

## The Smiling Angel

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simple and it can be this profound in its effects.

During the next class break, Rhonda and I stood on a balcony, across from the classroom and across from the top of the wide and carpeted stairway of this grand hotel that was built in 1870. As people returned from lunch, we threw them kisses. People were happily surprised, laughed, and returned the gesture.

And as we waited for the bus later the second evening, students walked by and every one of them threw us a kiss. This became the signature of the entire weekend: throwing a kiss as we remember to send gifts of kindness and love to others every chance we get.

Ask how you can send angel kisses to others today. Ask how you can uplift at least one other person without asking for anything in return. It might just be possible — as with the white-haired angel on the bus — that you will make an indelible impression on at least one person and give them loving feelings they will carry for the rest of their lives.

*Krysta is publisher of New Spirit Journal and is the author of several books and a CD. She offers individual consultations as well as classes. Information about her book in Spanish as well as DVDs of some of her talks in Barcelona last November are available at her website [www.krystagibson.com](http://www.krystagibson.com).*



## Everyday Spirituality

by Colleen Foye Bollen

### Waiting For The Other Shoe to Drop

Have you ever braced yourself for an inevitable, life-changing event? Whether it is a divorce, corporate downsizing, a child moving away from home, or losing a loved one to a terminal illness, many people begin grieving their loss before the event actually occurs. This mechanism is called "anticipatory grief."

Sometimes the anticipation period is short. For example, my oldest child went from being unemployed and living at home to being gainfully employed in another state within a three-week period. I only had 21 days to imagine what life would look like once she moved out.

At the other end of the scale, change can be excruciatingly slow. When a loved one is diagnosed with a terminal illness, the decline often lasts for weeks, months, or years. In his book "When Parents Die," author Edward Myers compares a sudden

death to an explosion that knocks you flat. But a slow, protracted death, he says, "arrives more like a glacier, massive and unstoppable, grinding you down."

Death is not the only thing that arrives at glacial speed. Sometimes financial considerations delay divorces or separations. Both parties may know the end has arrived, but neither can afford to move out. Another example is changing jobs. You may be mentally ready to leave a stifling job, but need to pay down your credit card bills before you can leave.

No matter what the cause, prolonged anticipatory grief can create tremendous strain in many areas of your life. One way to cope is by practicing mindfulness. This means being present to what you're experiencing from moment to moment, instead of being preoccupied with the past or trying to control the future. Focusing

your attention on the sights, scents, and sounds in your environment will give you a mental respite from uncertainty and stress.

Like many people, I find it taxing to wait for a negative event to occur. After my mom was diagnosed with terminal cancer, I jumped every time the phone rang; afraid it was news of her death. A man I know felt similarly when layoff notices were being handed out at work. Whenever he saw his boss coming toward his desk, he panicked.

To deal with my sense of panic surrounding my mom's cancer, I set aside ten minutes of alone time each day for a total meltdown. First, I found a private place. (Sometimes my car.) Then I gave myself permission to cry, scream, rant, and rave about the unfairness of losing my mom six months after I became a first-time mom. My ten-minute tantrum left me feeling calm, like I'd been washed clean from the inside.

Another tool I have used and seen several friends employ is journaling. A few people I know used journaling to help them through their divorces. When the stress of living with a soon-

to-be-ex mounted, these individuals released their frustrations in a torrent of writing. They said it provided a way to release anger, fear, and negative thoughts that were coursing through their minds. A bonus of journaling was that putting their thoughts down on paper lessened the power the ruminations had over their lives. And, they gained insights into how they wanted to rebuild their life once the divorce was final.

When you need relief from anticipatory grief, take a few deep breaths and think about incorporating one or two of these ideas into your life. It may take the anguish out of your pending loss for a few moments or maybe longer.

*Colleen Foye Bollen offers personalized Jin Shin Jyutsu treatments. This gentle Japanese acupressure technique works on physical, mental and spiritual issues to promote optimum health. Colleen provides a safe, healing environment where clients experience deep levels of relaxation. For appointments or more information call (206) 367-0491 or visit [www.floatingstillness.com](http://www.floatingstillness.com).*

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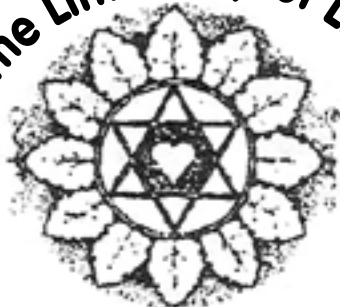


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