

Attending a Teacher's Dying At Home: Martha Crampton's Final Four Days

Dedicated to Catherine Lazure for her clarifying and deepening contributions to this account of the days we shared with her mother, and to all bringing dignity to dying.

-- Jean Guenther

We were present when Martha Crampton, the most important teacher from the first part of my life, died on April 7, 2009. When I learned she was dying, encouraged by another former student, I took the risk of asking Martha if I could visit, and with her welcome showed up at her home, having never been there before. I was prepared to stay for an hour or indefinitely. I made offers of my availability in small increments, hoping to match everyone's growing level of comfort with one another as we dealt with the variety of situations that arose that first day. I knew the importance of this time *for everyone involved*, to experience the awakenings that arise at this opening between the material and energetic worlds, as one dies. Martha had dedicated her entire adult life to facilitating the spiritual insight and grace available to those wanting to work with these psycho-spiritual awakenings. Because of Martha and her daughter's complementary readiness I had the unforgettable opportunity of living with my teacher and mentor and her visiting loved ones, through the last four days of Martha's life, offering a tincture of what she had given me and countless other people.

Meeting Martha in 1972

When I was 21 I had the good fortune of being introduced to psychosynthesis and then to Martha's work by Mark Horowitz. One year later, in 1973, I moved from Boston to Burlington, Vermont, about 100 miles South of Montreal, to avail myself of the trainings Martha offered. Whenever I could for those next seven years, I participated in the excellent professional training programs she and other leading trainers provided. Martha was a single mother who was clearly committed to following her own inner guidance. Martha independently created and delivered outstanding training programs through what began as the Quebec Center and quickly grew into the Canadian Institute for Psychosynthesis. Since the Institute was housed on the ground level of her home in Montreal, I had a little contact with her family. I especially enjoyed seeing Martha's 12-year-old daughter Catherine, (her youngest child affectionately called "Cat") and Martha's partner, artist Tom Hopkins, and had briefly met Martha's son, Michel, and her older daughter, Gabrielle.

Seeding Psychosynthesis in North America

A couple of years later, when Martha and Tom were building a rural training retreat center in the eastern townships of Quebec, I saw the warm and caring relationship Tom and Cat enjoyed, while Martha worked very long hours producing and delivering several summers of consecutive, intensive residential training programs. The beautiful rural, residential setting *greatly catalyzed several hundred participant's profound experience of being a community of like-minded souls, unusually present and skilled in supporting one another's deep psychological healing and daily spiritual-growth practices.* This was an extremely rich and fertile time for many people living in various parts of North America, some of who were teaching or studying in San Francisco. In this naturally peaceful setting, practitioners could reunite each summer for individual and collective healing, receiving and/or providing excellent in-depth, psycho-spiritual training. Martha and other teachers provided excellent clinical and group leadership training, and professional supervision in a variety of fields. This prepared me to shift from doing adolescent counseling in an agency to going into private practice with adults and then families. In 1975, I founded the Vermont Center for Psychosynthesis, first offering personal growth workshops, and then adding progressive levels of professional training programs.

Over these intervening decades, I had occasionally told Martha how valuable her mentoring and teaching had been for me in doing my life's work, and I especially enjoyed her supportive contact when I helped found the AAP, the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis. I had responded over the last couple of years when she'd email about how she was doing in her pro-active response to her shocking diagnosis of lung cancer, given her disciplined and healthy life style.

Knowing Martha's life was ending; I wanted to be there, and as soon as possible. With nutritional and other self-care provisions and promises for on-call support from a close woman friend and my partner, the day after Martha said I could visit I took the early commuter train from our home in Connecticut into New York City.

