

## Giving Up the Ghost: Let Go of Grief and Restore Your Life

**Karen Schultz**

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*Themes of sadness, faith, and the metaphysical are examined in this journey from grief to recovery and restoration.*

In this reassuring narrative, licensed social worker and spiritual medium, Karen Schultz reveals how grief can lead to self-destruction and a darkness that causes spiritual bankruptcy and why it's so important to move through it. Schultz explains that she wrote *Giving Up the Ghost* in response to her observation that recovery from grief is stunted by what she describes as "the secretive nature and fear about the mystery of death" and society's taboo about discussing grief. Schultz attempts to "demystify the death process" through her own personal stories and experience with grief and spiritual work.

*Giving Up the Ghost* presents evocative metaphors, such as people being one-winged angels who need one another to fly, and offers effective, gentle, and positive encouragement through grief: "The process is long, and the emptiness lingers. I see your courage to go on, and I admire you." Using her stories as a springboard, she discusses topics such as the signs of communication from the other side. She also discusses the importance of letting go of darkness and focusing on the light still in our lives by having faith in ourselves and various forms of spirituality such as angels, the Kabbalah, and God.

While the elements that need to be addressed in grief are mentioned, the narrative itself is quite general and reads more as a personal commentary rather than a how-to book on letting go of grief. The book doesn't, for the most part, offer specific steps on moving through grief but rather keeps the information generic. For example, in the chapter entitled "Restoring Ourselves to Wholeness," Schultz writes: "If the people or places [around you] are negative, you can lose your light. It's better to write a gratitude journal, and write down any spiritual happenings." Or: "Think peace, think love, and think restoration of your soul."

While the cover of the book is crisp and attractive, the book requires some editing to address some of the meandering narrative and correct the placement issues of content in order to fully meet its potential effectiveness. For example, in the epilogue, Schultz writes, "Here is a quote from Rabbi Nachman of Breslov," but the quote doesn't appear until a couple of paragraphs later and is then reintroduced as "Here is some of his wisdom," and it is not set apart from the narrative by quotation marks or italics. Also, the contents page does not accurately reflect the placement of the actual material: the contact page and Forgiveness Sheets appear in chapter 8 rather than in chapter 7 as shown in the table of contents; chapter 6 has leftover editing notes—as seen by the stand-alone sentence: "Joan's experience here-Nashville story."

*Giving Up the Ghost* provides a gentle and inspiring basic overview of why it's important to move through the darkness of grief using help from earth angels, as well as spiritual guidance from the Kabbalah and ethereal souls.

MAYA FLEISCHMANN (February 27, 2015)

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