



*Some Secrets
of Staying Connected*

By Wendy Sarkissian PhD, 2020





Gradually, we come to realize that the so-called dead and indeed the whole spiritual world are involved in and care deeply about every aspect of earthly life. Thereby, we come to understand the supreme importance of earthly life as the only sphere in the universe where death can be experienced. And not only death: earth is above all the place of connection, of relationship and love. Love, connection, relationship occur only on the earth. We had better take care of them. Those fruits we take to heaven.

—Rudolf Steiner



A common air of gratitude

Here are some of the insights I gleaned from listening to Karl and reading Rudolf Steiner's works about the benefits of staying connected to one who has died.

I was attracted to Rudolf Steiner's philosophy because he explained exactly how to stay connected. He says we need to enter into a space of the most profound gratitude for the life of that person and the joys and happiness we enjoyed from being in a relationship with them.

He recommends paying attention to the sense of gratitude beneath the surface of our consciousness, as the dead will have common ground with us if we affirm that life is a gift, or “a common air of gratitude”.

Below I summarize his key points.



Life always has something to give us

We should refrain from expressing our yearning or grief for the loss of that person.

We must approach them with scrupulous care and great propriety.

Says Steiner, “we must be able to raise ourselves to a feeling of thankfulness that we have had them;

We must be able to think selflessly of what they were to us until their death, and not what we feel now when we have them no more.”

It is helpful to express universal gratitude for the experiences of life and every experience — even the smallest, reaffirming a sense of community with the world around us (and thus solidarity with all existence).

Embodying a feeling of hopefulness in life, we must communicate universal trust, faith, and confidence in life and humanity.

We must remain open to how these qualities present themselves. Our motto must become *Life always has something to give us.*



Three Blessings

I included in my morning meditations a brief version of the *Three Blessings* gratitude exercise, popularized by psychologist Martin Seligman. Also called “The Three Good Things”, this exercise aims to increase happiness and a sense of well-being by transforming our negative thoughts into positive thoughts.

The three blessings I recorded in my journal are pretty basic: statements of three simple things that went well during my day.

I am also desperate to ensure that my grief will not tie Karl to me or the Earth or, in any way impede his passage in the spiritual realms. I release Karl the best I can, remembering Steiner’s cautionary words:

“When we lose these people we love, the better we can feel what they were to us during their life, the sooner will it be possible for them to speak to us through the common air of gratitude.”

Appreciation and Gratitude

Steiner’s concept of gratitude includes an appreciation of what that person meant and still means to us. He says that only in modern Western materialist cultures do we partition them from our consciousness and believe that they have no further interest in our lives.

The dead have a deep interest in human life. They eagerly seek information about the human life they have left and are eager to participate in and influence the lives of those they love and care for.

They want to work with us so that we can receive their guidance.

They want to help in the evolution of humanity via a reciprocal and caring relationship.

To alter our perspective, we need only build a bridge between the living and the dead.

When we open our hearts to caring in any relationship, we make it easier for the dead to communicate with us.



Actions speak louder than words

Steiner reminds us that the dead can appreciate or understand some aspects of human life more fully than others.

Most compelling for them is the evidence of our human appreciation of the actions they undertook in their human life.

While it is tempting to reiterate the valuable and honorable qualities of our departed loved one, speaking about actions is likely to yield better results.

We need to speak the language of the dead — a language of verbs. For them, everything is related to an activity.

In Steiner's view, our thoughts of love and our memories equal artistic creations; they are **like art to the dead**. He says, "Each time a dead soul encounters a remembrance of itself in the soul of a living human being ... it is as if something streams over to that soul that beautifies its life, enhancing its value."

Delicate moments of going to sleep and waking

After we attend to these prerequisites of gratitude and appreciation, we can move on to speaking and listening.

Some specific approaches can nourish our communication.

Timing is essential. We can develop a consciousness of what Steiner calls the "delicate moments of going to sleep and waking".

At the time of falling asleep, we may be most open to communication from the dead, so that is the best time to put a question to them — a question that may be answered when we awaken (if we listen carefully).

We can prepare the thought or question during the day, ask it as we are falling asleep, and listen for an insight when we are waking.



Four simple steps

Four simple steps can support this approach to staying connected:

1. We can remind ourselves of the love we feel for this person.
2. We can address them with real warmth of heart.
3. We can visualize actual moments we spent together.
4. We can say what impressed us about them that was helpful or valuable to us.