Showing Up and Being Present

Upon arriving, I was kindly received by Angela, her health aid, and went in to see Martha in her bedroom. She was sitting at her computer desk across from her bed, answering a few emails. She was wearing taupe-colored linen pajamas, graceful as always, but now very frail. We were comforted to see one another. Martha had a large cancerous growth on one cheek and was blind now in that closed eye. I just looked into her usable eye as we visited, and wondered if she was the trainer who had given those "gaze into one eye only" instructions in a guided exercise 35 years ago at her three-week residential training program held in Franconia, New Hampshire.

I was deeply relieved I had come, and grateful to Marjorie Goldman, who, having heard me wonder aloud about visiting Martha to lend a hand but concerned I might be an intrusion at this intimate family time, had said, from her recent experience there, "No, I don't think you would be in the way—quite the opposite. Your presence could really help Martha and her grown but vulnerable daughter, who's a bit overwhelmed managing Martha's care, to feel safe and loved. I hope you'll go if you can."

I took my cues from Martha for our times of conversation and of quiet. I had no agenda, just presence. Soon, quite tired, and with Angela's help getting back in bed, Martha told me she had that special tea she knew I liked, having served it at my wedding six years earlier, the last time she and I had seen one another. Still being the gracious hostess, she offered me this tea and anything else I wanted in the kitchen- or on her numerous library shelves-just after having told me she was doing the VSED plan, a Voluntary Stopping of Eating and Drinking. I was struck with what a poignant difference this was between us now, even though I had been told Martha was not eating much and I knew of VSED from my own mom's cancer a few years earlier. I thanked her, went into the kitchen, and brewed a pot of Good Earth tea.

There was a tenderizing sweetness in reconnecting with Martha's daughter Catherine, grown from a light-hearted girl when last I saw her, into a lovely woman. Catherine was understandably weary from having taken on what had extended into a two-year responsibility of arranging for care for her mother in her home, and being with her mom during several emergency and surgical hospitalizations. Martha was her usual brave and independent self and had taken herself to most of her chemo and radiation treatments. Cat was watching Martha's body deteriorate over this long illness, and now, feeling helpless, was facing her mothers impending death. Cat and I were both relieved to be doing this together. A couple of hours later, as Martha's suffering increased, we were all extremely relieved when the Hospice nurse arrived and immediately increased her morphine patch by 50%. Thank God and all the care providers for the grace that comes with hospice worker's excellent palliative 'comfort care'. They are the steady angels at the exit threshold.

Staying Present in the Mystery

Wanting to just be a grounded and receptive presence, in the flow, Cat and I practiced being as

flexible as jellyfish. Martha's condition was like that, like life, often changing in unexpected ways. In our desire to have anything stable to build upon and our illusions of what we expected to see happen—such as a somewhat steady winding down of her activities to meet her hopes for a smooth death—we had plenty of opportunities to practice disidentification from even our most subtle expectations. We just practiced letting go to what is: relaxing into basic goodness and loving-kindness, breathing into this present moment, this perfect moment. I made a large chart so everyone could more easily track the varying levels of Martha's medication doses received, and the ever-changing times we needed to track in order to administer each one of these medications at the earliest possible moment, based on Martha's preferences in the moment for balancing her pain management and her alertness.

Hospice Wisdom Liberates

Martha asked me to meet with her and her hospice counselor, Randy. A fine Buddhist, Randy brought Martha comfort suggestions after he calmly raised the pertinent questions and responded with reflective statements to be sure he completely understood her. “Are you thirsty?” “Is your pain adequately controlled with your medications?” “Are the doses being changed promptly enough?” After the physical update he asked, “What do you feel like?” “Are you ready to live some more?” As Martha answered each question Randy would paraphrase her: “Looks like you're ____.” At times Randy offered stories of other people's dying experiences, with the reminder that “every unique possibility exists to manage one's quality of life preferences as fully as possible, right up to and shortly after one's death. There is no one right way to die.”

