

LILIPOH

the spirit in life

SPRING 2025

What BLOOMS *After* RAIN

The GRIEF *of* DISCONNECTION

WITNESS *of* DARKNESS

TRANSFORMING GRIEF
Through SERVICE

GRIEF *is the* PRICE *of* LOVE



GRIEF

\$7.00



ISSUE 119 VOL. 33

Rational Cereal

Vital, sustaining energy.

Original & Cinnamon
centering strength.

Pure & Purifying cereal.

Real organic, long-lasting
satisfaction. 3 whole grains,
oat, spelt, & rye; 3 dried
fruits, lowbush blueberry,
raisin, & cranberry; and 2
seeds, pumpkin & sunflower.



© 2025 Eden Foods 14059

 EDEN FOODS®

Clinton, Michigan • 888-424-3336

cs@edenfoods.com • www.edenfoods.com

dear readers



We are honored to offer you the spring 2025 issue of Lilipoh, with the theme “The Many Faces of Grief.”

It has been fascinating and inspiring to watch this issue take on a life of its own, and to experience the many ways that the authors featured here engage with this universally human emotion. In these pages, it becomes clear that the complex and multi-layered ways that grief manifests are far deeper and broader than, at least in the twenty-first century, we typically consciously acknowledge. Grief for people – born and unborn – pets, places, are all shared here. Personal grief, collective grief, grief that lives in our imaginations and memories, our minds, our hearts, our bodies. The faces of grief are every age, color, social class, culture, and time in human history. Faces whose eyes meet ours from beyond time and space with longing, seeking compassion and connection.

And, such a generous sharing from so many who have borne witness to the grief

of others – as well as their own – with courage, deep listening, and simple, humble, yet eloquent words and images. Additionally, you will encounter many invaluable resources in the form of organizations, books, processes, and people who are out there and available to the rest of us in our time of individual and collective need.

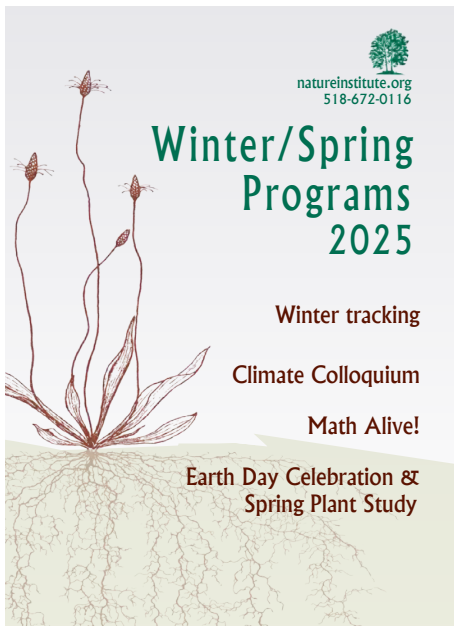
I encourage you to spend time with the stories, poems, and images in these pages; to linger, to ponder, to be open to the suffering and resolution that they hold. I trust they will enrich and deepen your own understanding of the grief that lives in you, in others, in our society, and in the world. It could be that this common bond of experience is what bridges seeming differences and brings us together.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Karen". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'K' and a trailing flourish.

With warmth and gratitude,
Karen (she/her)

LILIPOH stands for Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.

Life can mean the quality of life, inner life, consciousness – in other words, living a life enhanced through understanding. Liberty may mean the freedom to choose how one lives. Pursuit of happiness is a high term which has often been used superficially. It can mean the joy of helping each other along the road of inner and outer health, and toward a better world.



natureinstitute.org
518-672-0116

Winter/Spring Programs 2025

Winter tracking
Climate Colloquium
Math Alive!
Earth Day Celebration & Spring Plant Study

AdminService



Bookkeeping and Accounting Services

Personalized, Professional and Accurate

Specializing in small businesses and non-profit organizations

Virtual / remote – safety in social distancing – or onsite

610-917-9101 • www.adminservice.com

Steiner Health

Ann Arbor, MI

Life Force Intensive Session

Regain your health with **two weeks of anthroposophic medical care** and therapies designed for patients with chronic illness and cancer, suitable for anyone wishing to improve their health.



Learn more at
steinerhealth.org
or call 734-222-1491

2025 Sessions starting July 21st & October 20th
Location: Ann Arbor, MI

The Early Childhood Teacher Education Center



ENROLL TODAY!

- Birth-to-Seven Certification
- Birth-to-Three Certification
- Summer Courses
- Online Workshops




603.357.3755 sophiashearth.org

Move Over Dr. Sears...



The Nourishing Traditions Book of Baby & Child Care

nourishingtraditionsbaby.com



Invest in our healthy future!

The Healing Plant Garden Workshop at Camphill Village Copake is a unique collaboration between the social initiative of Camphill Village and an integrative pharmacy.

But the dusty old barn where it all started is no longer viable.

We need a modern and accessible working environment for the village to process herbs and plants and make teas, herb mixes and medicine tinctures that are used locally and all over the country. The new facility will expand our capacities.

With your help this unique social and professional endeavor can continue to stand as an example of social responsibility and beauty for all to see.

We are halfway to our \$4 million goal... Gifts of any size, matching grants and endowments will help us close the gap and sustain our work for decades to come.

Donate today: camphillvillage.org/donate

Or contact lklein@camphillvillage.org 518-329-7924 Ext. 136

PSYCHOLOGY-BASED

Brand & Web Design

FOR BUSY ENTREPRENEURS



IMAGINE... having a
professional graphic
designer all to yourself
for an entire day!

Hi, I'm Angelica, Waldorf graduate, opera singer, and designer of LILIPOH for 18 years. When you work with me, I'm 100% yours during our time together—laser-focused on your business, pinging you proofs as I work, and then quickly incorporating your feedback.

During your DesignDay, I even shut down my email and silence notifications! And because we make a plan in advance, you know exactly what you can expect to be completed. So you can cross that project right off your list... by dinnertime. *Phew!*

brandyourlight.com

BRAND YOUR LIGHT

Angelica Hesse | 518.253.6935
[@brandyourlight](https://www.instagram.com/brandyourlight)

LILIPOH

LILIPOH is a quarterly publication featuring an anthroposophic approach to health; encompassing holistic therapies, preservation of childhood, education, the arts, community, agriculture, nutrition and social.

ISSUE 119, VOL. 33

LILIPOH PUBLISHING

CLAUS SPROLL, PRESIDENT

ACQUISITIONS EDITOR

CHRISTY KORROW

MANAGING EDITOR

KAREN DAVIS-BROWN EDITOR@LILIPOH.COM

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING MANAGER

STEPHANIE O'NEILL INFO@LILIPOH.COM

CREATIVE DIRECTOR / DESIGNER

ANGELICA G. HESSE

COVER ARTWORK

LORRAINE ROY

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT

SOPHIA CHRISTINE MURPHY (DINGLE, IRELAND)

BUSINESS OFFICE

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

SANDRA VOLGGER-BALAZINSKI

ADS@LILIPOH.COM

PHONE: 610-917-0792

SUBSCRIPTIONS & WEBSITE INFORMATION

ANGELE HUNT INFO@LILIPOH.COM

CORPORATE COUNSEL

LEE SMITH, JD, LL.M.

Direct inquiries to:

LILIPOH, 317 Church Street

Phoenixville, PA 19460

Phone: (610) 917-0792; Fax: (610) 917-9101

e-mail LILIPOH: subscribe@lilipoh.com

www.lilipoh.com

The articles printed in LILIPOH represent the viewpoints of the authors, have been collected for their interest to a wide readership and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the publisher. None of the material herein is intended to replace the professional services of a physician. Articles do not represent any one political or ideological view. LILIPOH magazine is under no obligation to accept any advertisement and retains the sole, discretionary right to reject advertisements.

All Rights Reserved. No article or part of this publication may be reproduced or copied in any form without prior written permission of the publisher. Copyright ©2025 LILIPOH Publishing Inc., Phoenixville, PA 19460

PRINTED BY ENGLE PRINTERS, MT. JOY, PA

in this Issue

FROM THE EDITOR

- 1 The Many Faces of Grief KAREN DAVIS-BROWN, MANAGING EDITOR

SPECIAL FOCUS: GRIEF

- 7 What Blooms After the Rain JENNIFER DAVIS-BACHMAN
- 14 Rest in Peace, My Friend JUDY JASEK DVM
- 17 When Saying Hello is Saying Goodbye SANDRA MENDEZ M.D., F.A.C.O.G.
- 20 Grief is the Price of Love AN EXCERPT FROM THE MEMOIR
SEE NO STRANGER BY VALARIE KAUR
- 21 Omen POEM BY PETER BRUCKNER
- 22 Threads MARY LOU SANELLI

WORKING THROUGH GRIEF

- 25 Healing the Grief of Disconnection CHRYSTAL ODIN
- 34 The Sometimes Hum Along Book LYNN MULLER
- 38 To Be a Witness of Darkness MARGIT ILGEN
- 42 Making Space and Time for Bereavement and Loss JOYCE REILLY, AAP

EDUCATION

- 49 Cultural Appreciation Article Series #2: An Exploration of Relationship JOAQUIN MUÑOZ, AIYANA MASLA, AND MASUMI HAYASHI-SMITH

EURYTHMY

- 56 Transforming Grief Through Service LYNN STULL

POETRY: ZEINA AZZAM

FROM THE COLLECTION *SOME THINGS NEVER LEAVE YOU* (TIGER BARK PRESS, 2023). PERMISSION FROM THE AUTHOR TO REPRINT IN THIS ISSUE.

- 36 Death in War
- 36 To the Mother in Baghdad
- 61 A Refugee Grows Old

APPLY NOW for a Summer 2025
Low-Residency Program in
Waldorf Teacher Education

**Early Childhood • Elementary
Elementary Music
High School**

**Financial Aid
Available**
including
**Diversity Fund
Scholarships**
plus MEd option

Register Now!
Summer Series 2025
Online & In-Person Courses

 **Sunbridge**
Institute

Full Member: AWSNA / WECAN
Partner: SUNY Empire State
SUNBRIDGE.EDU
Inspiring Education Since 1967

Discover yourself through artistic movement
Explore the art of Eurythmy



Pacific Eurythmy.com
A Journey of Creative Expression and Self Discovery



**Lyre 2025
Conference**

"Let the Tone Come Alive"
with **Christian Giersch**

Master Lyrist, Composer & Teacher from Germany

Fri-Wed, August 15-20
at **Camphill Copake, New York**

Children ages 9 to 16 are welcome at our
"We Love Music" **YOUTH CAMP** with master
teacher **Veronika Roemer (Sat-Wed, Aug
16-20)**, which will run in tandem with the
Lyre Conference at Camphill Copake.

www.lyreassociation.org/events



The SWORD, The PEN, & The ARROW
A Youth Summer Program - Ages 11-16 **July 6 - July 11, 2025**



www.spatialdynamics.com
518-695-6377
info@spatialdynamics.com



What Blooms After the Rain

JENNIFER DAVIS-BACHMANN

*"What is grief, if not love
preserving?"*

-VISION, WANDAVISION
(A MARVEL TELEVISION SHOW)

No one deserves to lose an unborn child, yet it happens more often than many expect. It is also a topic that does not get discussed publicly. It comes with shame, embarrassment, suspicion, heartache, surprise, shock, disappointment; it can be scary and depressing. Miscarriage is a situation that can happen to a woman and couples more than once. Miscarriage is a life changing event. Let me share my story with you on how grief came to visit and how I worked through it.

The First Loss

On January 7, 2013 at 4:15pm, I walk alone, excited and nervous, down the dimmed hallway of the hospital towards the Ultrasound/Radiology Department. I am happy to be able to hear the rhythmic heartbeat of my second child growing within my womb. My long time dream and wishes will be coming to fruition. I check in at the desk and am directed to wait to be called back when it's my turn. After a few minutes, my turn arrives

and I head back. There is a quiet station with a large lounging chair covered in hard gray plastic, with a computer screen and equipment situated in front of me facing away. The sonographer asks me questions, types my answers into the profile, and informs me on the procedure for receiving the ultrasound.

My excitement mounts when my shirt is moved up over my small swollen mound of a belly. (A mere fourteen weeks along and my belly is slightly larger earlier than it was with my first child). The aqua-colored gel squirts on my skin, cooling to the touch, and then spreads around

“ NO ONE
DESERVES
TO LOSE AN
UNBORN
CHILD.



Lilipoh at your 'fingertips' at all times!

Get a one year
online subscription
of Lilipoh for
only \$10!!

SIGN UP AT

lilipoh.com



ART OF TEACHING

Deepening Our Practice Together

JULY 7-11, 2025

Join us in Southern California for
a week-long renewal training,
with special guest Jamie York.

Curriculum Training

Early Childhood &
Grades 1 - 8



Open to All Practicing Waldorf Teachers

For new and seasoned teachers alike, this in-person
Art of Teaching experience is designed to help teachers
prepare for the year ahead, deepen their practice
and fill their cups.

Registration: \$475

Early Bird Rate \$425
if registered by 5/1/25

www.JourneySchool.net/renewal

Email: renewal@journeyschool.net
(949) 448-7232



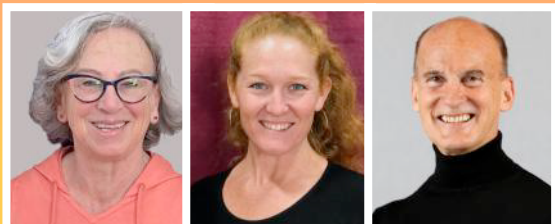
Dancing through the Ages

with Valerie Baadh Garrett, Katie Moran, Jaimen McMillan

June 29 - July 2, 2025

10 North Main Street, Mechanicville, NY

All are welcome on this moving journey through time.
Come join us as we dance the story of human development through the ages!



In-person & On-line

www.spacialdynamics.com

518-695-6377

info@spacialdynamics.com



into growing swirls and spirals over where the uterus is positioned. The ultrasound wand is gently pressed onto the mound and all I can see is the sonographer's facial expressions of what seems like confusion, defeat, and a glimpse of momentary fear. She spots something and I ask what she sees. She scans the area on the screen

sonographer returns, she says that I can go and wait for a phone call from my doctor.

