

**Welcoming the Soul and Bidding Farewell**  
**by Jane Fleming**  
**(based on her September 10, 2006 lecture)**

***Birth and Welcoming the Soul***

**What is nature of the soul of a baby?**

This summer, a workshop was offered at the Calgary First Spiritualist Church by Rev. Anne Larson of the Lighthouse Spiritual Center in Cloverdale, BC. The program was about developing your psychic ability, but Anne asked the participants an interesting question, “Why does a newborn baby sleep so much?” One person quipped, “Because the mom needs rest. Otherwise she couldn’t manage!” Anne replied that it was really because the soul starting its Earth journey has to adjust to being confined to such a small and helpless body. What an extraordinary beginning we all have for our Earth journey!

Jack Angelo, a renowned British healer, explains in his book *Sacred Healing* that the soul has no size, but it is difficult for the expanded soul to confine itself to the mortal body of a tiny baby. When we see the newborn child, it is tempting to imagine the soul as tiny, but the soul has no size. It is more important for us to understand the trauma of the soul’s descent into a tiny, restricting physical body. We also recognize the trauma of the physical body’s passage through the narrow birth canal into the outer world. Both deserve our compassion and respect.

**How can Spiritual Healing help in the birthing process?**

The birthing process is a huge accomplishment and takes great energy. Not only does the soul of the baby need to sense the welcome, but the mother needs reassurance and praise. According to Jack Angelo, pregnant women come for spiritual healing, not because they or the fetus are unwell, but simply because they know about the benefits to both mother and child. Most pregnant women are under a range of stresses and pressures. The unborn baby is part of the mother’s system and part of her emotional and mental life. Stress on the mother transfers stress or imbalance to the baby. So spiritual healing offers both mother and fetus the chance to restore harmony. It may also have a beneficial effect on the father or others surrounding the mother and child at that time.

**How does the birthing process affect an individual?**

We are all part of the cycle of life, so Jack Angelo invites us to find out all we can about the facts surrounding our own conception, time in the uterus and the ensuing birth. Apparently time spent in the uterus floating in a sphere of fluid can be the closest we ever get to bliss during our Earth journey.

Psychologists comment on how the nature of the birthing process affects the human personality. An example is that babies birthed with the use of forceps often suffer anger and rage, which can be recalled and released in a rebirthing session. Another example is that breech babies as adults can literally find themselves doing things in a confused or backward manner. A birthing process that stops for awhile, starts, stops and

starts again, can lead a child to be unsure of how to proceed with new ventures. This child may need extra encouragement in new situations and need compassion for any delayed development or progress in life. Understanding the nature of our own birth as adults can help us understand part of our own personality, and why we continually do things a certain way.

### **Can we communicate with babies at a deeper level?**

While respecting the nature and influence of the birthing process, we can honor the incoming soul and open our hearts to the possibility of communicating with the baby's soul before and after birth. Walter Makichen is an experienced and renowned clairvoyant medium specializing in communicating with the babies' souls. In his book *Spirit Babies*, Walter Makichen tells us how to connect with a child before it is conceived and waiting in the mother's energy field, and after conception. He suggests that if we as grandparents, parents, doctors or teachers could know and understand each soul's purpose, we might have different attitudes surrounding the birth, growth and development of each child, and how best to encourage them.

## ***Death and Bidding Farewell to the Soul***

### **What does the loss of a baby mean?**

There is always particular distress around a miscarriage or the death of a baby, but the soul chooses its life and the length of its life. According to Spiritualists, the soul can choose to come to Earth for a quick moment and then go. For some reason, a soul may need to gently touch base with the earth plane and experience it only for a moment. Walter Makichen says that some 'angel babies' come to the earth plane to experience human life for a very brief time, in order to understand human emotions and the human condition. This allows them to be better equipped to help human beings under their guidance and care. Mackichen also says that if a pregnancy is terminated for any reason, the incoming soul can return to the 'spirit baby world' and await the next opportunity to join its prospective parents, either the same ones or a new set. The spirit babies do not experience the loss of a body in the same way as maturing children or adults who have already invested an identity with the body. The spirit baby loses an opportunity, not an identity, and receives another chance for birth.