Randy continued, *“Martha, you can relax and trust that the body knows and will let you know how to die naturally, letting down your various systems as gradually and evenly as possible, so no heroic control efforts or chosen deprivation (such as VSED) are needed.”* “Live your own life until you die!” and “It's OK to tire yourself out; if you feel like being up, go ahead and do it.” Hearing of this variety of dying styles clearly comforted Martha. My heart overflowed, watching her receive the same wise permission she had given countless others throughout the many decades of her career: She was the first to impress upon me: *‘You can relax and trust the wisdom and process of your own psyche and body.’*

After it was clear I would stay as long as she wanted, Martha said. “Jeannie, it seems you're able to be my death doula. You are just what I needed, and you arrived at just the right time.” It meant so much for me to be able to be of service to her. I assured her, “Martha, I am here because there is no place else I'd rather be. Since your family and care givers come and then need to return to their own lives, I really want you to have a consistent companion here during these last few, precious days.” Giving to Martha was an honor and incredibly satisfying. I felt we both knew we were just coming full circle with our receiving and giving. Experiencing how there is not really any difference between the giver and the receiver, I was completely fulfilled.

Several Eleventh-Hour Healings

Arriving at the Banquet of Life

Having anticipated Martha would be sleeping from the higher level of morphine patch now topped with oral pain-breakthrough doses, Cat was coming for me so we could step out for a quick dinner around the corner. To our surprise Martha was active and out of bed most of the day, and at Martha's suggestion Catherine graciously changed our plans and ordered the food to be delivered. As we sat down at the table, another trusted friend came by, hoping to have one more bedside visit with Martha while she was alert. Ken was shocked to see Martha, not only out of bed, but also seated for a meal! This meal turned out to be a ceremonial *daughter serving receptive and grateful mother*, with Martha

more fully partaking in the "Banquet of Life", savoring the scent of every item she expressed interest in, as her daughter carefully placed it on her plate. This almost slow motion serving and visual-olfactory ingestion was an extremely potent and powerful time for all of us. A great healing was occurring and we all, silently, knew it to be so. Although Martha's body coughed and was not able to swallow even one bite of the foods on her plate, and she soon asked to be taken back to bed, we all felt Martha had fully joined us in the sensual pleasure of being vibrantly alive while sharing a last meal with loved ones. I thought of my husband's definition of a sacrament-- "An outward and visible sign of an inward, invisible grace." Cat had told me the previous day that her mom had had the profound realization, just during this last week of her life, that, "I had unconsciously deprived myself of the banquet of life". We felt Martha was intentionally and symbolically wanting to heal this loss, and end her past deprivation through her fully sensual and social pleasures during this last, shared meal.

Inter-generational Collaboration

After only about a half hour rest Martha returned, walking with the support of Andrea, to be with us again. We all sat in the living room and Martha and Catherine sat together on the couch. They talked about the mutual misunderstandings that happened when Martha closed her institute and left the family home for their sudden move from Montreal to California, so Martha could help launch the Synthesis Graduate School. Each got a much fuller understanding of how painfully this was experienced by one another, and more acceptance and healing occurred as they reviewed Cat's adjustments to Martha's various moves until Martha made a home again in Connecticut for 10 years, and since living in Manhattan. I wondered what healing might be furthered if several of the adults who were children of prominent psychosynthesis center founders could share their similar and yet unique life stories. I wondered if and how and where (internet?) those conversations might occur.

Cat suggested we have a Synchronicity Circle, as they had been doing recently in their Vigil Group, for and with Martha. "Shall we start with five minutes of silence", Martha asked? Hmm, daughter was suggesting we partake in her mother's work, and they were doing it smoothly, together. Another healing moment, pregnant with their mutual anointing of one another through this new, tenderly equal, adult collaboration. After some silence each person shared the spontaneous images we'd each received. Cat's image was of a circle of people around a primordial bonfire, while also mysteriously being able to clearly see the stars overhead, knowing some of these stars had burned out years earlier. I thought, her mother's life force is still embodied sitting here in our circle, but how will Cat find her after she's bodily died out? Perhaps Cat's image reminds us we can still see many things that have physically burned out, even if they've burned out a long time ago.