In my mind I thought, "Okay I really know that something about this situation is not right. It seems unjust, and my right to know what is going on is being dismissed. Now I know what it's like for the dust on the floor when it gets swept

“THERE WAS NO CONSIDERATION FOR
TREATING ME WITH COMPASSION AS
A WHOLE PERSON.

again with even more concentration and focus on getting digital measurements, seeing shapes within the uterus, and then silence. The time to be hearing the beating of blood flowing through the tiny heart of the babe passes and flits away. I ask, can I see what she is looking at? Is there a baby inside, to be seen? Is there a heartbeat? Silence. Crickets weren't even chirping in my mind. It was like the wind stopped blowing and the world went silent. The moment seemed like a year.

I asked if there was something wrong? Silence. Deep internal alarms are sounding and blood is pounding hard in my ears. There has to be something not right and she is not telling me. The words that rolled out of the slit of her mouth were "Wait here please. I will be checking with the doctor/radiologist about what they can determine from the ultrasound." She stepped away before we can both fathom what impending doom awaits us both if the incorrect thing would have been said. At this time, it was obvious that something big was not right. I prepare to hear bad news. Yet, when the

under the rug. With this last statement it felt like there was no consideration for treating me with compassion as a whole person or a pregnant woman going through this alone at the moment. Worst of all, I was not being communicated with then and there about what was discovered in the ultrasound. This became a situation of trauma and loss immediately when I was not able to see or hear anything on the ultrasound screen.

At the time I was unaware of the correct procedure. In my ignorance and naivety, I did not understand why I was being sent home (away) when this seemed like a situation where I should stay for more explanation. I did not know that I could call the medical provider with the sad news from this type of ultrasound right away. I did not know that I could stay there and make this phone call.

After the ultrasound and receiving the prompt to leave with this heartbreak, I stood up, gathered my belongings and made my way down the hall about thirty steps. A whisper in my head said reach out for support. I pulled out my phone and immediately called my mom. When I hear

I Carry You With Me

A little piece of life I carry with me;
Everyday of my existence I feel your presence.
I created a beautiful space for you with magical
creatures,
blossoming full of life, and peaceful guidance.
My heart beats a new sound and
My soul smiles knowing you are in a safe place.
It just happened that I knew I could create you
and this space for you,
with the feeling of unconditional love.
All I had to do was love you!
I did all of this and gave you part of me.
You love me in return so much I feel it deep to
my core.
You and I will be together again face to face
someday,
But for now I will reach out to you when I need to
know why, how, and when.
My babies, I carried you in my womb and
Now I carry you in my heart.

Jennifer Davis-Bachmann

her voice, a river comes out my eyes and I pour out my soul. My heart was breaking and I didn't know what to do, to fight or flee, so I froze. My mom asked if I had called the doctor myself, and I replied "No...". She said that I should do this and see what they advised, then call her back. I did this before even stepping foot outside of the hospital doors.

The Aftermath

When I called the doctor's office, a doctor (not my primary physician/OBGYN) explained that the ultrasound office should have had me stay there and call the doctor immediately to discuss the ultrasound results. She said this in a very supportive way, acknowledging that she was sorry and validating the effects of the experience. Also, I was scheduled for a follow up appointment with my primary physician/OB GYN the following day to discuss the results of the ultrasound, receive a physical exam, and find out the next steps. After the call ended, I walked to my car. I sat processing in silence for a bit, then I called my mom back to figure out a plan and discuss how I was going to handle this situation. I realized that I was carrying a non-living, unborn child in my womb and wondering how or what to do about telling my partner at home in the evening.

The quiet waiting time between the start of the trauma and the sharing of the experience with my partner felt like forever. I realized I was going to choose to keep moving forward with my everyday activities because I have an amazing, loving, and supportive partner and kiddo at home to be with and care for. I have the present moment.

Sharing the sad news and my experience went as expected; we were both disheartened. I felt isolated because I did not know how to explain the emotions rising within me, I did not know fully what was happening, and I did not know how to identify my emotions within this trauma. I only knew something was not right. The next day I met up with my mom at the follow up appointment. The

“WE WERE IN A RAIN STORM AND WAITING TO SEE WHAT CAME NEXT; WAITING TO SEE WHAT BLOOMS AFTER THE RAIN.

primary physician was there and she explained that the results for the ultrasound were showing no heartbeat from the fetus. This meant the pregnancy stopped when the heartbeat stopped and my body was beginning the process of miscarriage. The reasons were not fully known. It was not my fault or my partner's fault, it was something outside of anyone's control. The next step would be to arrange for a prescription medication to be used to help the cervix dilate and release the fetus in preparation for the Dilation and Curettage ("D&C," the operation to remove the fetus and any excess tissue in the uterus.) This appointment was hard to get through, but I felt very supported during this doctor's news and information and by my mom's presence.

Within the following two weeks of the ultrasound, I received the oral medication and took it as prescribed. Within twenty-four hours of taking the last pill and waiting for something to happen, I called the primary physician and let her know that nothing had progressed, so instructions were given to apply the medication internally overnight. By morning there was a pause in the contractions within a two to four hour time period of the medication taking effect and my cervix was dilated enough to allow for the delivery of the fetus. A strong contraction happened, a pressure in the abdomen, and a slippery whooshing feeling came and went. That was the birth of my baby. It came and went so fast. I was so sad and shocked from

the situation I was in. I felt alone, but I knew I had loved ones near.

I called the hospital to let them know the status of the medication's effects and of the delivery of the fetus. The hospital said come in as soon as possible and the appointment will continue to happen as scheduled. My family arrived, and we made our way to the hospital. I went through the procedure safely and recovered smoothly over the next week. The toughest part was the emotional wounding and the beginning of grief; recovering from the trauma and loss.

No Foot Too Small

No Foot Too Small is a non-profit born out of a desire to draw awareness to pregnancy loss and infant mortality while encouraging the celebration of angels. The No Foot Too Small mission is to: Celebrate Angels; Unite Families; and Build Birthing Bereavement Suites. Check out their website to learn more.

www.nofoottoosmall.org

I was feeling defeated and empty, just putting one foot in front of the other to finish this part of the process. Becoming more and more. How could this happen? How could I let this happen? Will I ever have any more children? Is this my fault? Why did this happen to me and my partner? What went wrong? All the hopes and dreams that won't

one healthy child. The grief experienced was the love for what was and was lost.

At the time I did not know what to do with this sadness and heartbreak. It was always present, wrapped around me like a cloak. I started seeking information on how to heal from the loss and to celebrate the life that once was growing and

“ I GREW TO SEE GRIEF AS NOT JUST SADNESS, BUT AS A GIFT.

be fulfilled. Our goals were crushed. A downward spiral of sadness and grief. Our journey was shifting and we needed to shift with it.

What followed were many appointments and blood tests to watch the body's regulation of hormones. This was to ensure my body was healthy and would return to a regular monthly cycle. Eventually I physically recovered, but the grief and heartbreak were still fresh and would be for a long time. We were in a rain storm and waiting to see what came next; waiting to see what blooms after the rain.

The Journey Continues

This journey of loss and grief lasted until 2018. My partner and I both wanted to have more children, and we were successful with becoming pregnant two more times. Both times resulted in miscarriages. One pregnancy was a partial molar pregnancy¹ (2014) and the other pregnancy was a full molar pregnancy (2017). There was new sadness and a heartache each time. This was also our sign to stop trying for a “Rainbow Baby”² and carry on with our lives filled with gratitude for our

dying inside me. It was in the seeking that I found comfort most in sharing my stories of miscarriage, the small memorials I was creating, finding more people with similar stories of loss and grief, plus finding time to be reverent and going inwards to heal my heartache. I sought therapy, I read, and I developed a practice of building a healthier connection with myself and loved ones. In all of this I grew to see grief as not just sadness, but as a gift of joy and love from the “angel babies” that blessed me with the opportunity to hold space for them within my womb, even for the briefest time. These experiences and memories will be remembered forever. It is within this grief that love for them can keep living. We are empowered and resilient from this experience. 🌈

NOTES

- 1 American Pregnancy Association, “Molar Pregnancy.” “A molar pregnancy is an abnormality of the placenta, caused by a problem when the egg and sperm join together at fertilization. Also called gestational.” <https://americanpregnancy.org/?s=molar+pregnancy>
- 2 American Pregnancy Association, “What is a Rainbow Baby?” “Rainbow baby is a healthy baby born after losing a baby due to miscarriage, infant loss, stillbirth, or neonatal death.” <https://americanpregnancy.org/getting-pregnant/pregnancy-loss/what-is-a-rainbow-baby>

Hello there, this is **Jennifer Davis-Bachmann**. It is an honor to share my story with you. Along with writing, I create art, do photography, go out in nature, spend time with family and friends, and work in the healing arts.



The call to adventure.

A hero's journey begins...

Northern Lights for girls, ages 11 to 14 | Langskib for boys, ages 10 to 12

Cultivating community, creativity, confidence, and adventure in boys and girls crossing the bridge from childhood to adolescence our 2 week programs celebrate the unique gifts we bring to this world and connects each child to their authentic self. Steeped in storytelling, skill building and play, Langskib and Northern Lights celebrate the need to take risks, test one's mettle, seek adventure, and find the hero within!



Northwaters & Langskib Wilderness Programs | northwaters.com | 866.458.9974

Rest in Peace, My Friend

JUDY JASEK, DVM

*In memory of Rex and all of our pets that have passed.
May we feel your love and the joy of your presences forever.*



Most anyone who has loved a pet has also lost a pet. It is a sad reality that, in our lifetime, we are going to outlive most of our pets. We know the joy and excitement of a new puppy or kitten, or the tenderness of adopting an abandoned older pet. Our hearts are full of hope, and we soon begin to enjoy the companionship, loyalty and unconditional love our pets so freely offer us.



At some point, however, through sickness, accidents, or old age, our pets begin to fail and eventually pass. It can be easy to forget the joy and feel overwhelmed with grief. We feel the pain of the loss, and many times the guilt of thinking that we could have somehow done a better job and prevented our pet's demise.

When I have lost pets in the past, I find myself asking if there is any purpose in this journey. I struggle to remember the joyful memories without feeling the pain of the loss.

I have an acute understanding of this, as I lost my one year old German Shepherd Rex a few weeks ago when he was hit by a car and killed. I have lost elderly pets in the past, and felt the loss of a trusted companion with so many shared life experiences. For me, there was something especially tragic in losing such a young dog; and the suddenness was a shock to my entire system. Rex ran off while I was tending to my chickens, and I would do anything to have those few moments back for a "do-over."

I have worked with many clients over my years of practice as they experience the loss of a beloved pet. Regardless of the circumstances, the grief is always profound. Along with grief come the associated emotions of guilt, shame, dismay, anger, and disbelief. There is often a tendency to blame oneself for circumstances that may have been completely beyond our control.

Gaining Resolution

There is no magic formula for resolving the feeling of grief; we all have to process it in our own way. I have heard it said that one loss will also bring to the surface the grief of past losses, so the resolution will depend on each of our past experiences.

Just as grief is a painful emotion; other emotions can be quite healing. I have found that rather than focusing on the grief, feeling gratitude for the time we had with our pets is helpful. Focus on the love we felt when our pet was alive rather than the pain of their absence. Forgiving ourselves for

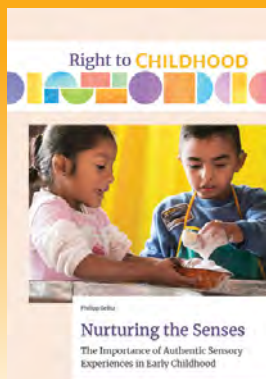
any part we think we may have played in our pet's passing is also very important. Each of us knows that we would have done anything in our power to save our pet if we could. We can only do what we know and it is impossible to change the past. So the would've/could've/should've's only cause us more suffering.

I have found that a simple meditation focused on feeling the healing emotions in our body can help tremendously. It goes like this:

- Find a quiet spot where you can sit comfortably. A quiet spot in nature is ideal.
- Visualize your pet, and one of your favorite memories.
- Feel what comes up in the moment. Where does it show up in your body? What color is it?
- Now bring in the feeling of love for your pet. Where do you feel that? What color is it?
- Bring in the feeling of gratitude for your time with your pet. Where do you feel it? What color is it?
- Finally bring in the freedom of self-forgiveness for the events surrounding your pet's death. Where do you feel it? What color is it?
- Now as you go through your day and feel the grief, try to shift to feeling one of the healing emotions. You may start by just seeing the color that you visualized during the meditation. Allow that to bring forward the feeling in your body.

This is not a quick-fix by any means. There is no magic formula for making the grief go away. This is a practice, and the more you practice, the more you will begin to feel the healing emotions rather than the grief.

This is not intended to minimize or suppress the feeling of grief. Sometimes you will need to lean into it, cry, scream, whatever you need to do. The key is not to stay there, and begin to shift into feeling the healing emotions. Although our pets are no longer present in the physical form, the unconditional love that they offered us will remain



Shop online at
store.waldorfearlychildhood.org
 Discounts for WECAN members
 (join or renew online!)

For wholesale orders, contact:
 845.352.1690
info@waldorfearlychildhood.org
www.waldorfearlychildhood.org



Investment Opportunity: Altair Ecovillage in Kimberton, PA



www.altairecovillage.org

Altair Ecovillage is planned as a 30-unit 55+ environmentally-low-impact townhouse community. Incorporating the cohousing model of social support will give Altair a very special appeal.

We are looking for members and investors who will provide \$50,000 (or more) and are offering either a 5% guaranteed ROI or a discount on the purchase of a home (rentals and shared homes allowed). There are currently nine investors engaged and eight homes already reserved.

Our beautiful 8-acre parcel of land is in the historic rural center of Kimberton PA, adjacent to the bustling town of Phoenixville and 33 miles from Philadelphia. We will be applying for our Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO) approval in the near future, with construction slated to begin in late 2025.

Interested? Contact Joel Bartlett, Project Manager:
AltairEcovillage@gmail.com / 610-220-6172

forever, and it is always there for us to access.

Moving On

What about getting another pet? You will know when you are ready. It is impossible to replace a lost pet, but a new friend can bring to us another example of the joy and companionship we experience with our pets.

Some may avoid getting another pet to avoid the loss, but avoiding the loss also deprives us of the love and fun our pets bring to us. It may take some time to be ready, but a new pet will once again allow us to experience the healing enrichment a furry friend can offer.

I feel the presence of my Rex every day on our property.

I remember where I stood the last time I saw him alive.

I remember the hours of looking for him, calling endlessly hoping he would appear.