Reading to the dead

The dead need nourishment that can be drawn only from the ideas and thoughts of those with whom they were connected during life. For the first period after death (Steiner does not specify how long), we offer the highest service by “reading to the dead”.

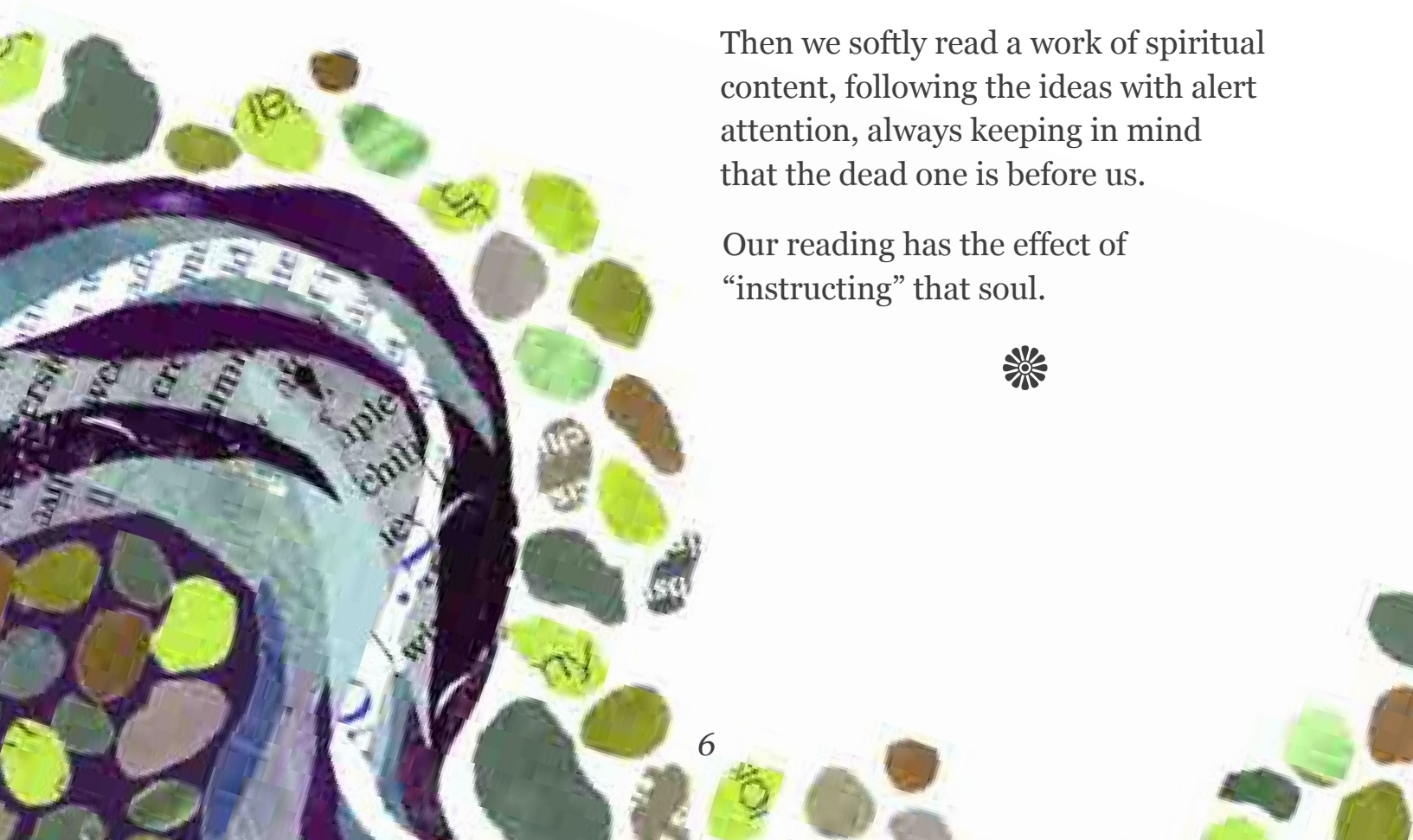
By this, Steiner means reading (not aloud) from books of a spiritual nature that the person could appreciate.

This reading is nourishing to the departed soul, as it can remind it of the world they knew on Earth.

We need only to form a picture in our soul of that individual as we knew them in life, standing or sitting before us.

Then we softly read a work of spiritual content, following the ideas with alert attention, always keeping in mind that the dead one is before us.