A Mother-Daughter Healing

While doing imagery work in a circle was wonderfully familiar for me, for Martha's daughter this circle constellated an enormous maternal and spiritual healing. Once again meditating with her mom and other people in a small, deeply focused group allowed Catherine to re-experience being in the spiritual, "sacred sanctuary" her mom was so gifted in facilitating. Martha's Canadian Institute was in their home, and I remember Catherine and the family cats joining us for monthly meditation meetings. That night, for the first time since her childhood, Cat had "*an enormous experience of coming home to my roots and my mother's spirituality, which she had shown me growing up.*" Cat wept, as this was "*deeply gratifying as it returned me to the aspect of my mother I cherished the most, the greatest gift she had given me.*" Cat was now holding both her mother's limitations, as well as her great gift.

The Comfort of Legacy

Ken shared next in our circle, reminding Martha of his commitment to get her final work out into the world through his recently secured domain name, SynchronicityPractice.com. This clearly was helping Martha relax and let go of this life, knowing her work would continue to be available after her death. She especially wanted the synchronicity practice to support people in making the great turning, the cultural and personal life-style changes needed for us to move from being a society prioritizing private wealth and industrial-growth to preferring and hopefully becoming a truly life-sustaining culture and planet. (Jane Cameron had recently edited and produced Martha's final article on this same Synchronicity Process, available on www.aap-psychoanalysis.org and in the Monograph AAP published in Martha's honor.)

"I Thou" Healing

Then Andrea shared, and because Martha had been anxious and short with Andrea earlier, Martha said she was happy Andrea had joined our circle and asked, "Are we friends again?" Andrea said, "Oh Martha, we're always friends." It appeared Martha was making sure she shifted her communication style from one that could have been seen as criticizing hired help to one of expressing her own desire for a more tender, person-to-person connection, expressing our common need for class healing.

A Synchronistic Song

Fulfilled by this time in our circle, Catherine spontaneously started singing the chorus to "May the Circle Be Unbroken." We all knew the refrain and sang it together to celebrate our joy, being held by one another in what we knew to be our final circle with Martha.

The next day, while discussing the complexities Cat felt in her family relationships, I learned she didn't know the lyrics to the song she had spontaneously sung the night before. I explained it is a song sung by a person experiencing the death and funeral of one's mother, and returning home afterward. "My home, it was empty, since my mother, she had died." I silently wondered who would be with Catherine the first time she entered her mother's home, when Martha was no longer here? As Cat realized her song's perfect synchronicity with what she was living, she suggested, and we all agreed, to sing this spiritual, "May the Circle Be Unbroken," with everyone present at Martha's funeral. And we did.

On Sunday, when Bill, Catherine's mate and long-time supporter of Martha, came by to visit, Martha was pretty exhausted from having been up almost all day. Scared, but sounding critical, Martha expressed her doubts that in the changing staff of Megan to Andrea that evening, she wouldn't get good enough care. Having newly arrived I could listen while Martha expressed her concerns, and then we brainstormed 'new' strategies. Martha finally appeared settled, but when she turned back to repeating her first concerns, Megan firmly said: "Martha, I've been doing this work for a long time, and you have an excellent team of care-givers here. We are from the West Indies, and we take care of our people." Martha seemed to accept Megan's confident truth; relaxed, and said she was ready for bed. We all slept pretty well that night.

Early Monday morning Martha said Andrea had been very helpful last night, but she was in increased pain. She accepted another of her three pre-authorized break-through meds under her tongue, wanting to still be alert to participate in the nurse and ministers' visits later that morning. In between swabbing her lips with water or moisturizing them with Shea Butter, Martha and I shared our last cup of tea, which was just a mouth rinse for her. We breathed together until the meds gave her enough relief so she could relax and rest.