I remember the kind man who found him on the side of the road and called to let me know.

I feel the warmth of the blanket he placed on Rex as he took his final breaths.

But most of all, I remember the love, joy, and persistent sense of humor that Rex brought to our home.

May you rest in peace my friend. 🐾

Dr Judy Jasek has nearly forty years' experience as a practicing veterinarian. Her practice philosophy is that we do not create health, but support the body's natural ability to attain it. Her current practice is primarily telemedicine where she helps pets with acute and chronic illness along with general wellness. <https://ahavet.com/>

When Saying Hello is Saying Goodbye

SANDRA MENDEZ, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.

I've been an obstetrician-gynecologist for thirty-five years. One of the most challenging situations I encounter is the loss of a pregnancy. Surprisingly, I didn't receive any formal training in medical school or residency on how to address this difficult situation. So, over the years my approach has evolved, with compassion always serving as my guiding principle.

The typical scenario unfolds when a patient visits the Obstetrics Triage, expressing concern about a decrease in her baby's movements. In such cases, the nurses and I remain vigilant, especially when the woman reports feeling no movement at all. The responsibility of placing the fetal heart rate monitor to the mother's abdomen falls upon the nurse. If, after attempting to monitor the baby's heartbeat, the nurse is unable to detect it, I step in with the ultrasound machine. This is when I have to break the heartbreaking news to the distraught mother that her baby has passed away. The words I choose have to be just right for the situation, but the outcome is the same. The mother is devastated, and if she has a partner with her, they're both going to be heartbroken. Their pain is raw and intense.

The first question is usually, "Are you sure?" I always order a formal scan to confirm the diagnosis, but most of the time the mother knows the truth. The next question is, "Why, how did this happen?" I can provide her with statistics.

For instance, one out of every 175 pregnancies results in stillbirth, which is approximately the same number of babies that die in the first year of life in the United States. Additionally, stillbirth occurs more frequently in certain populations. For example, among non-Hispanic black women, Native Americans, and Native Hawaiians, stillbirth occurs two times more often than among Hispanic, Asian, and non-Hispanic white women. The numbers don't make her feel any better, of course. But I can tell her a few things that might bring some comfort.

Helping the Family Understand

First, I assure her that there's nothing she did that caused this. She'll be carefully reviewing the days and even weeks before this happened, looking for any actions or omissions that might have contributed to it. I want her to know that it wasn't the stress she was under, the fight she had with her partner, or any sudden fright she had. It wasn't even lifting something heavy. Contrary to popular belief, motor vehicle accidents are not a common cause of stillbirth.

The most common cause of early pregnancy loss (occurring before twenty weeks) is chromosomal abnormalities, which are outside the

mother's control. In contrast, for late-term pregnancy loss, the mother's age and chronic health conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure can significantly contribute to the risk.

Second, there's nothing she could have done to prevent it. There are no medications or monitoring methods that are foolproof in predicting and preventing stillbirths. Even with well-managed diabetes or blood pressure, a stillbirth can still occur, and a mother can't change her age. Avoiding street drugs and other risky behaviors might have prevented the pregnancy loss, but it's not the

feelings of depression or anxiety. Certain dates can trigger the recurrence of symptoms. The anniversary of the baby's death will bring back painful memories. The anniversary of the expected date of the baby's birth will be filled with sorrow. Even the holidays she thought would be filled with joy will bring on unexpected grief. As soon as a woman realizes she's pregnant, she starts planning not only for the birth but also for how her life will be after she has her baby. She already imagines holding this baby at these special occasions.

“HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS WHO CARE FOR THESE WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES, PLEASE ALSO PRIORITIZE YOUR WELL-BEING.”

appropriate time to bring this up.

Thirdly, friends and family will make well-meaning comments. For example, they might suggest that she should have another baby immediately. They might say that this was God's will or that she wasn't that far along, so she will soon forget what happened. I suggest she doesn't let these comments get to her. I've seen firsthand that she needs to allow herself to grieve for this baby she's lost. It doesn't matter how far along she was in her pregnancy when the baby was taken away. The pain and sorrow are the same, no matter what.

Fourth, perinatal grief is totally real and can affect everyone differently. Hormonal changes after a pregnancy loss can also contribute to

I tell her that there's no set timeline for grieving. I gently suggest she take her time before trying to conceive again. This way she can fully enjoy the next pregnancy without feeling like it's a replacement for the one she lost.

Celebrating a Life

The process of delivering a stillborn baby is incredibly tough for the mother, her partner, and the entire family. As the title of this article implies, they finally meet this special person who has shared a deep physical, emotional, and spiritual bond with her. Even though she's known for a while now that the baby is gone, she's going to say the final goodbye.

I must confess that the majority of the effort required to assist the mother during this challenging time falls upon the nursing staff. Every maternity unit I have had the privilege of working with has a meticulously crafted process for creating an almost joyous atmosphere to celebrate this special bond and facilitate the process of letting go. This requires incredible patience. They take photos, they take footprints, and if there's any hair, they collect a lock of it.

Pregnancy losses can happen due to serious birth defects, which can be quite severe and disfiguring. It's truly heartwarming to see mothers who embrace these babies with such love and acceptance, regardless of any disfigurements. In some cases, women may be offered termination early in pregnancy, presented as a way to avoid the potential distress of seeing a deformed baby at birth.

The Grief of the Healthcare Workers

I would like to take a moment to address the second victims in these situations. These are the healthcare workers who provide care to these women and their families. I don't want to divert attention from the real victims of these losses, the mothers and their families. But there are nurses, nurse midwives, and doctors who are deeply saddened by the loss of these babies and the hardships their mothers face. It's not about us; we all try to put our feelings aside to care for our patients. However, we do take these traumatic events home with us. Healthcare providers who care for these women and their families, please also prioritize your well-being. Allow yourself to experience your feelings and pain. Reach out to your colleagues and loved ones for support.

Pregnancy loss can be incredibly tough for

“EVEN THE HOLIDAYS SHE THOUGHT
WOULD BE FILLED WITH JOY WILL
BRING ON UNEXPECTED GRIEF.

I learned a valuable lesson from one of these mothers who refused termination. At the birth of her baby, she told me how relieved she was that she chose not to terminate the pregnancy. She was enveloped by her circle of supportive women who were there for her, helping her dress the baby, and singing songs softly, gently. This mother and her group of attentive women imparted to me the profound essence of maternal love, womanly strength, and sisterhood.

any woman. It's important to approach these situations with compassion and understanding. Not every woman will react the same way, but they all feel grief and sadness, to some degree. Let's remember to let them lead the way for the best way to support them. 📌

Dr. Sandra Mendez, MD is an obstetrician gynecologist in Sacramento, CA and has over 35 years of experience in the medical field. She graduated from University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health in 1985. She is currently a member of the Board of Directors of The Physician's Association of Anthroposophic Medicine (PAAM).

Grief is the Price of Love

EXCERPT FROM *SEE NO STRANGER*
BY VALARIE KAUR¹

Grief is the price of love. Loving someone means that one day, there will be grieving. They will leave you, or you will leave them. The more you love, the more you grieve. Loving someone also means grieving with them. It means letting their pain and loss bleed into your own heart. When you see that pain coming, you may want to throw up the guardrails, sound the alarm, raise the flag, but you must keep the borders of your heart porous in order to love well. Grieving is an act of surrender.

Many of us are taught to avoid grief and to fear suffering and death. Our dead are wheeled out of sight, their bodies incinerated behind crematorium walls or buried beneath sterile marble tile. But grieving openly is an ancient practice. In our blood lie memories of ancestors who participated in grief rituals in all corners of the world: drums and fire, music and moaning, incense and incantations, bodies burned in moonlight, ashes poured into silver waters. We know how to grieve. We just have to remember it. The wisdom across faith traditions is that grieving is done in community.

Grief does not come in clean stages: It is more like the current of a river, sweeping us into new emotional terrain, twisting and turning unexpectedly. In one moment we need to cry and rage, in another we feel nothing at all, and in another we feel a sense of acceptance, until we find ourselves one day sobbing on the steering wheel of a car as a song plays on the radio. Grief has no end really. There is no fixing it, only bearing it. The journey is often painful, but suppressing grief is what

causes the real damage—depression, loneliness, isolation, addiction, and violence. When we are brave enough to sit with our pain, it deepens our ability to sit with the pain of others. It shows us how to love them.

Some forms of grief are impossible to bear alone. In the wake of trauma, when it feels like we're thrown into a hole, we need to be able to tell the story of what happened in order to return to a sense of community. We must be able to say: This was wrong and must not happen again. Telling the story is the prerequisite to justice. But for the story to matter, someone we trust must be listening. It is not easy to listen. A story of violence is like "a living presence transmitted in real time, entering the body of those who are listening," says Elizabeth Rosner, the daughter of Holocaust survivors. "Something entirely unbearable that must, somehow, be borne, and then passed on." But it is worth it.

Grieving together, bearing the unbearable, is an act of transformation: It brings survivors into the healing process, creates new relationships, and energizes the demand for justice. We come to know people when we grieve with them through stories and rituals. It is how we build real solidarity, the kind that shows us the world we want to live in—and our role in fighting for it. ■

¹ Valarie Kaur, *See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love*. (One World, 2020), 43-4.

Valarie Kaur is a renowned civil rights leader, lawyer, award-winning filmmaker, educator, innovator, and best-selling author of *See No Stranger*. She is the founder of the Revolutionary Love Project, where she leads a movement to reclaim love as a force for justice. <https://valariekaur.com/>

Omen

(A true story from the
United States Civil War)



A mourning dove pecked at her window
and she awoke.
It looked at her the way a bird will do,
then flew away—
a flutter of grey in the half-light before dawn.
And she knew
her husband had just died.

Quietly, she cried,
not wanting the house to wake—
not wanting to share her grief:
All there was left to replace her love.

She rose and went downstairs
to sit beside the hearth
and watch the flames do
what she could not:
Wail and rage and tear and tear
away from everything.

Her pain was so immense, she feared it.
War had torn a jagged wound across the land.
Its wake of hurt and hate was worse.
It could destroy her, even now.

Her children found her,
staring at the flames.
She pulled them close
but could not stop their tears.

They did not ask.
they knew enough to know
that answers grew, taking their time.
When they were ripe and heavy
they would fall— final and forever.

When the letter came,
after much delay,
it was an empty shroud
for one long dead.
The meaning of the message -
its soul— had fled:
A flash of wings
seen in the half-light grey,
just before dawn.

— PETER BRUCKNER

From the collection Down the Road

Peter Bruckner is internationally active as a Waldorf teacher, lecturer on anthroposophical themes, poet, painter, writer, jeweler, puppeteer, song writer, stained glass artist and craftsman, among other things. pbwindrose@aol.com



Threads

MARY LOU SANELLI

It's a familiar story: I met someone who became my friend. And though this someone was a man, we were never more than a friendship. From his first dance class in my studio, there was something between us that might have made people think we were more, but it was never like that.

I remember the first time we talked, really talked. We leaned against the barre with our arms folded, our thoughts freed, and from then on, our conversations ranged from crucial issues (personal history, politics, choices we made that were good, but just as often bad) to the everyday (films, books, the absurdities of small town life). "That woman," I said to him once, upset about a comment made by the graphic designer working on the cover for my newest book, "had the nerve to say that I dressed too stylishly for a small town. What kind of an artist would say that?"

There was a long pause.

"Someone ought to tell that woman not to walk around in yoga pants. Her backside looks like a mattress folded in half," he said, and I loved him for saying the words, for being a man who could deliver a line like that without apology. He always knew how to make me laugh. And because he wasn't a man for groupthink correctness, I found it freeing to laugh with someone whose sense of humor seemed to mirror my own. It grounded me.

We laughed about so many things.

And when he got cancer, once or twice we even tried to laugh about that.

But it fell flat.

I kept working on a piece of choreography at a frantic pace, as if I could beat what was coming, which right there is the worst of self-deception. *If I could express my fear, I told myself, I could*

“ IF I COULD EXPRESS MY FEAR, I TOLD MYSELF, I COULD HANDLE IT.

handle it. But whatever I thought I knew about coping at the time, I had no ability to admit that the choreography may have been a desperate counter to loss and grief. It wasn't working.

Meanwhile, he got weaker.

If there is one sink hole you never want to go down, it's this one: I started to read everything on-line about cancer. But what those websites never tell you is that the only way to deal with loss is to, first, surrender to its intensity (which is like the seven major plates of earth shifting in your chest) and secondly, take all the time you have left to love others as much as you can. There are so many people in need of so much love.

The year after he was gone, when I struggled the most with grief, it felt as if a lot about life held none of the protections I relied on. It was as if I'd reach for a familiar safety net and fall through the mesh.

I still feel a loneliness so deep when I look at a framed photo of him dressed as Othello that sits on a shelf in my living room.

But we are capable of moving on (an absurd phrase when you think about it, as if we are standing stock-still when bearing the unbearable), and so we do. We give in.

Or, no, not *in*. That sounds too much like defeat.

We give ourselves back. To ourselves . . . eventually.

Words I couldn't have conveyed when my friend was dying but just now they literally wrote themselves.

And today, when I drive from my home on Bainbridge Island to teach dance in Port

Townsend, I give myself extra time to stop in Chimacum because that's where he lived. I thought I'd have to avoid this route, but that's not at all how it feels. I like to shop at the farm store that sits by the four-corner stop, but mostly I want to get out of the car, stand, stretch, and breathe in the air that surrounds a place he loved.

Maybe we use metaphors because they are such an old, old, writing tool. Or maybe we use them because they help us reveal a familiar version of what we are trying to say. I like most the ones that address something painful while also lessening the pain, and when I walk by the yarn store on the ground floor of my building near the ferry terminal with its window full of colorful skeins, I can't help but compare weaving to, well, *us*. That two threads need to bind in order to knit is just so metaphorically perfect.

And now, out of all the perfect metaphors, this one stands out for me: I was bound to him. And in many ways, I'm still at loose ends without him.

But in other ways, I'm stronger. The strength I've gained may feel at times more like a knot than a knit, but it holds. And though I'd like to say this hold comes from having known him, that's not the whole story. It comes from having the courage to let him know me.

Love is always about risk. This is the line I say to myself every time I reread this piece from the beginning to this point.

