes a container for silence and for feelings. The feeling of being the container is one of expansion and then of transcendence.

To transcend means to rise above or go beyond believed and perceived limitations. Love transcends all assumed limitations of space. Because life is also love, you can be with your transitioned loved ones, wherever you are, in any perceived space. Love transcends time, so you can also be with them

whenever you are. Thinking of someone effectively connects us with them, even if they no longer appear to be in our presence.

BE STILL

When we are with a loved one who is in the process of transition, what should we be saying? We don't have to say anything. Keep it simple. Let them rest while you rest with them. Be still ... be sensitive ... be respectful ... be open. Listen. Listen to the silence, which needs a container of quiet. Many people who have sat in silence with a transitioning or a bereaving person have reported it to be one of the most spiritual experiences of their life. Space becomes expanded when occupied by silence, especially when shared with another consciousness. At first we might feel uncomfortable with silence but if we let our presence be enough, the fear-energy will transform and the space will expand, which then allows for higher vibrating, spiritual feelings to emerge. It is an exceptional time to practice some kind of mindfulness. Mindfulness will enhance and raise your vibration and possibly even the vibration of others in some way. Stillness expands itself upon your field of mind, and the result is the adventure of growth and learning.

Of course we can talk if someone wants to converse with us. You will know when it feels right to soothe one another with soft speech and maybe a very gentle touch here and there. Quite often, a transitioning person is trying to share with us about their journey's experience. Be still and let the journeying one say whatever they want, even if it sounds irrational, weird, hurtful or mean—this is the time for us to open up and practice acceptance and unconditional love. There's no need to correct them, rationalize, or fix anything. They might appear to be attacking us in anger, but we must recognize that it's ok for them to let the energy of anger flow outward rather than inward, and that there's no need to take the energy personally, but just let it pass through us and then fade like a brief summer storm.

We can also do all of this with our beloved beasts who are transitioning, by outwardly talking to them or just sitting in silence and sharing good thoughts and memories. Believe it or do not, but they understand everything we are saying or thinking, often better than we ourselves do. Tell them out loud or in your mind how much you love them and will never leave them, while assuring them you completely know that they will never leave you, even after they've left their body. After they've risen from their body our animals often choose to stay with us for quite a while before venturing out further beyond our detection. This is because they are already used to consciously traveling in the astral dimensions, and in their wisdom completely understand, without fear, what transition means. They will continue to act as if all's normal, although they may probably wonder why you act as if you can't see and hear them anymore. If we continue to communicate with them they will stay around whenever we want. Let them know that you desire to feel them in some way. Eventually they will want to use their new freedom to explore further outside

the boundaries, but as long as you let them know that they always have a place with you they will return without hesitation.

So we must continue to talk to our human and beastie friends as usual, even though we can't sense their physicality any more. The peripheral areas of our physical eyes are the most sensitive, which is why you may see movement out of the corners of your eyes—these are your friends, so be sure to acknowledge that you see them. And when you at last make your transition, it is a certainty that your animal friends will be there to accompany you on your journey, and your human friends will be eagerly awaiting your arrival.

BE HAPPY

Because it may seem counterintuitive at first, it can take some real superhuman effort and time to become genuinely happy for someone who has transitioned or is about to. Before, we celebrated each time they completed a full circle around the Sun. Now we must strive to realize that this is their new birth day into a glorious, glowing world of unimaginable peace and beauty, spiritual companionship and assistance, and also where they will be preparing for and awaiting our eventual arrival. This includes our animal companions, who are often the very first ones to greet us, if not already having traveled with us, showing us the way Home.

Our happiness is not someone else's, nor do we have any right to insist they be happy in the way we are happy. This understanding is rarely able to be shared aloud, so it's alright keep our inner understanding about our happiness private, as a kind of quiet, prayerful attitude. Yet it *is* appropriate and not a mistake to also feel and be sad for ourselves and others who are left behind.

RITUAL GOOD-BYES

Funerals, burials, memorials, wakes, viewings, sitting shiva, unveilings and the like have evolved from the human need for comfort and to help make saying farewell—but also “see you soon”—easier. We may be called upon to participate in such public and private ritualistic events, which could be formal undertakings of elaborate gloom, or celebrations as unpretentiously bright as a sunny afternoon of gardening, all meaningful in some way.

Some people and cultures find such events uncomfortable or embarrassing, whether privately around a few others or in more public situations. Wherever it is, don't be too quick to speak to or touch someone who is grieving until you have some sense of the situation—this is being sensitive. Maybe they will signal by reaching out a hand to you or touch you first. Perhaps you already have that kind of intimate relationship that will allow you to quietly step into their space and share. Be sensitive to their time, and always keep the ideas of privacy and confidentiality foremost in mind.