Women's Closing Circle with Last Rites

Jane Cameron had arrived with her overnight bag on Sunday and we shared some loving time walking in Central Park that afternoon, while Martha slept. On Monday morning, we met in the living room with Martha's daughter Catherine and the kind Episcopal priest, Elizabeth Garnsey, the daughter of Martha's cousin. This was the final in-person conversation planning Martha's memorial service. Before lunch, when Martha was comfortably medicated, we four women went in and sat with Martha at her bedside, forming a circle of love. Martha listened and was reassured that everything was in place. Visibly very weak, I asked Martha if she wanted a last blessing. She nodded. Gently, confidently, Elizabeth stood over Martha and arm outstretched offered a beautiful parting prayer, which was tenderly received. Martha then very slowly looked at each one of us in turn, and tenderly thanked each of us for our help, being there with her. She seemed much more content at this point, and it was clear she had deeply relaxed into her final letting-go.

The hospice nurse was delayed elsewhere at another person's bedside, but had alerted their physician to come, and he was able to arrive right at the scheduled time, asking us many questions to understand all he could about Martha's condition before going to her bedside. "Hello Martha, I'm here, Dr. Schwartz. How are you?" Quietly she said, "Not good." "Yes, it looks like you're on your way out now" he said. "I hope so" she softly replied. After seeing Martha he told us, "She doesn't have long now, I imagine 24 hours, at the most, so any last visitors should come immediately." He answered our questions about any health or safety risks in having Martha's body in her home for many hours after her death, and he fully re-assured us, suggesting we open windows if the central heating got too warm, and he reminded us to call Hospice immediately upon her death. He then said Martha was very fortunate to have such a loving circle of caregivers around her. I walked him to the door and thanked him, saying, "You're a real mench", and to my surprise he said, "You are too." We bent our heads in appreciation of one another, and he left.

Invisible and Embodied Transitioning Presences

During these four days I went in to be present with Martha every hour or two, except during my times asleep. Sitting in silence, I sensed a few invisible, peace-filled presences in the room. I thought of Roberto Assagioli, the founder and her private tutor of psychosynthesis, and I was deeply grateful for his and other benevolent beings in helping Martha transition. Any activity now appeared to be inner work. This vigil and 'turning it over' was comforting, and *I too was feeling held by a much larger circle*. As I sat with Martha, who appeared to be sleeping peacefully at about 3 on Monday afternoon, I softly said, "Martha, everything is in place." To my surprise, she nodded. Then I said, "And you are surrounded by love." And she nodded deeply, twice. Like a benevolent, radiant smile filling us, I felt great warmth was being shared among the visible and invisible presences' in the room.

Martha's dearest and faithful friend, Lea, brought a huge bouquet of pink roses. Karen Speira brought some healthy cookies she had just made to sweeten the moment of our death vigil. Martha's sister, Nancy, stopped by after her photography job and when she saw Martha had slipped into a coma, she burst into tears. Nancy, after two years of managing Martha's in-home care with Catherine, and now being in the presence of several loving women, was finally having an emotional release over the death of her older sister. She let us know our being there was 'like a miracle.' We were tenderly held by our unique yet common bond with Martha, and in our compassion for one another.

A Daughter's Sweetness At Her Mother's Deathbed

By Monday evening, Martha was heavily medicated and appeared to be in a coma. Her daughter sat close beside her for quite a while, soothing and comforting her. Cat spontaneously made up lullabies, which she sang to her mom, and one was about Martha's favorite childhood cat. Buzzy had been

wonderfully present to Martha during her early years, in ways her own mother couldn't be, and, in Martha's words, "Buzzy saved my life." Ah, deep presence. Cat sent waves of sweetness as she sang, and said: "Guess who's waiting for you, Mom? Your cat, Buzzy. You've done your work, you can play now." This especially tender time was Catherine's final visit with her mother.