I think it is trying to tell me to end right here. ▀

Mary Lou Sanelli's newest collection of essays, *In So Many Words*, has been nominated for a 2025 Washington State Book Award & a 2025 Pacific Northwest Book Award. A professional speaker and master dance teacher, she lives with her husband on Bainbridge Island, Washington. For more info, please visit www.marylousanelli.com.



Healing the Grief of Disconnection

CHRYSTAL A. ODIN

“People who think a pluralistic society can’t exist are suffering from a lack of imagination.”

— WALKEN SCHWEIGERT, PCF COMMUNITY MEMBER

We breathe in air, cry water and salt, our bones are healed up from the stones of the earth, and our power is born of fire-heat and blood. As humans, our relationship with land goes beyond utility and taps into a deeper, almost unconscious exchange that sustains life.

In this article we’ll share insights into thoughts, hopes, dreams, and fears of disconnection, and the resulting need for reconnection to land, from some of the resident members of Philadelphia Community Farm (PCF). PCF is a rural-based intentional community farm in Osceola Wisconsin working towards liberation. We are a volunteer-run, intergenerational, Multi-Abled, Black,

Brown, & Indigenous and LGBTQ led nonprofit 501(c)(3), committed to creating access for historically oppressed people to connect to their history through land, food systems and cultural practices.¹

The Adaptive Learning Process (ADL)

At PCF we have agreed to a process of consensus decision making called The Adaptive Learning Process (as developed by Robert Chadwick).² The ADL process was developed for individuals to process their feeling and thinking life, in order

“AS HUMANS, OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH LAND GOES BEYOND UTILITY.

“ THERE IS A JOY THAT ARISES FROM
THE POSSIBILITY OF RECONNECTION.

to make wise and strategic action steps towards solutions The ADL process, used in conjunction with the Equity and Empowerment Tool (as developed by Dr. JuanCarlos Arauz³), helps to create real world practices for those of us committed to decolonizing ourselves, moving us through grief and into reimagining; necessary steps towards true liberation.

For this conversation, we followed a set of scripted questions to dive deeper into what we feel, think, and will eventually do to support reconnection to land for ourselves and others. We encourage readers to use these questions (laid out in sequential order) to explore their own feelings around reconnection; or really any conflict, because a conflict is just a decision that needs to be made.

Exploring Perspectives

First we gather information to create a shared knowledge base, and move emotions through the body by naming them. We begin by asking: **What is your view of the situation (reconnection to land)? How do you feel about it?**

One thing we observed is that, if there is anything that has gotten us in this situation to begin with it has been the idea that ONE way is the RIGHT way.

Deep senses of moral purity are just as dangerous as fascism. As soon as you think you know how other people should live, and that they should live like you...

— Walken Schweigert, Community Member

It's a little bit like a flower seed when it doesn't quite make it through the process of germination. It begins to create order from chaos, and just as it believes it has ordered itself properly, it rots in its casing, all the future seeds ceasing to exist. There is not one way to germinate a seed. We ask: Does it need light, or to be covered in darkness, does it need cold or warmth? Is humidity involved? What specific configuration of conditions does each seed need to become its truest self? What conditions does it need for growing, for sharing bounty? In the garden we must learn the needs of each individual seed. We are no different. We are seeds. We too hold the potentials of all of the past made manifest, and the potential of all futures imagined.

Our community strives to honor the reciprocity we share with all parts of nature. Our conversations in the 'west' tend to use language that is inherently about separation. As "westerners" we all too often center ourselves in conversations about land.

Our society has very much created a culture [where] we talk about being stewards of the land. That feels like we're separate from.

— Aiyana Machado, Community Member

Why do we talk about anything in this way: stewardship, landholders, property, ownership... How do we even begin to undo the way we view our relationship to land? When will we get to the part where the word *land* just inherently, the single word itself, simply *includes* us?

There is sadness in recognizing how disconnected humanity has become from the planet. So

many of our earth based traditions and practices have been lost to colonial capitalism and white supremacy. There is fear in everything. Fear that if we don't do something the "right way" it will all fall apart, as if the entirety of the world rests on our individual shoulders. Fear is the true power of these atrocities of thinking.

And yet there is a joy that arises from the possibility of reconnection; An excitement about finding our rightful place in the spiral of life... A deep and profound respect, that elicits feelings of empowerment and freedom.

Society is gradually beginning to shift toward remembering and rekindling this connection. We hold a curiosity of how we will get there, and a gratitude for the privilege to reconnect and tell new stories.

Understanding Expectations

Second, by sharing our expectations we get clear on what we think may happen with the situation. This can help us understand our feelings more clearly. We ask: **What are your expectations of / for the situation (reconnection to land)?**

For me, it is like a pendulum that has been swinging for hundreds of years (perhaps since before feudalism) between two extremes. And will swing to the center again. I can expect the whole of the universal order to do what it does best without having much control to change it. At the same time, we humans do love to cling to our own self-importance.

If we are going to get through the next 5,000 years peacefully, we are going to have to make some serious reconnections. Cultural changes will most likely be necessary, at least for the "western" mind. We imagine we'll need to include ceremony, process thinking skills, and community all together, instead of segmented in the way we do. It must absolutely be a mix of everything, old and new, outdoors and indoors, all the ways.

A few years ago I was saying to a friend, 'Human beings are the worst thing that ever happened to this planet.' But what she said back to me was, you know, 'For most of human history, humans have had a really important role in nourishing the diversity and flourishing of all the life around us.' And I'm going to cry saying that, because I have been really separated from that narrative.

— Maddy Shaw, Community Member

We must grieve and let go of a great deal of our current ideas of who and what we are, in order to reimagine who we will be.

To find an equilibrium, beauty has to be a part of the process. Because, lack of beauty is directly connected to white supremacy. To be in the presence of things, not for a purpose, not for a goal, not for anything other than to revel in them existing. Art, music, any of the things that underpin our cultural creation, they are needed to heal these wounds.

We will likely have to find a relationship to our own indigenous pasts, however far back we must

“ WE MUST SEE THE WISDOM OF THE ELDERS, AND OUR INDIGENEITIES AS CORNERSTONES.

“OUR GLORIOUS CONNECTIONS WILL BE STRONG ENOUGH TO OVERCOME FEAR AND COMPETITION.

go, in order to learn the practices that have given us life. We must see the wisdom of the elders, and our indigeneities as cornerstones, without romanticizing that past.

Our Deepest Fears

In the ADL process we must address our worst possible outcomes. We do this to move into creative thinking. Worst possible outcomes can also be viewed as deep fears we hold. They are based on past experiences, whether real or imagined and are often self-fulfilling prophecies when strongly held. The third question to ask is: **What is the worst possible outcome for the situation (not reconnecting)?**

Sometimes our worst visions for the future are intertwined with the dreams that make them seem less terrifying. They are, in a way, different sides of the same coin. Take for instance, the idea of wealthy elites moving to Mars. However far-fetched that may seem, it couldn't be all unpleasant. Perhaps the rest of us would be left to create a more just planet if we weren't held in the grips of capitalism. I want to see all of our potential on land realized, and sometimes it seems like if it all went wrong, maybe that was right.

The cycles of life come and go, and that's beautiful. The worst possible outcome is that we wouldn't respect that.

— maddy shaw, community member caps?

Other intensely imagined fears such as global war and total annihilation, or complete isolation well up and can be insidious creatures of our minds. These can take the form of little whispers passed on through heritage and memory. Some of us fear we will be left alone forever to carry the weight of the humanities' extinctions on our shoulders, that one alone will carry the torch; doomed to an existence of tumultuous loneliness, living with the cyclical process of guilt and shame forever. Others can fear the loss of generations of potential. The sobering sadness that our grandchildren's children won't see the beauty of the current day, that they won't know the sweet drip of a maple tree, freshly tapped in the spring, sharing of the life giving sap.

And my grandchildren may never see the life that I have been able to see. I know (tearing up) I feel scared, and so sad about that.

— Aiyana Machado, Community Member

Our Most Hopeful Dreams

With our fears named and acknowledged, the brain's "flight, fight, freeze" mode has been overridden and we begin to move into possibility thinking! We start imagining, dreaming and listening together of how we see the future. Best possible outcomes are intensely imagined future outcomes, not often experienced, and tend to be self-fulfilling when strongly held. We ask next:



“ WE NEED TO LET GO OF OUR ASSUMPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF “RIGHT AND WRONG.”

What are the best possible outcomes for the situation (reconnection to land)?

Social ecosystems prosper when diversity is embraced and respected. We can recognize that capitalism's dominance undermines diversity and we hope to live in a world where multiple truths and ways of life can coexist. Pluralism is vital for the flourishing of the planet.

We thrive when there is diversity. Mono-culture, hegemony, these are things that destroy ecosystems...

— Walken Schweigert, Community Member

At the heart of a beautiful world is reconnecting with the land in a way that respects balance and harmony with Mother Earth, honoring all life forms. If we can recognize the life-giving, nurturing qualities that exist in all womb-holders, (including the womb of the earth) humanity would mirror the nurturing relationships found in nature.

When we center interconnectedness and an evolution towards harmony, a less fear-driven world will follow. Our glorious connections will be strong enough to overcome fear and competition, embracing the cycle of life and death, and living with love to achieve a balanced future. By fostering a more cooperative narrative, humanity can be a part of the creation of a thriving and vibrant world.

The most hopeful dream we can have is to rise to the occasion of brilliance, facing all the difficult,

beautiful, joyous, chaotic moments of life. To keep rising. . . To continue “Noticing the field of purple.”

Naming Our Needs

By stating our needs aloud we create a foundation for creative action. We may find we have more in common than we had previously thought. Our next step is to ask: **What do you need from the situation (land reconnection) or parties to work towards your best possible outcomes?**

Naming our needs can feel very strange when we are out of practice. “What do I need?” What does that even mean in the context of reconnection to land? Do we need to forgive injustice, to grieve, to let go of the stories that no longer serve us? We may need to find the places these stories are rooted and dig them up, unearth their molding roots and turn them into compost; something transformed to bring fresh life.

We need beauty, patience, time and space to rest. We need to slow down and enjoy the process. We need to reconnect with our ancestors, and build new relationships with humans and non-humans alike. We need reconnection with spirit, and practices that support that reconnection. Mostly we need to let go of our assumptions and expectations of “right and wrong,” and begin to be a bit more *human* again. The only intolerable thing is intolerance.

We need to continue finding ways to divest from and expand beyond the capitalist

imagination. Perhaps we should be befriending ravens. We should be seeking experiences of truly different ways of being. Other beings do not understand reality the way that we do. We need more authentic relationships with every being. We need to begin to understand that trees talk. They speak a language that is real, earnest and must be listened to.

We need to heal enough as a species that we stop centering ourselves in the conversation. Perhaps we need space to decide what it is we actually need. Some of us haven't ever asked ourselves this question.

Making A Change

Now we can name the action steps we will take to foster our best possible outcomes. Not solely actions though, we must also create *strategies* for ourselves. We ask: **What are you willing to contribute towards your best possible outcomes?**

In our conversation, I kept hearing the truth about healing beyond our disconnection. The pain and grief of being oppressed and what it means to be on land is very real. Still, we long for

a different world. More and more, our generation is moving in the world of social change through the lens of land and culture.

If we had a society where we were literate in trees, insects, and plants, and became so clear in passing down that wisdom and knowledge, with curricula designed for everyone, that would be amazing.

— Aiyana Machado, Community Member

We found that we're willing to be committed to, and work towards creating spaces that develop and utilize processes that support pluralism, diversity, learning and patience.

Imagine schools, not just for the few with access, but for the masses, that taught children these earthways. Imagine a world where we are all seen for our value inherently. Where just being alive makes you valuable – not your work, not your beliefs, not your upbringing. Just being able to be alive and connected is enough.

We can hold multiple truths at once and also be in our integrity.

— Walken Schweigert, Community Member



The
Anthroposophical
Society
is to be an
association
of people
whose will it is
to nurture the life
of the soul,
both in the
individual
and in
human society,
on the basis of a
true knowledge
of the
spiritual
world.

Rudolf Steiner
the First Statute of the
General Anthroposophical Society
given at The Christmas Foundation Meeting
1923/1924

JOIN US
anthroposophy.org

Connect to the Spiritual Rhythms of the Year...

A sacred service.

An open esoteric secret:

The Consecration of the Human Being

Celebration of the Festivals

Renewal of the Sacraments

Services for Children

Religious Education

Summer Camps

Study Groups

Lectures

The Christian Community is a movement for the renewal of religion, founded in 1922 with the help of Rudolf Steiner. It is centered around the seven sacraments in their renewed form and seeks to open the path to the living, healing presence of Christ in the age of the free individual.

 THE CHRISTIAN
COMMUNITY
MOVEMENT FOR RELIGIOUS RENEWAL

Learn more at
www.thechristiancommunity.org



A **vibrant, purpose-driven** community
dedicated to supporting elders at every
stage of life.

Chestnut Ridge, NY



FELLOWSHIP
COMMUNITY
HUMAN-CENTERED ELDER CARE

Join our community!

Live independently in a
beautiful apartment or enjoy
personalized care in a private
room in our adult home.

Learn more at fellowshipcommunity.org
or call (845) 356-8494 ext. 2



“ WE ONLY NEED TO REMEMBER
WE HAVE BEEN CONNECTED ALL
ALONG. WE ARE THE LAND, AND THE
LAND IS US.

We must share these processes so they can be replicated. When we encourage rest, and give grace to self and others, we are more open to passing on the learnings and wisdom we have received along our journeys. We must be sure to share our processes; ones that support conflict as healing; spaces that allow the flourishing of beauty, and rest, and understanding. Places where we can have different religious and spiritual beliefs, vastly different cultural practices, and share in the culture of difference. With no culture being more valuable than another. And we should have fun doing it, incorporating as much laughter as we can. Laughing at ourselves and the world could make the difference.

Reviewing the Journey

How do you feel and what did you learn?

I feel inspired. One of the most important things to be doing right now is figuring out how to be in non-extractive relationships with humans and non-human life.

—Walken Schweigert, Community Member

Here's the thing. I don't enjoy saying this word, but I'm gonna say it. I personally am feeling a little hopeful. I once read a quote from an author who said something to the effect of "Hope is for people who don't know the path forward." In essence, hope is for people who aren't doing; who aren't accomplishing a road (and yes we can talk about

all the layers there). And I remember being struck by that and totally identifying with it.