If for any reason you are not comfortable attending funerals, viewings and the like, you must also remember to care for yourself. Just in the way that our happiness is not someone else's, neither is our own sadness, and so we must be

just as gentle and kind with yourself as we would with anyone else in grief. It is not necessary to force yourself to attend such events, and the only worth is that which you place upon it, but you must truly believe in and accept the value. If you can find a way to go with the flow, meaning letting your feelings guide you, you will come back to conscious realization that you are immortal, and so therefore you can remove any and all resistance to being still, being here, and being happy.

Most often our resistance is the fear of going into a painful situation and that it will be more than we can bear, and so we must not force ourselves into causing ourselves any more suffering. By now you will have some understanding about resistance and how to change it, but do not force it—rather, ask for help from your own Risen Guides. As exploration and experiment, we can choose to make our intent that we will carry our own sense of immortality and well-being into the midst of such unhappy events, knowing that our life is unfolding perfectly, no matter what. Of course, for most of us it takes much practice to be able to maintain a sense of internal well-being, and all of the practices in this book will, in various ways, activate and restore us to an awareness of who we really are. But again, do not force yourself, and instead pray in some way; a Golden Key is most surely a way in to a way out. (See Chapter 20.)

Before speaking to a bereaved or transitioning person you might do some kind of brief mindfulness or prayerful practice to bring a calming to your aura of presence. Someone in grief or other pain may have heightened or even lessened sensitivity, or alternate between them—they may be easily overwhelmed by light, sound, and movement. They may act out in manic ways or appear apathetic and uninterested in what's going on around them—this includes animals. There's no need to make these things into problems that need to be fixed—as the Risen say, “Do not.” This means to simply allow it. Let it be. Let it flow.

We are all perfect beings in what may seem like an imperfect situation, because perfection itself is a flexible location. Sometimes what we say or do may be taken in the wrong way, or we appear to make a mistake. Whether we are right or wrong, if we feel it's important to apologize we can do so in a simple, quiet way—yet there's no need to overdo it. We could even use a Golden Key to restore balance and harmony, which is presented in Chapter 20.

It's helpful to remember that while someone in grief might not remember what you said, they will most likely remember how you made them feel. The most important thing is to first take care of how *you* feel, because the more at peace you feel, regardless of the situation, the better the vibrations you will bring to the space.

Following are a few things you might be able to offer to a conversation with a transitioning or a bereaving person. If they answer or in some way signal “no” to any of your offers, respect that and don't get pushy. “Ok, no pressure, I'll be around, and you can let me know if you change your mind.” *And mean it.*

This is not the time for resentment, sarcasm, or other such passive-aggressive responses. *You* also might not be feeling very well or even irritable because of stress, so do what must be done to take care of yourself as well.

Emphasis must be placed here on the fact that there are many cultural and ethnically diverse domains and frames of reference regarding grief and mourning. Specifically, they have been identified as communication, space, biological variations, time, environmental control and social organizations. In plainer words, some cultures listen with their ears, and others with their eyes—so smiling or crying might illuminate or confuse those of different cultures. Not all of the suggestions below will likely be culturally appropriate—it's not always easy to figure out who is allowed to do or say what, when, where, how and why. Therefore it could be extremely helpful and likely appreciated if we take time to familiarize ourselves with the do's and don't's that are codified in the grief rituals and rites of passage from within a culture's domains.

The following few examples are informed primarily by my own experiences from a Westernized cultural background consisting of aspects of particular Christian emotional thought systems—including Spiritualism, which is in itself a vibrantly complex mixture of various cultures and eras. But as a blended, modern inhabitant of the 21st century I aspire to let those more concrete, sociocultural traits fade into the background, while seeking to allow more numinous or spiritually living aspects to gently arise into whatever situation is present so that I may offer, at the very least, some aspects of sensitivity and well-being.

- ✧ “How are you doing (or feeling)?” You can then softly echo their answer—“I feel sad, too.” “I miss her, too.” You could also just nod your head in shared silence.
- ✧ Pay attention to their breathing, which will give you information about how they're feeling. As influenced by the principle of entrainment (see Chapters 18 and 20) your own breathing may synchronize to theirs, so if you notice your breaths are shallow or anxious, it might be that you're picking up on their feelings. Adjust your breathing and their body will likely respond by adjusting itself as well, if that is what is needed.
- ✧ If they speak about being in physical or emotional pain or fear, or don't but appear to be uncomfortable in some way, quietly ask if you can help or get them help. “Could I get you something, a drink of water or a little something to eat?” “Would you like me to get a nurse or doctor?” “Could I call someone for you?” “I'm on my way to the store—is there anything you need that I could get for you?”
- ✧ If the answer is no, respect it. “Ok, I understand—not now, but maybe later if you want, just let me know.” If there is no answer,

remember that their sense of time is not yours—it's alright to wait and repeat it in a few minutes, but only once.