Before Cat went home that night I asked her if she wanted to be called if Martha's condition worsened, No, she said she'd check in or come over after her dance class at 10am Tuesday morning. I went to sleep at 10 that Monday night, asking Megan to wake me up at any precipitous change in Martha, and set my alarm for 3am so I could check in with them.

A Knocking on the Door Before Dawn

At 2:20am on Tuesday, an urgent knocking on our doors awakened Jane and me. We scurried to Martha's side. She had just stopped breathing, and her face began to look more peaceful, being released from pain. We stayed right there with her awhile, awed, grateful, and at peace. Megan, Jane and I then slowly and very carefully lifted Martha's body in the bed sheet, having rolled up the edges together above her body, and we carried her into the living room and set her body on the massage table, where I had been sleeping an hour earlier. We had prepared it and placed the table into the center of the room so Martha's head was facing the east, awaiting the light of dawn.

Fulfillment in Honoring Martha's Last Wishes

We covered Martha's body with the shawls she had chosen, and a scarf given to her by Gabrielle, her daughter living in Paris. We placed Lea's pink rose petals around her uncovered face, and all around her. I brought in photographs of her family members and placed them on the wide windowsill behind her head, interspersed with a few of the quartz crystals Martha had used in her energy healing work. She looked very beautiful to me now, free from any pain, her mouth softly open and her head tilted slightly to the side, as it had often been to see those standing along side her bed. Peace was growing in the place. Jane was making all the necessary calls with the most sensitive of timings, and those who wanted to come sat in meditation with her body for quite a while. Randy and Lea and Ken came and were fully present, and we each savored Martha and the love and grace we were feeling, giving our last respects, sitting with her body for varying parts of the nine hours she was laid out in beauty in her living room, pink rose petals everywhere.

At 10 am, when Cat called as planned and asked, "How's Martha doing?" I said, "She's great. Right where she wants to be. She passed over well before dawn surrounded with love and peacefulness, and her body is as she wanted it, lying in beauty." Cat and I were both getting our wishes, being exactly where we each wanted to be at the time of and just following Martha's death, and grateful to one another for making this possible and easy. Cat and I made plans to meet downstairs later and go to a quiet spot around the corner for lunch.

When the gurney came just before noon to take Martha's body we made sure the funeral home staff would wait a full three days before her cremation. They seemed familiar with this preference. "The Buddhist way?" they asked. "Yes, exactly."

Downstairs, as Catherine came to meet me for lunch, she unexpectedly saw the driver of her mother's hearse, and ran up the street, unprepared to see her mother's body. After recovering from her shock, Cat and I shared a very tender time over lunch, appreciating all that had unfolded so beautifully. After lunch I accompanied Cat as she returned to her Mom's apartment, empty for the first time, walking into every room and facing the finality of her mom being gone. Cat's grief was heart breaking. It was quite difficult to leave her there about an hour later, although eased a bit by all the phone calls she

was receiving. It was time for me to go home.

The doorman hailed me a cab to get to the train. When the man driving asked me, very calmly, me how I was, I felt safe in his receptive presence and so told him how full of grace and incredibly fortunate I felt, having lived with this most important teacher in her home through the last four days of her life. He understood. After a respectful silence he said he would be honored to do the same for the teacher in Iran who had helped him straighten out his life after the premature death of his mother, and who had encouraged him to come to the States and get an education, which he was now doing. After more reverential silence, I said a prayer of gratitude for this synchronistic meeting of hearts and minds, immediately upon leaving the cocoon of these final four days with Martha and her daughter.

Time for Assimilation

I got off the train in Connecticut to my husband's welcoming embrace, and gave myself time to reflect and rest, writing and being in the garden. I needed the wisdom of the natural world to help me continue to absorb and be effected, as fully as I could, by the power of these experiences. I wrote an announcement of Martha's death, an obituary, discussed more of the details off her memorial service with the family and the priest, and slowly returned to my daily responsibilities. I needed to fully receive the largess of Martha's gifts for my soul's life work, while simultaneously being aware of so many, many other people whose soul force she enlarged. I wanted to reap the benefits of having come full circle in our giving and receiving with one another. I keenly felt the value of being alive, for still having the ability to carry the jug, and water the seedlings and flowering plants I encounter in my own short, precious life, potently feeling how interdependent we all are.