Yet here we are, and we don't actually *know* the road forward. And still, we're traveling. And I can travel a road and not know the path forward as long as I have people around me who are also committed to the unknowing. So we just resolved a paradox. And we are doing it together. An impossible thing. . . walking ahead into the unknown, together, and trusting in the process. Trusting in the diversity of thought and feeling as the map to get us there. I mean. That's just it. We're hopeful about land. And for all intent and purpose, from here on out, know that when I use the word land, I am including **us** in the definition of the word land. Yes, all the complex and complicated parts of *us*. We don't need to be reconnected necessarily, we only need to remember we have been connected all along. We are the land, and the land is us. 📌

NOTE

- 1 Information about Philadelphia Community Farm, including how to support our work, can be found
- 2 Robert Chadwick, Finding New Ground: Beyond Conflict to Consensus (OneTree, 2012.)
- 3 More information on Dr. JuanCarlos Aruaz and his work can be found at <https://www.e3educate.org/e3-tools>.

Chrystal Odin is a mother, spouse, artist, and farmer; an educator and activist for African Descendants of the (en)Slaved (ADOS) and Indigenous access to land. An alumni of Camphill Village Communities Inc, North America, Chrystal has spent more than a decade doing land and home-based service work within the framework of intentional community. They are a current resident of Philadelphia Community Farm Inc., serving on the Board of Directors, as well as lead Farmer-Florist and Resident Community Member. <https://phillyfarm.org/>

The Sometimes Hum Along Book

MARNIE MULLER, MLA

The recent and ongoing Hurricane Helene disaster in the Southern Appalachian region is still with us and very visible – houses sitting demolished by the abnormal flooding, trees keeled over, roads and driveways no longer in existence or in extreme disrepair, and much, much more. It has uprooted families and brought deep shock to whole communities here in the region, especially the children.

With this ongoing traumatic situation, children have been face-to-face with the sudden and overwhelming destruction of the land they called home. So much of the destruction is still “sitting there” - overturned trucks, caved in houses, demolished businesses - visual daily reminders around every corner as they ride the school bus. Also, the children are having to deeply process their recent experiences of a range of traumatic

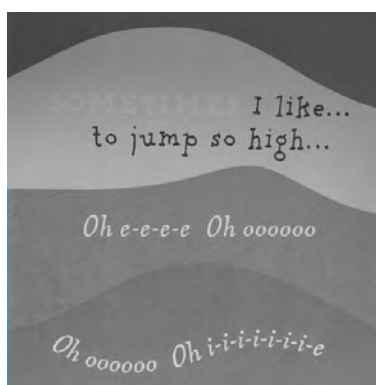
incidents such as witnessing the death of their neighbors, loved ones and pets.

The Importance of Rhythm

Having extensively studied the work of Rudolf Steiner and anthroposophy (which means “the wisdom of the human”), I know that it is important for all of us to remember in our daily lives how extraordinary the human being is in terms of the four-fold aspects of physical, etheric, astral, and the “I am.” I also know that in addressing any incident of trauma with children as well as adults, it is about supporting their own inner constitution which includes their rhythmic nature. Doctor Steiner emphasized that “the whole being is rhythmically organized.”¹ In fact, he stated that it is important that “the human being should not believe one can live without rhythm. Just as one’s inner life was formed from outside inwards - **one must now create rhythm from inside outwards.**”²

Sometimes Hum Along

The *Sometimes Hum Along Book* has come forth to help children navigate the traumas that are still very present to them and to help them remember who they truly are – deep inside. In particular, it is to help strengthen their sense of inner balance




and stability and to nurture their sense of feeling rhythms from the “inside outwards.”

In this simple book, each page has rhyming verses that visually curve along colorful waveforms. Below each waveform is an invitation to the children to hum along with the humming sounds that are there. The verses themselves offer the reawakening of their memories of simple activities that are familiar to them – that bring joy, pensiveness, laughter, and such. Each verse begins with the phrase “Sometimes I like” so it helps them remember something familiar to them. For example, “Sometimes I like to look at the sky” then the opposite page, with the same colorful waveform, shares this rhyme: “Sometimes I like to jump so high.” The rhyming verses have an uplifting sing-song rhythm with the humming sounds below adding a playful element.

This new book with its verses and hums as well as its beautiful, colorful waveforms offers children - and all ages - a gentle opportunity in the course of their day to calm their nervous systems due to trauma, to take a deep breath and in a healing way to remember joyfully very simple, self-soothing experiences that have comforted them throughout their lives.

Humming is For All Ages

Ancient humans knew about humming. Humming “has been accompanying the social life of our distant ancestors for many millions of years ...”³ This timely book can be read over and over as a reminder of what can bring inspiration and a sense of restoration. It also serves as a tool to be used by parents, teachers, grandparents and the community to help children begin to settle themselves, to remember how to smile inside and to relieve their continued stress.

The back cover states: “Humming is for All Ages. When we hum we feel a sense of well-being. Humming also helps us enjoy a feeling of relaxation, and even helps relieve stress. Humans are truly Humming Beings.” 



The Trauma Relief Project

The Trauma Relief Project is gearing up to help hundreds of children receive their very own copy of this just published book: *The Sometimes... Hum Along Book* by Marnie Muller, MLA, HeartWisdom Publishers, ISBN 979-8-9914649-0-1.

To join in making a contribution, please write a check to: Sacred Mountain Sanctuary (501-c-3 non-profit organization) earmarked for Trauma Relief Project and send to: Marnie Muller, MLA, P.O. Box 367, Leicester, NC 28748

Signed copies of *The Sometimes...Hum-Along Book* are also available directly from the author. Including postage, the book is \$22. Please send a check to the address above.

NOTES

- 1 In *Practical Advice to Teachers* GA 294
<https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA294/English/RSPC1937/19190827n01.html>
- 2 In *Rhythms in the Being of Man* (GA 107)
<https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA107/English/RSP1981/19090112p01.html>
- 3 Joseph Jordania is an Australian–Georgian ethnomusicologist.
<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Times-to-Fight-and-Times-to-Relax%3A-Singing-and-at-Jordania/c69a61ea521ea25419f8a72da3927cb67b4186cd>

Marnie Muller, MLA lives in the mountains of Southern Appalachia and is Advisor to Sacred Mountain Sanctuary. She has designed/developed a sixty-five-foot Biodynamic Zodiacal Calendar Labyrinth for the School of Living Arts (SOLA) community and the Biodynamic Gardens there.
excellentwordworks@gmail.com

Death in War

After the headlines,
the photographs of still bodies
in utter surrender

the stacking and burying
in unmarked graves

don't turn away.

Say a prayer for each farmer,
teacher, bearded grandfather
on a cane,

mother whose scarf flies in the air,
father staring at the ground.

Think of the empty chairs
at the dinner table,
the shirt and socks missing
from the clothesline.

Remember each pair of hands
that opened and closed,
held a pencil,
clapped with joy...

and when
the wheat and flowers they sowed
reach toward the sun
bring water
to these tenacious
flags of presence
on the land.

— ZEINA AZZAM

To the Mother in Baghdad

If only I were at your doorstep
to know more about the wetness
of weeping, the barren depths of hunger,
the blackness of mourning

and the halting longing, like cut-off breaths,
for the hum of school buses
and sandwiches in the park,
for the playground, though dilapidated,
that nurtured the sounds and screams of children.

Burning tires roll down streets now.
People walk, toes first, vigilant as hawks
with clenched claws, knotted.

My own doorstep opens out
to flourishing oaks and maples
and in, to images of Baghdad on TV—
you amid rubble and palm trees that
hunch over like desolate old men.
Your son is in a grave.

Your wail pierces the distance between us
from mother to mother.
It stretches across two continents and an ocean,
a taut rubber band that one day
might spring back at me.

— ZEINA AZZAM

© Zeina Azzam (Tiger Bark Press, 2023) Reprinted with permission.

Zeina Azzam, a Palestinian American poet, writer, editor, and community activist, is currently the Poet Laureate of the City of Alexandria, Virginia. This poem is from her full-length poetry collection, *Some Things Never Leave You*. www.tigerbarkpress.com/catalog/p/some-things-never-leave-you-zeina-azzam



WALDORF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT 9TH COHORT

*Cultivate your capacity
to serve in leadership
positions, gain clarity of
roles in practice.*

Hybrid Module (In-Person & Online)
May 2025– April 2026

REGISTER NOW



RENEWAL SUMMER COURSES 2025

*Deepen your relationship
with Waldorf education
and anthroposophy,
connect with community
and engage with the arts.*

PREPARE FOR GRADES 1–8

In-Person : June 29–July 4
Online : July 7– July 11



REGISTER NOW

THE WALDORF JOURNEY FROM GRADES 1–12

TEACHING COMBINED CLASSES

In-Person : June 29–July 4



centerforanthroposophy.org

To Be A Witness Of Darkness

MARGIT ILGEN



To go in the darkness with a light
Is to know the light.
To know the dark go dark.
Go without sight,
and find that the dark, too,
blooms and sings,
and is traveled by dark feet
and dark wings.

—WENDELL BERRY¹

I am a psychotherapist, and I work for a company called Lumen Health and Psychological Services. Lumen means Light. And our website says indeed: “Lighting the way to mental health.”

I am deeply grateful for the work I do with my clients, ranging from eighteen to ninety-five years old, because I see again and again the light within them and the strength and love with which they work through dark forces in their souls and dark periods in their lives.

Before I begin my work, I light my candle held by a little angel and pray that Christ will be in my heart when I meet my clients. My angel is darkened, and it misses one wing. That is what I love about it: It has been in the trenches, and it knows the dark. Still, it holds the flame.

But in this article, I want to talk about darkness! Because the darkness seems to grow, and I feel strongly that we need to look at it, without avoidance, without right away listing what we need to

do, without right away telling each other how we can find the light again.

Before all that, I want to witness the darkness.

“I Just Want to Tell My Story”

I have a fifty-three year-old man as a client who came to therapy not long ago, not with a problem or something to change. “I just want to tell my story,” He said. And he did, every session he told seven years of his life.

And I became a witness to the most horrible childhood I have ever heard, leading him to being on the street with no parents at fifteen years old. He survived through crime (breaking into cars and selling drugs), because that was the only thing he had learned. At eighteen he ended up in a Level 4 state prison where he shared his cell with

pages long. This gave him great joy, because he felt that his story was witnessed; it was there for him to see.

The Dignity of the Human Being

There is another client I want to tell you about. He is a thirty-nine year-old man, who came to therapy because of many years of exposure to what is called vicarious trauma (the trauma of other people). He worked as a young man in Guatemala, then in the United States in a center for children who came unaccompanied to America. Later he worked in a border town in Mexico with asylum seekers, and now in the United States with asylum seekers, especially from the LGBTQI community.

In our last session he told me about the raids

“ DARKNESS SEEMS TO GROW, AND I
FEEL STRONGLY THAT WE NEED TO
LOOK AT IT.

murderers and serial killers until he was released when he was thirty years old. He told me in detail about his life in prison. He told me that he was thin when he came in, and he weighed 315 pounds when he came out. It is called Hate Weight. He said that he looked like a monster and showed me his picture.

However, this “monster” turned his life around, became a counselor and helped the children who went through the same as he went through. He raised three wonderful children as a single father.

Before our sessions, I showed him the notes I took from the previous session. They were several

in Bakersfield, where undocumented farm workers were picked up out of the field by the border patrol and put into detention centers. He told me that they leave families behind, and it is uncertain that they get out and the families do not know if, and when, they get out.

This brings us to the daunting realization of the refugees in our country, many of whom could soon have to leave, and the millions and millions of refugees all over the world. It brings us to the darkness of violence against the dignity of the human being.



CALLING SOCIAL ARTISTS

STUDY ANTHROPOSOPHIC INCLUSIVE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
WITH **CAMPHILL ACADEMY**



APPLY TODAY! **CAMPHILL.EDU**

COMMUNITY-BASED HIGHER EDUCATION
1, 3, AND 5-YEAR PROGRAMS
TUITION-FREE, TRANSFERABLE COLLEGE CREDITS

“OUR WITNESS WILL BRING THE
DARKNESS TO LIGHT AND THUS TAKE
AWAY ITS POWER.

The Darkness of Our Own Soul

We also may be a witness of the darkness in our own soul. It can be deep.

I write this because I truly believe that we must see first in full wakefulness, before we can hope to change anything.

I write because, somehow, I know that our witness will bring the darkness to light and thus take away its power.

I know that, in some images, the angel Michael does not look at the dragon which he holds under his feet. I wonder how that would be now, in our time, when Michael has changed his gesture to a beckoning and transforming movement. What does he see?

When I was a child, I always wanted to work in a circus. And one time when I was about seven years old we watched the circus show and then my father took me behind the screens and I got to talk to the lion tamer himself. (I always loved to look at the lions.) He told me that, to work with the lions, he would watch them for hours and hours when they were little cubs. He would especially look at what they liked to do, and that is where he began his training. Then, the first thing he would teach them was where their place was, which of the little high platforms in the ring was their own and that became their safe place.

Whenever unrest came or a threatening situation, he would direct them to their place, and they became calm.

Perhaps we can witness the darkness and then give it a right place.

Compassionate Witness

In my field there is the term: Compassionate Witness.² It is well known that we all need a compassionate witness in our life.

We might think of the Christ as our Compassionate Witness.

We also hope to be a compassionate witness of each other.

I believe that when we are aware that we are all together bearing witness to the darkness, we can light the world.

O Christ, Thou knowest
The souls and spirits
Whose deeds have woven
Each country's destiny.
May we who today
Share the world's life
Find the strength and the light
Of Thy servant Michael.
And our heart be warmed
By Thy blessing, O Christ,
That our deeds may serve
The healing of peoples.

— ADAM BITTLESTON³ 

(Both clients described in this article gave permission to write about them.)

NOTES

- 1 Wendell Berry, "To Know the Dark," in *Soul Food Nourishing Poems for Starved Minds*, edited by Neil Astley and Pamela Robertson-Pearce. Bloodaxe Books, 2007.
- 2 Kaethe Weingarten, *Common Shock: Witnessing Violence Every Day - How We Are Harmed, How We Can Heal* (Dutton, 2023).
- 3 Adam Bittleston, *Meditative Prayers for Today*, sixth ed. (Floris Books, 1982).

