

May 2, 2021 HGSA Talk
Rev. Dr. Marilyn Johnson-Kozlow

The Day Spirit Took My Hand

It has been nearly seven years since the 2014 Cocos Fire destroyed most of the buildings of Harmony Grove Spiritualist Association—although it never destroyed our spirit. This talk is about how Spirit walked with me a few days before the fire.

My story begins with being at the Grove on Sunday, Mother's Day, May 11, 2014. It was a sunny day, warm and dry. The Grove was green, bright, and beautiful and I was glad to be there.

After working in the office, I went to my house at the Grove to relax. What a wonderful home, a solid house, built in the 1930s. The property has four magical areas: street level, the lower-level yard underneath the very old oak tree, the main upper-level yard, and then the small area above the house.

On that Mother's Day, it was lovely how the sunshine fell into the house and made dappled patterns through the lacey curtains. I noticed there was an otherworldly stillness. I fell into a sort of reverie, with a slightly out-of-body sensation. I just seemed to be listening, feeling, and sensing.

Monday was a workday and later I was going to San Marcos, from where I commuted to work. I looked around to see what needed to be done before I left. Without thinking about it, I got up and closed all the windows, something I had gotten out of the habit of doing. A vague thought came to me that I was doing it for safety. I tidied up the house.

I went outside without any real plan but ended up spending hours working on the yard. I started by cutting off every dead branch and leaf I saw. Then I removed them from the yard. I looked around and smiled. Everything looked vibrant: green and healthy!

Then I decided to take down the many hanging decorations from the patio roof. The decorations were fun: some spun around, some made sounds, some sparkled in the sun. Many were sentimental house-warming gifts. With no good reason, I took every one of them down, even though I loved them.

Previously, I had cleaned out some overgrown succulents. I had put them in three big plastic containers filled with water. For whatever reason, I didn't like where I had originally placed the containers. Even though the containers were very heavy, I moved them several places around the yard. Finally, I placed them under the lime tree in the upper yard. It felt like just the perfect spot! With everything in place, I gave the yard a good soaking. When I looked around it felt like the house and yard were happy and at peace.

The Cocos Fire began three days later. No one could have predicted it. Fire officials concluded that a single ember from San Marcos traveled on the hot and dry wind that led to the conflagration in our beautiful, but drought-damaged, Harmony Grove.

The fire came to my house from the east, travelled across the lawn, and stopped at the patio attached to my house. The house was saved, possibly because of a change in direction of the wind.

What I also know is that Spirit had led me with such a beautiful and gentle hand to close the windows, take down the patio decorations, remove the dry plant matter, water the yard, and place the succulents in just the right place. Those succulent-filled pots of water served as a fire damper between the upper and lower yard, where the wind funnels up the stairs.

For many years I felt guilty that my home still stood when so many other homes did not. I think that is why I, along with so many others, devoted so much time working on the grounds and helping the Grove survive. But here we are seven years on, survivors and thrivers, with a new day and new outlook at the Grove. All is in divine order.

What I know for sure is that each of us has gotten messages from Spirit: that slight nudge to take the alternate route home, the loving message from a beloved family member who has passed in Spirit, or the smiling face in the clouds. I believe and accept those messages from Spirit.

What I love and appreciate about messages from Spirit is that they are just the right message for me to receive at the perfect time.

I would like to thank you for reading my story and may God bless you for your love and support of the Grove.

Rev. Dr. Marilyn Johnson-Kozlow

Rev. Marilyn has been a spiritualist with Harmony Grove Spiritualist Association since 2008. She has her mediumship and healing certificates from HGSA and has served on the board of directors for several years. She was ordained as an HGSA Minister in December 2019.

She has enjoyed contributing to church service at Harmony Grove as a healer and medium. She is an approved HGSA Psychic Fair reader and a lifelong spiritual seeker.

She teaches at Cal State San Marcos. In her free time, she works as an artist and astrologer. She lives at the Grove with her husband and Cha-Cha, their Chihuahua.