Wanting to share Martha's end of life with those people who had a deep connection with her and couldn't be at her memorial, I wrote the following letter.

"Dear Friends of Martha,

It's wonderful to be in closer communication with you as we integrate the gifts we've received from Martha and the significance of her life's work. Thanks to Ken Ross, a new colleague of hers, we can look forward to her website, SynchronicityPractice.com and yes, John Parks, sharing our appreciations of Martha there, with an explanatory Link from our AAP and other related sites.

I'm still in the largess of Martha, our final four days together, her peaceful dying at home as she wanted, and the lovely Memorial held at her cousin's daughter's church where Elizabeth Garnsey is an Episcopal priest at the Church of The Heavenly Rest, near where Martha lived in NYC. How's that for synchronicity?

Martha's sister and all three of Martha's children and their partners and her four grandchildren and former sweetheart, Tom Hopkins, were present. We in her psychosynthesis community were well represented. Tom and Anne Yeomans came down from Massachusetts and with my husband Bob and me drove into the City. Mark Horowitz came from Boston, and Walter Polk was there, as was Martha's long-time friend Jane Derman Leifer and other early students, Alanna Hartzok and Marjorie Goldman's daughter, Shendoah, in Marjorie's stead. Many people who couldn't be there were in close touch, and present in spirit.

I am happy to say that Martha's three closest home-health aids and Randy, her stellar volunteer from New York Hospice, attended. Andrea was not able to attend. During the time of sharing I re-constituted the circle of the five women present who became very close while being with Martha those final days, to acknowledge, thank, and honor them. They were all attentive, skilled, and full of loving-kindness. These caregivers were Megan, Carol and Angela, Martha's daughter Catherine, and her

long-time friend Jane Bradley Cameron.

What a great gift, to be able to be present for the one who taught me how to be present. I felt we had come full circle in mutual blessing. As another single woman Martha had modeled for me living as much as possible being guided by her intuition. She founded and directed a major training institute for North America, and a rural retreat center, providing a summer community context for professionals participating in intensive, residential psychosynthesis trainings. Throughout her life Martha was always learning new ways of being in service to people's evolution, guiding and teaching at several leading training centers and at AAP Conferences, and inspiring many professionals in many parts of North America to come forward and teach and train others in psychosynthesis.

Many people at the gathering, of about 100 people present, spoke of their experience of being most deeply seen by Martha, and of her connecting them to their own soulfulness and right work, setting them on the path in their most important life relationship, with the Divine. All of these unique yet similar stories, spanning 40 years, brought Martha's life work-the unique gifts of her powerful guiding presence-into a collective and distilled tincture. It was obvious that Martha's soul-evoking gift continues to bless us and radiates still in many people.

I wanted you at a distance to know Martha's life was finished in beauty and gratitude, and her gifts live on in many of us, and hopefully soon in her forthcoming website. In gratitude for you, and being in our community,

Jeannie Guenther"

Immediately and in the days just following Martha's death, many of us experienced her energetically blessing us here on earth. I heard this especially from family members and others very close who share in similar or the same life's work, people I think of as in the same soul group.

In the Giving, We are Gifted

I'll close with a passage written by Tamara, the daughter of a friend who took a sabbatical to live with her mom who also recently died at an early age. Tamara spoke of "the realization that there is ALWAYS world enough and time for those I love. Always. The challenge is to balance the move outward with the move inward, the gifting to others with the gifting to self, but, also,... I want to remember, to really get in my very bones, that these are times that call for MORE from us. The world, humanity, circles and spirals large and small, need our care and attention, and we can always give so much more than we believe possible. . .and in the giving, we are gifted.' "

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