Margit Ilgen grew up in the Netherlands, where she worked in an Anthroposophical Community for People with Alcohol and Drug problems. She did her Speech and Drama training in Dornach, Switzerland, and came to the USA in 1993 to work with therapeutic and artistic speech at Rudolf Steiner College and Raphael Medical Centre in Fair Oaks, California. She received her license as a psychotherapist in 2008 and is an active Member of the Christian Community in Fair Oaks. margit11@comcast.net.



PHOTO: BERND RUF

Making Space and Time for Loss and Bereavement

JOYCE REILLY, AAP

When a dear friend was diagnosed with a terminal illness, her daughter returned home to spend the last year with her, devoted to her care. Time progressed and my friend seemed stable. Her daughter took another job. When my friend died last year, I heard that her daughter might not attend her mother's funeral, which sounded ridiculous. But the daughter's new employer said she could take off the day of her mother's death or the day of the funeral. She chose to be present for both, and she found another job.

Grief. Such a common word, even used in jest. "Don't give me any grief!" "Good grief!"—but

connected to loss, like my friend's daughter's, it takes on a deeper resonance.

Throughout ages and across cultures, people have marked loved ones' passings and community catastrophes with rituals and services meant to honor, to console, to mend the fabric of a community ripped by loss. The indigenous people of this area of Pennsylvania where I am writing this, called grief "covered with night."¹

In our western, analytical approach, Swiss-American psychiatrist Elizabeth Kübler-Ross famously defined the stages of dying, death, and grief in 1969 in *On Death and Dying*,

ground-breaking and important work in the 1970s.² Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance—these can be seen as an individual's response to receiving a diagnosis of a terminal illness, or as part of the response of their partner or family. Even as thinking about grief has shifted, many find this framework helpful. My colleague in anthroposophical psychology, Dr. Elias Abdel Ahad, has done a study of this framework for grieving from a Rudolf Steiner-inspired perspective, with references to the planets and the seven life processes in "The Seven Stages of Grief, the Seven Planets, the Seven Life Processes, and the Seven I-Ams," his Association for Anthroposophic Psychology foundations program capstone in 2025. And just a few years ago, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) used by western therapists and psychiatrists, gave time periods in which grief could be carried in a *normal* way.³

But about the only thing "normal" about grief is that everyone experiences pain accompanying loss and each person has their own, individual way of moving through. The most helpful evolving responses appear to be those that take into account no "one size fits all."

How do we understand the varied responses to profound loss? How would we like to respond and to be responded to to support healing?

The Manifold Effects of Grief

Grief affects all of our being—physical, emotional, intellectual. Body, Soul, and Spirit.

Trying to cope and make sense, we can become ill. We often need to be encouraged to eat—or we may crave food to stay connected to the earth as a loved one departs. We experience the person as present; we may feel we are receiving messages from them. Or we are swept into the deepest sadness and despair.

The loss of a person, even a pet, might have us thinking we still need to be home by a certain time or have us glancing toward the loved one's

favorite chair. The loved one is physically absent, yet still in our time body, our vitality, our etheric.

Emotionally, we may feel longing over our regrets about conflict with the person as we are challenged to maintain soul equilibrium, our "astrality," or our emotional life. And in our "I being," our eternal individuality, we stand at the portal of the spiritual world, and we can be either further convinced of the reality of the spiritual world because "they" are there—or feel the loss as final.

In contrast to our fast-paced, materialistic culture, other cultures closer to their spiritual roots give grieving persons time and space to experience the pain. Mourning may be thirty days, forty days, an entire year. Home altars commemorate the dead.

Recently watching the beloved 1946 Christmas movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*, I noticed that George Bailey and his staff at the savings and loan wore black armbands to honor George's father, who had died three months earlier. We *did* have ways of protecting the grieving, honoring the dead, quite in contrast to the experience of my friend's daughter.

Varieties of Loss and Grief Responses

To orient potential responses, we can acknowledge many ways to situate loss, including:

- Loss of a home and history;
- Loss of a person;
- Loss of community, culture, country.

The Loss of Home and History

Here, we may encounter destruction wrought by extreme weather. How many homes were lost in the fires in and around Los Angeles, for example? Each home contains the past—objects valued for their links to beloved people and meaningful events: pictures, children's paintings, heirloom jewelry; the present—school work, bicycles, pets;

the future—family gatherings, nurseries, grandparents coming to stay.

Early this year, the Waldorf community in Pasadena and Pacific Palisades, California, conducted a four-day intervention through Emergency Pedagogy⁴ under the auspices of Bernd Ruf of Germany and the New Hampshire-based Kairos Institute at the Center for Anthroposophy. These events, the best that Waldorf tradition provides, included music and art, movement and conversation, to initiate healing for children, families, and teachers who lost their schools, pillars of their social life. The re-weaving of relationships to one another and to one's self, with concentrated attention and deep respect, is a model for a healing response to communal tragedy. Respect for the varied meaning of the losses to children, teachers, and parents is the beginning of a long, complex journey toward wholeness.

Ruf has spent decades studying trauma's effects on children, including natural disasters and human conflict, and has engaged in these

practical and artistic responses, which integrate the wisdom of Steiner's view of the developing human being, a gift to the field of trauma and grief studies.

The Loss of People

Aging adults may be prepared for losing loved ones. Yet unexpected, out-of-sync losses hit us hard. And what about childhood loss and grief?

Thousands of children in the United States lose a parent or sibling every year. Help is slowly increasing as schools have some resources, yet there are many cases of the bullying of bereaved children, and insensitivity when it comes to parent-child activities. Unless family or cultural-religious traditions are still observed, children are often alone with their sorrow and trying to understand what happened. Complicated by family dynamics and the need to “get on with life,” children are stuck with pain and confusion, and an emptiness that seems theirs alone.

In Summit, New Jersey, Good Grief⁵ stepped into this gap, first meeting in a church basement in 2004. It has since expanded into its own light-filled buildings in Morristown and Princeton. The community-supported organization was founded on the notion that sharing grief and our experience of the loved ones we have lost, is a path to healing and to living with our loss. There is no expectation that the pain will be vanquished, and there is no language that makes this reality less painful or less *real*. But what we do—and I am in my sixth year of serving as a facilitator—is full of meaning and joy.

The buildings have been decorated by volunteer interior decorators. “Volunteer” is key; the organization does not charge and *all* but a few administrative personnel are volunteers. Facilitators, from all walks, including many in the helping professions, undergo a four-day/all-day training. Most facilitators have experienced loss themselves, either in childhood, or of a partner, while raising their own children.

Explore the Language and Being of Soul

If you know psychology is more than “mental health” and you want to explore the language and being of “soul,” consider joining the next cohort of the Association for Anthroposophic Psychology's (AAP) three-year foundations program, starting in November. Exploring soul is *the* task of this time for human evolution. With AAP's excellent instructors and other striving human beings, you will develop a rich understanding of what soul is and what the human soul can become. For more information and to register, visit <https://anthroposophicpsychology.org/3-Year-Certificate-Program-Cohort-6-2025>.

The children, grouped by age, engage in creative activities. They can act out frustration and anger in a safe Volcano Room, or relive an event in a Hospital Room or a special Phone Booth. Parents attend either Spousal Loss or Child Loss groups. Facilitators are ready to help, but this is true peer counseling, a kind of magic—“warm relationality,” as we say in anthroposophic psychology! This is a community built through shared pain and shared understanding, which often ends in hope.

The Loss of Community, Culture, Country

As complex as death-as-loss is, violence-saturated trauma and grief demand more from the individuals suffering and from those who may attempt to help. Psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton, who did extensive research on the trauma and stress experienced by war victims,⁶ said we must be careful not to equate a strong reaction to war to an illness to be medicated and discounted. If anything underscores no “one size—all” approach it is the unique complexity of the refugee experience. Whether from previous or active conflict zones, the refugee has lost community, culture, language, and country. They have to adapt to a new culture, and this combination engages all of their resources and leaves little energy to feel, much less create rituals that might have brought comfort back home. They may not know what happened to family and friends and they may suffer “survivor’s guilt.”⁷

For the last thirty-five years, the anthroposophy-inspired House of Peace (HOP)⁸ in Ipswich, Massachusetts, has provided a safe space for internationally displaced individuals and families to adapt to a new life, to work, but also to mourn. Grounded in the Camphill tradition of shared community life, some House of Peace coworkers have years of experience, some with people with special needs, others with refugees.

House of Peace also serves war zone—displaced, caregiver-supported children who receive

PHOTO: NATALIA PESCHIERA, PICASSO



Ten Tips for Supporting Grieving Kids

1. GRIEF IS NORMAL

Grief is a normal part of the human experience. There is no right or wrong way to grieve, but there are healthy and unhealthy ways to express that pain. Grief for kids is both emotional and physical. Kids benefit from physical outlets since they often don't have all the words to talk about it.

2. GRIEVING KIDS FEEL ALONE

Grief can be very isolating and many kids feel alone or misunderstood. Peer groups are highly effective because knowing someone going through something similar helps a child know they are not alone.

3. DON'T ASSUME

Kids will work hard to have their needs met. Don't assume what they are feeling or think you have all the answers. Just because a kid looks fine doesn't mean all is well, and just because a child is having a hard time does not mean something is wrong or that they need to be fixed.

4. YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIX IT

Kids benefit from open, honest, and understanding adults who don't assume and validate their experience. Listening to a child and being a consistent presence in their lives matters. Kids need consistency.

5. TRY TO UNDERSTAND

It is more important that you understand a child's perspective than try to fix their pain.

6. BE WILLING NOT TO KNOW

It's okay if you do not have all the answers to a child's questions or if you don't know their every thought. Every grief experience is unique, and sometimes there's a lot of uncertainty or confusion.

7. CHILDREN NEED THE TRUTH

Children understand their feelings, death, and the future through facts and the truth. Lies never help. Use facts and not euphemisms or clichés to talk about death. With the truth, kids can learn and develop healthy coping skills.

8. MODIFY YOUR EXPECTATIONS

A child or teen's grief does not look like an adult's grief. Don't expect a child to think or feel like an adult. Kids grieve in spurts, their questions vary as they try to understand death and their feelings, and they emote differently from adults.

9. EVERYONE'S GRIEF IS UNIQUE

No two kids or adults grieve the same. Everyone experiences grief differently depending on where they are developmentally, their support systems, the nature of their relationship to the deceased, and many other factors. Everyone is different and it is important that everyone's feelings are affirmed and supported even if a child's truth differs from yours.

10. BE PREPARED

Knowledge is power. Use teachable moments to educate a child about death. Learn how to talk openly about this subject matter, using honest language and creating a safe space for present and future needs.

From www.good-grief.org

medical treatment in Boston's specialty hospitals.

This extraordinary group helps heal one another. Biodynamic gardens, music and painting, eurythmy and craft work support grieving processes. Thanks to the dedicated work and open-heartedness of founders John and Carrie Schuchardt, Ipswich is more than supportive. Everyone from those at the library to the firehouse to the café—owned by a Nepali transplant—is aware and involved.

Their dedication is a verse from Rudolf Steiner:

The healthy social life is found, when, in the mirror of each human soul, the whole community finds its reflection. And when, in the community, the virtue of each one is living.⁹

Grief Is a Consequence of Love

However quickly or slowly time runs for the grieving individual, there may be ways to work through the pain and to discover meaning. These are often creative and highly personal. Playwright, comedy writer, and actor Michael Cruz Kane and his wife responded in two extraordinary and very different ways to the death of one of their infant twins, who died at just a few days of age. Michael Cruz Kane wrote a play, performed to much acclaim off Broadway in 2024, called "Sorry for your Loss." Reviewed in the New York Times and invited to Good Grief for their yearly Educational Institute, the play explores the response of family, friends, and colleagues to the tragedy, with the sympathy cards and other well meaning but rote and even trivializing responses. The play

asks the question, “What IS a ‘good’ response?” and explores many answers.

Michael’s wife took another route. Deeply moved by the time that she spent in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit while accompanying her infant’s last days, she left acting and became a neonatal nurse! Both responses are examples of what is coming to be called Post Traumatic Growth (PTG rather than PTSD), taking a traumatic experience and finding a way to take a step in life, a response which is closely related and yet goes forward.

Rather than a stand-alone concept, can we not say, “**Grief** is a consequence of **love**”?

Alexandra Fuller wrote the beautiful *Fi: A Memoir of My Son* about the unexpected death of her 21-year-old son, Fi. This is her healing statement, grief as the consequence of love, and how we go on:

Love is everywhere, if only I can let it in, recognize it. That’s the trick—I see that now too—to accept the death of a loved one is to arrive at the knowledge that love itself cannot die or change or end. Love goes on and on, blowing your mind, blasting out of your heart, endlessly. And everything else that I’ve ever called love but that isn’t now with me, that’s been something else...

Love doesn’t arise from loneliness assuaged.

And loneliness doesn’t arise from love’s loss.

Loneliness is the injury that results from a refusal to let go—and to let come.¹⁰

Shifting Our Ideas of Grief

When I was first introduced to Rudolf Steiner’s work, I was struck by the deep understanding of the human journey. At the end of life, great care was taken with the person “crossing the threshold” to be accompanied with warmth, physical care, music, inspirational readings. The funeral and burial or cremation, the flowers, the eulogy tracing the path and purpose of the person’s life, it was all extraordinary.

Years ago, when a close friend died of AIDS, I was sitting on the step outside the church at the end of the funeral, and I realized that this was the most certain I was that there was a spiritual world, because Charles was now, definitely, IN it. There is so much written by Rudolf Steiner about the world beyond the threshold, and ways to accompany the dying person with verses and meditations, all during the process and beyond. Remaining in touch, experiencing the person as still with us, yet also “there,” is described in such books as *Staying Connected*, with a wonderful introduction by Christopher Bamford.¹¹

Recently a dear friend who has a wide circle of colleagues and friends was suddenly diagnosed with a swift-acting cancer. One of her circle sent us a list of the favorite verses and meditations with which to accompany her

“OUR WITNESS WILL BRING THE DARKNESS TO LIGHT AND THUS TAKE AWAY ITS POWER.”

In Service of the Honeybee

At Spikenard, our sustainable and biodynamic beekeeping practices honor the true nature of the honeybee and support her health and vitality above all else.

We invite you to explore our in-person education opportunities, live and recorded webinars, sanctuary-made products, and donate in support of the health of the honeybee worldwide.