- ✧ “Would you like me to stay/walk/sit with you?” If the answer is yes, be extra aware if they become tired and it's time to leave. “I'm feeling like it's time to stop or get back home, how about you?”
- ✧ *Be very careful and frugal with email and especially texting*, as they are contagiously poor transmitters of feelings, and words often become misconstrued. They can also be overwhelming in their signal for immediate attention, as well as the sheer number of them popping up. You might even gently suggest that you could help find a way to turn off certain aspects of their technology for a while.

Things probably best *not* to say:

- ✧ “I know just how you feel.” “Everything is for the best.”
- ✧ “Don't cry—she wouldn't want you to; it would upset her. Don't cry—you'll upset the others.”
- ✧ “Be strong. Be brave. Be positive. Time heals all wounds. You'll get over this. Are you still not over this?”
- ✧ “At least he lived a good/long life. The good die young. He's in a better place now. God needs him more than we do.”
- ✧ “You'll find someone else/remarry someday. You can always have another child. You can always get another pet.”

You might notice that “I'm sorry” is not included here. Many of us have been taught to automatically, non-consciously say this, almost as if apologizing. Knowing what you know now, it is being left up to you to feel your way to what feels better when wanting to express your feelings of authenticity. Will you be offering only more sorrow to theirs? Or could you offer a different expression of uplifting emotion, which could even be unpretentious silence?

Undeniably, grief may be frightening and take us to places of seemingly no return. Our modern Westernized world generally urges us to move away from bereavement as quickly as possible and not take too long a look at it, and certainly not to talk about it. But it's ok to look at it to understand what is happening, and—at some point and in some way—it's ok to talk about it to shift the energy of understanding in a new direction. But we can't necessarily talk about it with everyone, nor do we have to feel that we ought to. Speaking with a therapist or grief counselor in the privacy of their safe and confidential space can be a good place to start, and sometimes we're fortunate enough to have certain friends to share our experience and feelings with as well.

The human grief response to “death” can bring us together or keep us apart. Modern Western culture still tends to view transition through a lens of medicalized suffering rather than one of spiritualized healing and joy. Because

most of us have had some kind of grief experience, a commonality exists that sometimes allows us to join with others in discussions about our suffering. Let the grieving person tell whatever story that wants to come out of their mouth, no matter how odd or inappropriate you might think it is. We humans tell and re-tell our stories, for that is how transformation—including that of suffering—is accomplished on the Earth plane. It's why Tim and I share some of our stories with you, so that there may be a gradually increased understanding of this process, from which validation and strengthened confirmation of your own experiences will arise.

Every story begins with “once upon a time” and every story has an ending—which is really another beginning. Stories must be told or else they become secrets which eventually eat their way back out. Trying to keep them from coming out will result in their implosion, which then sets up a resonance that attracts negativity like iron shavings to a magnet.

When some of my still-embodied friends and I get together, we may sometimes feel an urge to re-tell our personal stories of loss. At times there's a bit of underlying inner guilt that chastises, “They don't want to hear it *again*.” Yet because we love each other and there is great trust in the safe-holding of our friendship, we've come to realize just how important it is that our stories are retold. Thus we experience that our narratives change over time. More details emerge from each new telling; more connections are made, and flashes of insight appear out of nowhere. Our tales of death are revealed to actually be novels of life, unsolved mysteries much stranger than fiction. And we've also noticed another miracle—we *enjoy* telling our stories because of the joyful truths that have finally emerged from the depths of grief. Somehow in the telling, joy finds its way back into the chronicles of our lives. Happiness is possible again. Here is grief transformed.

What about our beloved, now-relocated Risen Ones? By now, you likely have a clearer understanding and acceptance that although they might be out of sight, they are not out of Mind, wherein we all dwell. In plainer words, if you are at their funeral or any other gathering in their name, they are locating right there as well. As the poet Henry Scott Holland so compassionately put it:

Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?

I am but waiting for you, for an interval,
Somewhere very near, just around the corner.

Throughout this book, People in Spirit have, in many stimulating ways, expressed the truth of their undeniable existence in a new state of mind—or “geography”—and are, in this and every moment, living in the great fullness of unbiased, fearless curiosity ... they are in peace. They bring this peace with them wherever they are, and if they're with you at such ceremonial gatherings, be assured that they want so very much for you, the still-embodied, to partake of their serenity. Be also assured that whether you decide to go to such

gatherings, or not and stay away—wherever you are, they will be right there with you, if that is what you want. You can commune with them from the sunny quiet of your back porch as easily—perhaps even more so—as you can next to a hole in the ground. What matters to them is you.