Many women have suffered for years because their stillborn children or miscarriages went unacknowledged with the ritual of a funeral or allowance for the grieving period, or some other significant way to bid farewell to this soul. The hospital staff during an earlier era did not allow for or understand the necessity of rituals to be observed around such deaths. Every soul is important and as humans we need closure in all cases involving death. But we also should know that some lives were meant to be short and the brevity has a higher purpose.

### **When does death occur?**

The first and last breaths mark the beginning and end of each soul's life journey here. When the incoming being takes in the life force with the first intake of breath, this signals to their ancestors that they have come to be a part of earth life for a while. When a person gives out their last breath, it signifies rebirth to a new life in spirit.

The body ceases when the soul has completed its mission. It decides the moment when we detach from the physical body and pass back to the subtle realms of being in the astral body. Even with sudden death such as accidents, the etheric energy system upon which the physical body depends, becomes depolarized and gradually withdraws so that the life force no longer reaches the cells. Each nucleus gives its last instructions to begin the process of disintegration and to return the chemical components of the body to the earth again. The life that animated the body has simply moved on to another form.

### **What do the dying leave behind?**

When we do return to the Light, however long or short our stay here, we do not just remain in the memories of loved ones, we leave an energy trace that continues to vibrate within the landscape and all those places we have touched. This is our gift to Earth and all who inhabit her at the present time. Every energy trace influences the energy pattern of *all that is*. Sometimes we can feel the artist's individual energy or trace of life in a great piece of artwork or a past life in a fossilized bone. We all hope to leave a positive rather than negative trace of our energy behind.

### **How should we respond to the death of a soul?**

We celebrate birth in many ways with specific rituals such as naming ceremonies or baptisms, baby showers and gifts, and we often experience much shared joy. On the other hand, we celebrate death with traditional funerals according to our cultural background. But Jack Angelo suggests that we can choose to forget that death is a wonderful celebration too and is our way back to the Light. If we place the soul at the center of life on earth, then death too can truly be celebrated.

I want to stress that we must grieve a death as well as celebrate it. Ella Groves' article on the various stages of grieving and mourning called *Comforting the Bereaved* is posted here on the Calgary First Spiritualist Church website under 'Thoughts & Talks'. Ella emphasizes that it is best to understand and go through the stages of grieving without resistance, as well as to find suitable people to help with support along the way. But let us always consider birth and death as two sides of a perfect coin—a welcome and a wonderful farewell.

### **What does death mean for grief support workers?**

Healers and Spiritualists often work with both people who are dying and those who grieve for the dead. According to Angelo, if we are going to be in the presence of the dying and the grieving, unless we address the reality of our own inevitable deaths, we cannot fulfill our role as healers or grief support workers. We should be especially aware that our passing will someday occur and be ready for the wonderful place death has in our own soul's journey. Death means leaving the physical body. It means returning to a state of expanded soul. It means discovering more love, more peace and more light than ever imagined on Earth while in a physical body. Death is the gateway to profound beauty and a cause, once again, for celebration.

### **What constitutes a suitable celebration or ceremony for birth and death?**

Jack Angelo suggests that we hold celebrations and ceremonies privately on our own, alone and in our own way. But we can also join with others for these events. When we celebrate together, it reminds us that we are part of the great Oneness of the universe. Author Bill Bryson in the book *The History of Almost Everything*, says we have been One ever since the Big Bang and before. (It is part of our being). Each one of us is here today because there has never been a break in the continuous chain of life since creation. In order for each of us to exist today, the successful creation of species and successful reproduction of individuals has continued uninterrupted. Therefore, celebrations of birth and death can be considered parties with our own special group of connected individuals, to celebrate this ongoing chain of earthly existence. And parties are definitely more fun shared with others! So I invite you to find your own way to share special rituals to welcome the incoming soul of a new child and bid farewell to others with joy. Welcoming the soul and bidding farewell can be approached in the same spirit of celebration.