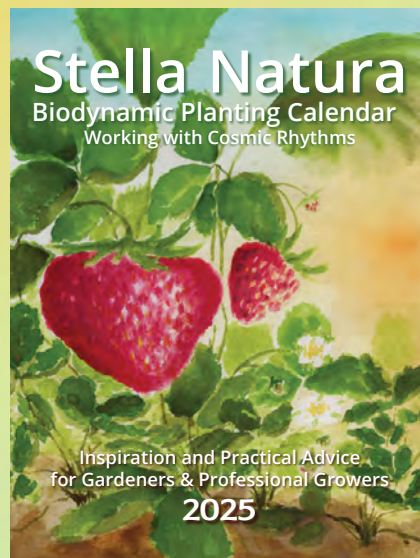
SPIKENARD FARM HONEYBEE SANCTUARY

Stella Natura Calendar

Now published by Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary, this year's Stella Natura features refreshed articles on the history, background, and indications for planting and cultivation times along with hand-drawn charts and thought provoking articles.

This year's edition includes a free recorded webinar! Register for "Introduction to the Stella Natura Biodynamic Planting Calendar" at www.spikenardfarm.org (under Education > Class Recordings).

Visit us at spikenardfarm.org | Floyd, VA | 540-745-2153 | info@spikenardfarm.org



through this transition, and I was very grateful for this help. The proviso was—let us accompany her, but not hold her back. We are sad and soon grieving, but let us send her on her journey onward! A wise direction.

Steiner wrote special verses for children who had died and for young soldiers killed in the First World War. Georg Kühlewind, the Hungarian thinker, mentioned how his teacher Massimo Scaligero, a writer and an anthroposophist, held his pipe in a special way. Scaligero's work lives on, but the affectionate details of his life? Gone.¹² And we grieve! Of course grief is a complex concept and reality and our individual psychology, also. Yet the space for sadness and recognition of death as well as new birth makes for a "healthy social life"! 🍷

NOTES

- 1 Nicole Eustace, *Covered With Night* (Liveright, 2021).
- 2 Elizabeth Kulber-Ross, *On Death and Dying* (Routledge, 1969).
- 3 "Prolonged Grief Disorder," American Psychology Association, <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/prolonged-grief-disorder>
- 4 <https://centerforanthroposophy.org/programs/kairos-institute/kairos-institute-emergency-pedagogy/>
- 5 <https://good-grief.org>
- 6 <https://www.robertjaylifton.com/>
- 7 Personal exchange.
- 8 <https://www.houseofpeaceinc.org>
- 9 <https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA263/English/SOL2025/Verses.html>
- 10 Alexandra Fuller, *Fi: A Memoir of My Son* (Grove, 2024), 121.
- 11 Rudolf Steiner, *Staying Connected* (Steinerbooks, 1999).
- 12 Personal communication.

Joyce Reilly is a Certified Life Coach, a Certified Psychosynthesis Coach, and a Certified Psychosynthesis Counselor. She is the founder of Gheel House in Kimberton, Pennsylvania, which just celebrated forty years. She has been involved with the Association for Anthroposophical Psychology since 2015 and has a private practice.

www.beginwithjoycereilly.com

HAWTHORNE VALLEY *alkion center*

WALDORF GRADES TEACHING OR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

2-YEAR, PART TIME CERTIFICATE
PROGRAMS INCLUDE:
core curriculums, artistic immersions,
child development, and foundation studies
in anthroposophy

ARTS & EDUCATION
SUMMER WEEK
JUNE 22-27, 2025
Open Enrollment

INFO@ALKIONCENTER.ORG | ALKIONCENTER.ORG



cultural appreciation series #2

An Exploration of Relationship

JOAQUIN MUÑOZ, AIYANA MASLA, AND MASUMI HAYASHI-SMITH

We have noted that many teachers are carrying similar questions and concerns. Some are holding themselves back from taking risks that could lead to growth, afraid that they will cause harm or that they have already caused harm, and concerned with how to move forward. Some teachers have heard the term Cultural Appropriation, but don't know exactly what it is, or how it relates to their work. Some teachers feel overwhelmed by the task of working with the concept. We hope to offer support, structure, and resources for teachers to authentically deepen their inquiries and expand their offerings.

In our last article (issue #117, Fall 2024), we examined what culture is, defined cultural appropriation, and explored the relationship between cultural appropriation and power. From here, we will explore the importance of relationships in moving from cultural appropriation to appreciation. Our hope is that by deepening our understanding and engaging in the practices offered, we will be able to share with our students and families respectful, authentic portrayals of the beautiful and diverse world in which we live.

In the first article of this series, Masumi spoke about a moment they came to terms with learning that a song they taught and loved was actually appropriating culture. Continuing that story, Masumi reflects, “When I considered how many songs in my repertoire were inauthentic examples of Indigenous songs, I felt frustrated and lost. I was confused why I, alongside so many others, have been satisfied with ‘traditional’ or ‘Native American tune’ as the source of a song for such a long time. I was also interested in connecting with multiple heritages and histories of the land I



STORM

Artisan Candles

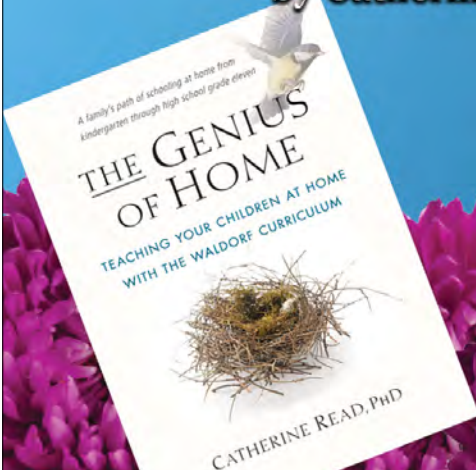


Experience an Angel in your home
 Angel Candles - hand dipped, rolled flat and twisted. 100% beeswax

www.artisancandles.net

The Genius of Home

by Catherine Read, PhD



Teaching your children at home with the Waldorf Curriculum

SteinerBooks

thegeniusofhome.org

IF YOU LIKE
LILIPOH
 LIKE US
 ON FACEBOOK!




Admin Institute

Online and in-person courses designed for continuing education in areas of professional and personal development.
Register for our current course offerings online at admininstitute.net

A few of our Courses:

Board Development and Best Practices
 This webinar introduces participants to best practices of board recruitment, conduct and governance, with special attention to the needs of collaborative, non-hierarchical organizations.

Digital Marketing
 Digital marketing is new to many non-profits. But digital marketing—and especially social media—can effectively engage the people your organization serves. That's why AdminInstitute has invited specialists to simplify digital marketing and make it easy to get started.

Elements of HR
 The aim of this course is to develop a full understanding of the legal and social aspects of managing people in a professional context, both vertically and horizontally; based on an understanding of current legislation and policies.

Interested in customized courses specifically designed to meet your unique organization?
Please email info@admininstitute.net for more info!



Live and work in Camphill Village Copake

A truly
transformative
experience.



Camphill Village Copake is a diverse welcoming community for all abilities. Residential volunteers live and work with adults with developmental differences in many capacities.

Learn more at camphillvillage.org/volunteer

Residential volunteers enjoy:

- beautiful room, board, and grounds here
- possible college loan assistance
- health insurance
- organic and biodynamic food every day
- honing new skills in craft studios and households
- lasting friendships with people from six continents
- developing communication skills and a deeper sense of compassion

was on. I wanted to teach music with histories and backgrounds that I could share with my students.”

As teachers, many of us interact with cultural artifacts every single day that we teach. In a recent workshop, Oglala Lakota Sioux Tribal member and Waldorf educator Celestine Stadnick emphasized that “we all transmit culture.” As we introduce our students to cultural practices that may be new to them, the question remains: how can we do so in ways that model to students how we want to interact with other cultures? How do we avoid appropriating culture, and instead model appreciating culture? *In order to understand this more deeply, it’s important for educators to consider all of the different aspects of culture that may be incorporated into our classroom practice.*

Culture is what we share with a group of people, often community or family. It includes shared agreements and practices, shared assumptions and behaviors, shared rituals and symbols, shared meaning or beliefs, shared priorities or worldview, shared legacy, shared legends, songs, and stories. Out of culture, such technologies as musical instruments, housing, artwork, fashion, and food preparation are generated. Culture is learned and it is taught. *How* we approach another culture and its cultural practices or technologies determines whether or not we are appropriating or appreciating that culture. Key questions to ask include: What is our *relationship* to this other culture? Is there a deep respect and reverence for the other culture’s way of making meaning, of thriving, and of understanding the world? The nature of the relationship determines the quality of the cultural exchange. As a teacher asking whether or not something is cultural appropriation, we may consider: **What is my relationship to this culture and this element of culture?** In light of this, we must honestly ask ourselves: **What are the ways I may participate in cultural appropriation?**

In the first article of this series, we defined cultural appropriation as:

Theft of another culture’s cultural elements for one’s own use, commodification, or profit. This includes symbols, art,

language, customs, etc. — often without understanding, relationship, citation, acknowledgement, or respect for its value in the original culture. Cultural appropriation is exploitative, and results from the assumption of a dominant culture’s right to take another’s cultural elements and use them to its own benefit, profit, and enrichment.¹

If we look closely at this definition, we can see how power plays a central role in cultural appropriation. Power determines who has the ability to take and exploit. Understanding power imbalances also helps us understand the difference between someone who takes on aspects of dominant culture for their own survival (assimilation), and someone from a dominant culture taking on the culture of others for their own added benefit (appropriation). Power imbalances throughout history contribute to anger, fear, and distrust today about who can access culture, and when, how, and why culture is accessed the way it is. Even if we haven’t directly been involved in causing these power imbalances, it’s important to know about them and understand how they influence the impact of taking and benefiting from the cultures of others.

Cultivating Relationship

To deepen our understanding of *how* to practice cultural appreciation, let’s focus on relationship. We know that we want to be aware of the power dynamics in our work, but we also need to go further than this. The first step is to **examine our relationships**, both to the content and elements of cultures that we are bringing, and also to the cultures and culture bearers we are interacting with.

Joaquin shares one example of a pedagogical approach to teaching with a positive relationship to Indigenous ways of knowing and being:

When teaching undergraduate education students about Indigenous communities and teaching practices, I always

TRUTH



incorporate language learning. Here on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Musqueam people (known colonially as Vancouver) the hən̓q̓əmiṇəm language is still spoken regularly, though fluent speakers are harder and harder to meet. Because we are not Indigenous to this place, I guide students to see that it is essential for us to teach and learn in ways that honor the people whose land we are on.

One way I do this is to have students work with hən̓q̓əmiṇəm language and to consider how they might incorporate it into their own teaching practice. Learning parts of hən̓q̓əmiṇəm language helps students connect to the local culture by working with language, learning aspects of culture that are embedded within the language.

There are a number of well-crafted teacher and learner resources that have been developed in consultation with the Musqueam community. These include a digital alphabet word chart, a collection of books authored by Musqueam authors in English and hən̓q̓əmiṇəm, and YouTube videos showing chefs, storytellers, artists, and other creatives using hən̓q̓əmiṇəm

WE ARE MANY



words. Students are asked to learn words and phrases like the days of the week, weather, and seasons. In this way, they encounter words and phrases that they might use as future teachers in classroom settings. Students are also offered the opportunity to explore their own personal experience and interests by identifying words in hən̓q̓əmiṇəm that connect to hobbies or pastimes as a way to enliven their language learning.

Students learning words and phrases from the Musqueam community is a pedagogical technique to help them experience language learning firsthand. Because many of these students will be working with early elementary-aged children or English language learners, it is essential that future teachers have the chance to experience learning a language that they are not familiar with. These teacher candidates often become vulnerable and anxious as they engage with a language they are unfamiliar with and as they work to shape words and phrases they have often never heard before. This helps them to develop empathy with future students who may be having their own encounter with a new language, and to approach this task with understanding and care. It also gives

these future teachers the opportunity to talk about language learning with joy and humor, while being very careful about the kinds of nervous laughter that sometimes happens with encountering unfamiliar words. We talk about the importance of valuing and respecting everyone's forms of communication, the importance of being accepting of our learning process and not demanding perfection, which I hope these future teachers transmit to the young ones they will soon lead.

I remind students that, as uninvited visitors to this land, we have an obligation to learn and honor the language of the people whose land we are on. Because Indigenous people in North America are so often conceptualized as being relics of the past or historical fixtures, having students learn a living and breathing language connects them to the people who continue to live on. Students are compelled to examine their own biases and preconceived notions and at the same time must contend with correcting erroneous assumptions they may see in society around them.

This approach aims to instill a sense of respect and reverence for the languages around them. Teaching them about the current, day-to-day use of hən̓q̓əmiṇəm helps to increase their awareness of Indigenous culture around them everyday. In this way, it is hoped that they will transmit this contemporary understanding and awareness to their future students.

One question students often ask is about teaching language when they themselves are not members of the community and if this is an act of appropriation. I describe to them the significance of "citing sources," analogous to what one might do when creating a references list for a research paper. There are some hən̓q̓əmiṇəm

speakers who argue that language learning is for all people, as long as it is done with respect and reverence, and not used as a tool of manipulation. Students learning the language as a sign of respect and appreciation must cite who they have learned from, either citing the sources they have worked with or referencing the names of individuals who they have learned from, to show the lineage of their learning. Teacher candidates are also taught to resist any urge they might have to monetize their learning (that is, taking what they've learned and commodifying it for their students or other teachers, or worse, to members of the Musqueam community). By citing sources and approaching this work with respect and reverence, students have the opportunity to engage in meaningful cultural experience while also learning crucial pedagogical techniques.

Practices of Cultural Appreciation and Questions to Consider

Joaquin's story emphasizes that there are multiple ways to develop relationships with culture bearers and elements of culture. Some ways can be more direct, and others less. As you consider your own relationship to elements of another culture, we encourage you to consider the following questions:

Where have I learned about these elements of culture, and what more could I know?

A relationship that honors the culture bearers and the cultural significance of the elements of culture being brought to the classroom (be it a song, a

story, a way of preparing food, etc.) is built out of research and developing an understanding of this culture as ongoing (not just historical in nature). We must get specific and precise in connecting to the context of the contribution, and pursue understanding it more fully before bringing it to the classroom or school community. This can look many different ways, including researching the source and story of the contribution, bringing in connected historical anecdotes, explaining why this content existed and how it was used, and inviting in guests who can speak to their own experiences with these elements of culture. This kind of action generates respect and an authentic relationship to the elements of culture, even if we do not have access to relationships with living culture bearers.