Grief shuts us down, and can also open us up. Be still, quiet the mind, take deep breaths, and relax ... allow yourself to open up to their presence; to the *feeling* of their presence. Tune into one another. Let yourself talk and listen—door open, or door closed.



My life is always unfolding openly, no matter what.

PONDERINGS

- ∞ Door open, or door closed.
- ∞ Our Relocated Risen Loved ones are locating with us here, right now, somewhere very near, just around the corner.
- ∞ Tune in to and speak with one another.
- ∞ Each re-telling of our story becomes a new one; joy finds its way back up from the depths of grief and into the living chronicles of our ever-enlightening existence.
- ∞ Our tales of death are revealed to be novels of life, unsolved mysteries much stranger than fiction.
- ∞ It's ok to tell and re-tell our stories.
- ∞ It is appropriate and alright to feel and be sad for ourselves and for those left behind.
- ∞ Someone in grief might not remember what you said, but they will most likely remember how you made them feel.
- ∞ Let it be. Let it flow.
- ∞ We are all perfect beings in what may seem like an imperfect situation, because perfection itself is a flexible location.
- ∞ Be sensitive to time, privacy, and confidentiality.
- ∞ Practicing mindfulness or affirmative prayer will raise your vibration and perhaps that of those near you as well.
- ∞ Keep it simple—there's no need to overdo anything.
- ∞ Love transcends space and time. Because life is also love, you can be with your loved ones wherever and whenever you are.
- ∞ Live and let live.
- ∞ Be here. Be still. Be happy.
- ∞ Our presence is life, and the feeling of life is living.
- ∞ Don't worry, be happy.



The great and sad mistake of many people—among them, even pious persons—is to imagine that those whom death had taken, leave us. They do not leave us. They remain! Where are they? In darkness? Oh, no! It is WE who are in darkness. We do not see them, but they see us. Their eyes, radiant with glory, are fixed upon our eyes filled with tears. Oh, infinite consolation! Though invisible to us, our dead are not absent.

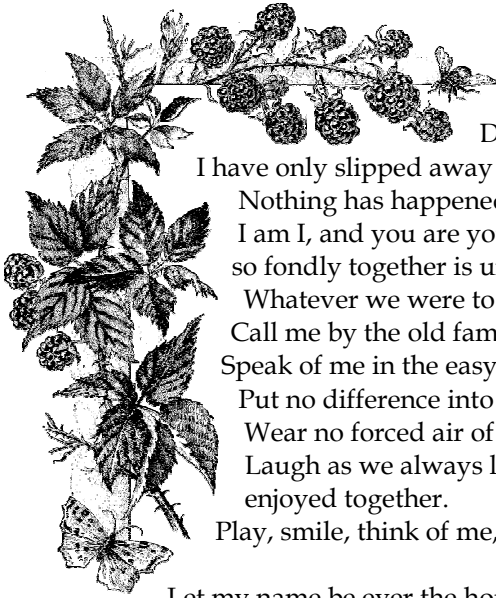
I have often reflected upon the surest comfort for those who mourn. It is this: a firm faith in the real and continual presence of our loved ones; it is the clear and penetrating conviction that death has not destroyed them, nor carried them away. They are not even absent, but living near to us, transfigured: having lost, in their glorious change, no delicacy of their souls, no tenderness of their hearts, nor especial preference in their affection. On the contrary, they have, in depth and fervor of devotion, grown larger a hundredfold.

~ Attributed to a sermon by Karl Rahner, FSJ



DEATH IS NOTHING AT ALL

Henry Scott Holland
(1847–1918)



Death is nothing at all. It does not count.

I have only slipped away into the next room.

Nothing has happened. Everything remains exactly as it was.

I am I, and you are you, and the old life that we lived
so fondly together is untouched, unchanged.

Whatever we were to each other, that we are still.

Call me by the old familiar name.

Speak of me in the easy way which you always used.

Put no difference into your tone.

Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.

Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes that we
enjoyed together.

Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.

Let my name be ever the household word that it always was.

Let it be spoken without an effort, without the ghost of a shadow upon it.

Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as it ever was.

There is absolute and unbroken continuity.

What is this death but a negligible accident?

Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?

I am but waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near,
just 'round the corner.

All is well. Nothing is hurt; nothing is lost.

One brief moment and all will be as it was before.

How we shall laugh at the trouble of parting when we meet again!