Our reading has the effect of “instructing” that soul.



Lessons from reading Rudolf Steiner's work

I kept communicating with Karl and learned that, as the dead are genuinely interested in the human lives of those they were close to, reading to them is an effective way of keeping in touch.

If we focus on verbs and action when we communicate with them, we can expect a reciprocal relationship and to feel supported and nurtured by them.

We will benefit in various and numerous ways. I also concluded that my death will be made more comfortable for those who love me if none of us are afraid of connecting with dead people.



My experience

When I began recording Karl's words in my journal, I thought it must be my imagination. So, I asked for the gift of discernment. Is this really the voice of my loved one?

Rudolf Steiner offers an entirely different perspective: when we speak to the dead, what we say comes from them. And when they speak, it comes from our soul.

To start my day with Karl's loving words, I soon change from evening recording to morning journal recording.

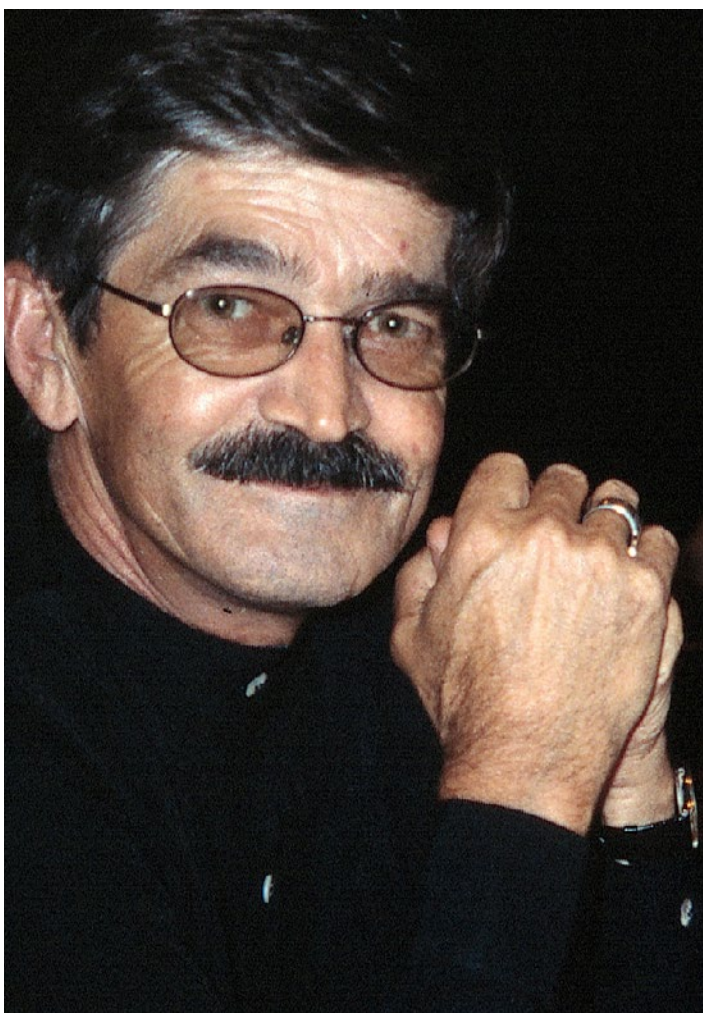
I add Three Blessings, an appreciation of Karl's life (a few sentences, focusing on his actions), followed by my letter. I do this so that I can act on his morning advice. His reply then follows my letter.

Typically, a communication session would last about forty minutes.

During the day, I visualize Karl as he was in our life together, and I think about the questions I will ask him at night. Often, I would fall asleep with a question in my mind, requesting that he send his advice in the morning.

These simple processes enabled us to communicate at a deep level and build confidence that our communication was authentic. We constantly reaffirmed our joy at the blessings of our newfound connection and its power.





About this excerpt

This is a summary of material in a forthcoming ebook by Wendy Sarkissian that will be for sale in July 2020: *Stay Close: How to Heal from Grief and Keep Connected to One Who Has Died*. For information about how to purchase the ebook, please visit our *StayClose* website: www.stay-close.com

Or please contact Wendy Sarkissian: wendy@sarkissian.com.au

I am also offering an online course about the principles and benefits of connecting with one who has died. They are described in my *Stay Close* book. The course will be open to the public in September 2020. Please visit www.stay-close.com for more details.

Karl Langheinrich, 2000