How can I ground in real relationships to build bridges and connections?

Relationships that are built out of respect include curiosity and a humble willingness to learn. Relationships of appreciation and celebration bring us to inquire, to be open, and to do research. Because of this, a real relationship takes time and is generally not initiated with a request for a service or information. If you are interested in building relationships with culture bearers, consider attending performances, cultural gatherings, activist events, and events where people share and build community together. Meeting people in these contexts allows you to gain a larger understanding and build further connections.

In the practice of cultural appreciation, there is a recognition that the culture we

interact with is not ours, but instead something we honor and uplift as we interact and engage. A relationship is not exploitative or transactional. We do not own the culture of others - even if we buy a book or pay for something. A real relationship includes deepened mutual respect and exchange, which is fostered over time. An authentic relationship isn't easy to define with words as much as it is felt. We encourage you to consider: what does an authentic relationship feel like for you?

As we explained earlier, the reality of *power* and our understanding of power are essential first steps in acknowledging historical and contemporary impact. With an awareness of power, we are more equipped to cultivate authentic *relationships*. In the next article in this series, we will focus on *reciprocity*, and unpacking concepts of *acknowledgment*, *recognizing harm*, and *repair*, in more depth. 🏡

NOTES

- 1 Masumi Hayashi-Smith, Aiyana Masla, and Joaquin Muñoz, "Cultural Appreciation in Schools: An Exploration of Power," (Cultural Appreciation Series #1), *Lilipoh* 32, no. 117 (2024): 8-13.

Joaquin Muñoz, Aiyana Masla, and Masumi Hayashi-Smith are associates with Alma Partners. Alma Partners is a diverse, multiracial, multigenerational group of eleven experienced consultants and facilitators who offer workshops, courses, Student Leadership Conferences, individual and group consultation, strategic planning, curriculum review and development, and more for schools and other organizations, bridging the gap between ideals and actions. almapartners.net

Now Enrolling for 2025-2026



Phoenix Initiative

TEACHER TRAINING

*Spirit-Led Education
for a Spirit-Led Life*

www.phoenixcommunityinitiative.org

Transforming Grief through Service

LYNN STULL

Grief is one of sixteen gestures Rudolf Steiner gave the eurythmists to express the mood of soul in a poem.¹ The figure cloaked in tones of gray and almost black, stands upright with feet firmly planted, rooted into the earth. The arms reach for the earth and are held close to the body. While hands are fisted. The head erect while the eyes gaze off into nothingness.

Grief has different qualities in relation to the degree of pain felt as the result of an experience of a loss: unmet life goals, loss of work or one's home, a move to a different location to name a few. All of these experiences can put one into a state of grief. When working therapeutically with clients who hold grief in their souls and bodies I will invite them to put themselves into the position of the grief gesture. Often this will bring tears and a softening around a life event. Sometimes it will bring fear and avoidance because being in grief or sadness can be seen as a weakness. No matter what the experience felt, most clients find it difficult to release themselves from the grief gesture. To get out of the grief gesture takes an effort. Which is the key to healing. Grief is a noble, and often humbling, teacher.

Death of a Loved One

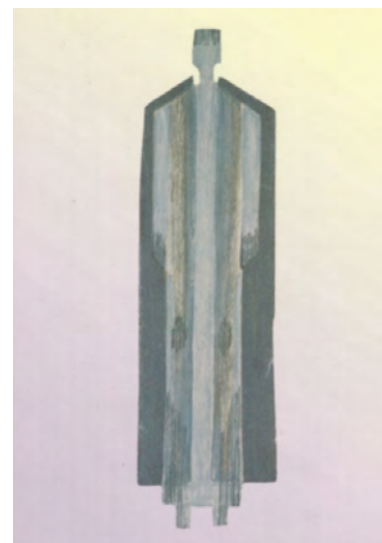
The death of a loved one can be one of the deepest pains of grief. In my experience being in service to my loved ones who have died has been the most effective means for transforming grief into spiritual growth.

Human freedom may choose whether or not to seek and maintain a conscious relationship with the dead. Nothing, either from within or from without, compels it. It is a deed of purest love.

— Albert Steffen, (1884-1963)

Poet, painter, writer, Colleague of
Rudolf Steiner

GRIEF, by Rudolf Steiner



MOTHER AND CHILD, by Lynn Stull

Reading to those who have died is the most well known activity of service that Rudolf Steiner teaches. Another activity of service: creating with loved ones who have died, is not as clear but is certainly indicated when Rudolf Steiner describes how the dead speak to the living in the popular collection of Steiner lectures; *Staying Connected*.²

My journey with deep grief and its transformation came with the death of a loved one. Fortunately my biography brought me to Rudolf Steiner's work six months before the death of my loved one. In the spring of 1997, shortly after my loved one died, I was seeking answers in the library and bookshop of the Anthroposophical Society Los Angeles Branch. A volunteer, whose name was Giselle, guided me to Rudolf Steiner's books which explained how to read to the dead and what happens to those who die. At that time I wanted to be a travel guide for my loved one so I started to read to her and other family members who had died about the spiritual worlds and what they may encounter on their journey.

After many months of daily reading, I noticed that I was often prompted, inspired, to choose different categories of books to read. The first area of study was to explore color and the spiritual nature of colors. After years of being led to certain books or subjects I realized that my loved ones were either quenching a thirst of things not completed while on earth or they wanted to hear about subjects that might be helpful to them now in the spiritual realms or in a possible future incarnation. My experience with reading to the dead is that it should be intentional.

The Foundation of Relationship

My experiences of reading were the foundation of my relationship to my loved ones. I began to be inspired to complete different tasks including speaking about working with those who have died. I was inspired to pursue specific educational

SOUL QUALITIES WHICH ALLOW THE DEAD TO APPROACH US MORE EASILY

Inner quietness
Freedom from our personal feelings
of sympathy and antipathy
Genuine interest in our fellow
human beings
Purification of all egotism
Gratitude

goals including studying Liane Collot d'Herbois work with Light Darkness and Colour in Art and Therapy and completing an artistic eurythmy training followed by a therapeutic eurythmy training.

How the dead speak to us and their capacity to influence us is specific to where they are on their spiritual journey.

In the first three days, when the deceased is releasing their etheric body, we the living can receive imaginations, living pictures via our etheric body.

Our work for our fellow human beings does not cease with their passage through the gate of death.

—Rudolf Steiner, November 9, 1916

Once the person enters Kamaloka, the soul world, the influences from the dead can appear as inspirations. We the living can only be conscious of these types of messages if we are able to feel into, know deeply, the qualities and life habits of our loved ones.

As we develop the capacity to feel into and live with our loved ones' qualities and habits we can then receive inspirations which will come to us through our astral body influencing our habits.



The Conversation Continues

When our loved ones have completed their work in Kamaloka, approximately a third of the time of a person's life on earth, they are now pure spirit bodies. At this point, in addition to providing messages via our etheric and astral bodies, our loved ones are able to impart their wisdom directly to our I, ego body, through intuitions. To receive these intuitions the living must be conscious of and have a deep connection to the dead's ideals and truths. Through our study of the dead's ideals and truths, our loved one can then uplift our views and ideas.

It must be said that our social, ethical, and religious lives would be endlessly enriched if the living allowed themselves to be advised by the dead.

— Rudolf Steiner, March 5, 1918

There have been many times in my work with my loved ones who have died that I have not been able to “hear” them. If I were to allow it, this might lead me to get discouraged and to stop connecting with them. However, if I continue with my spiritual practices, I find the “conversation” continues. I am truly grateful to Rudolf Steiner for giving us the indications to lift the veil between our loved ones and ourselves because this work has transformed my grief and made me into a different human being. I am not sure that we ever lose a deeply held grief - but I do know we can use grief as a vehicle for gaining wisdom and expanding one's capacity to love. My hope is that others will find this path as rewarding and transformational. 📖

NOTES

- 1 Rudolf Steiner, *Eurythmy as Visible Speech*, tr. Alan Stott, Coral Schmandt and Karen Stott, Weobley, Herefordshire, Anastasi Ltd, 2005, 73-74.
- 2 Rudolf Steiner, *Staying Connected, How to Continue Your Relationships with Those Who Have Died*, edited by Christopher Bamford. Great Barrington, MA: Anthroposophic Press, 1999, Chapter 7.

Lynn Stull is a therapeutic eurythmist, author of *Wonders at the Veil, Creating a Living Relationship with Loved ones Who Have Died*, and producer of the Easing Grief Home Study Program. She has been working with loved ones across the threshold since 1997. The paintings included in the article are hers.



Wonders at the Veil

Lynn Stull's book *Wonders At The Veil* contains spiritual practices that revolutionize the way we look at our relationship with loved ones who have died. It is available from

rudolfsteinerbookstore.com/product/wonders-at-the-veil/

Lynn also offers a home study course at

EasingGrief.com.

*Nothing Added...
Nothing Missing*

Frey Biodynamic Zinfandel vineyard, Redwood Valley, California

Biodynamic® Wine

Gluten Free, No Sulfites Added, Vegan Friendly!

*Share a glass of real biodynamic wine from
America's first certified biodynamic winery.*

FREY VINEYARDS

800.760.3739 – FreyWine.com/near-you



BAY AREA CENTER
FOR WALDORF
TEACHER
TRAINING

**Embark on a journey of self development and discovery
Study with us to become a Waldorf Teacher**

Early Childhood, Grades and High School Tracks

www.bacwtt.org

tiffany@bacwtt.org

415 479 4400

Study Eurythmy *at* Eurythmy Spring Valley

**Consider a profession in eurythmy,
the stunning movement art that supports**

- Healthy development in the child
- The inner work of the adult
- Therapeutic steps toward wellness

Eurythmy Spring Valley offers

- Part-time and full-time training options
- Teacher training certification
- Public courses and more



260 Hungry Hollow Road, Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977
845-352-5020, ext. 113 • info@eurythmy.org • www.eurythmy.org



**NEW COHORT BEGINS
NOV 2025**

Engage with
the mysteries of

Body, Soul and Spirit.

FREE Online Webinars

January 25, 2025

The Fourfold Nature of Anxiety

with Tonya Stoddard, LCSW
and Alex Schneider, LMCH

March 29, 2025

The Heart of Relationality

with Roberta Nelson, PhD and
Christine Huston

May 31, 2025

Burnout: Understanding and Help from Anthroposophic Psychology

with Zheni Nasi, MA, RP
(Qualifying) and Vincent
Roppolo

LEARN MORE



ASSOCIATION FOR
ANTHROPOPHIC
PSYCHOLOGY

anthroposophicpsychology.org

Classifieds

A Sacred Listening Space Monthly conversations to honor and support your spiritual story: Spiritual Direction/ Companioning with Lory Widmer Hess. Visit enterenchanted.com (enterenchanted.com) / email lory@enterenchanted.com

H o m e o p a t h i c D i c t i o n a r y
Yasgur's dictionary, also contains many anthroposophical terms -\$24 • Winston's 'Faces of Homoeopathy' homeopathic history in USA -\$60 • ORDER: homeopathyworks.com 800-336-1695

The Power of One-Third (1/3 sleep, 1/3 daily activities, 1/3 me), a 52-week prescription for a Balanced Life based on ancient wisdom and latest neuroscience. Embark on a journey to trust your body, mind and spirit, make lasting life changes and meet a NEW YOU. Curious? Contact mariola@powerofonethird.com.

Institute for Eurythmy in the Work Life
inspiring positive action and creating self awareness. Consulting, workshops, retreats. For schools, businesses and non-profits. Move to align your mission and values with your work. Leonore Russell and Associates in Understanding and Managing Change. 516-581-5696/
www.understanding-managing-change.com

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh Seeking Early Childhood and Grade Class Teachers. Please contact Administrator at 412-441-5792 or email résumé to: info@waldorfpittsburgh.org

Biography and Social Arts private sessions:
visit www.attentiveheartcoaching.com to find out more about my approach. Free 25 m intro session.



A Refugee Grows Old

for my mother

She is surprised by the pink cyclamen
in the pot, examines the foreign
petals, upswept as if reaching toward
another place. Her own journey seems muted now,
details as far away as her childhood in Palestine.
Where in one scenario she would have lived
in the same place until great grandchildren
played around the lemon tree that defined
her family's house in scent and space.
Where in the real scenario
she fled for her life with a husband and baby,
in her pocket a key that rusted over the years.

Her memories are like henna on a hand,
splendid arabesques fading each day
until gone. She has covered so many miles
by boat, plane, car, on foot, measured
by oceans and clouds, gas fumes,
tattered flags left behind, driver's licenses,
rental agreements, goodbyes to friends and family,
a lifetime unanchored, cleaved.

She continues to worry that someone
is plotting to take away her home
while slowly hunching over, a downswept
bent flower, weighed down by hallucinations.

She knows some things never leave you
so you have to leave them yourself, takes
small steps away
looking for some peace.

— ZEINA AZZAM

© Zeina Azzam (Tiger Bark Press, 2023)
Reprinted with permission.

Zeina Azzam, a Palestinian American poet, writer, editor, and community activist, is currently the Poet Laureate of the City of Alexandria, Virginia. This poem is from her full-length poetry collection, *Some Things Never Leave You*. www.tigerbarkpress.com/catalog/p/some-things-never-leave-you-zeina-azzam

LILIPOH

317 Church Street, Phoenixville, PA 19460
P: 610.917.0792 F: 610.917.9101
info@lilipoh.com
www.lilipoh.com

PRST STD
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 280
LANCASTER,
PA 17604

Stores order from LILIPOH (610.917.0792); One Source (USA) 1.800.541.5542; Disticor (Canada) 1.800.668.7724



Working together to serve
your organization's missions.

888-511-4110

We know just how hard you work. Long before dawn, devoted teachers are awake crafting the perfect experience for their students. Late at night the lights are on in the office while the dedicated admin team prepares for a big event. Yet there's never, ever enough time! **We lighten the load** by supporting your school's business needs—so you can realize your vision!

adminservice.com

- admin skills courses
- capital campaigns
- communications solutions
- development
- database analysis
- feasibility studies
- financial management
- foundation research
- fundraising support
- grant writing
- international student recruitment
- marketing
- mentoring
- organizational structure
- marketing coordination
- school safety & security
- crisis communications
- school administration
- solicitation training
- staff conferences
- strategic development
- technology support
- training
- web & design services