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A 90th Birthday Celebration

How Reiki helped to honor a loved one

by Therese Fisher

Several years ago, my grandmother turned 90. I know we don't always think of birthdays as accomplishments, but really, ninety years of living; this is a pretty amazing thing! Over 32,000 days; each one filled with its own challenges and successes. A family raised into grand children and great grand children. How many times in those 90 years must she have sat in prayer or gone to church? How many cookies must she have baked or meals prepared? How many times did she get out of bed, even when she didn't want to? How many blankets did she crochet and how many people at one time or another in their lives were lovingly wrapped in comfort by one of these blankets? How many times must she have smiled or laughed? Suddenly, a woman whose life seemed pretty mundane to me now seemed miraculous and awe inspiring. How could we possible honor all that?



Palmyre on her 90th Birthday

Our family began to plan a gathering to celebrate this remarkable occasion. As discussions started about time and place, what kind of cake to buy and what to barbeque, I began to get nervous. Let's face it; I'm a practical woman. A large gathering of family one hasn't seen in a long time can sometimes bring a little tension into the body. Sure, we love each other, but so many things unsaid over the years, so many people changing into their own individual beautiful people on their own unique paths. How do we all come together in a place of love; without fear and without resentment?

The answer to that question turned out to be pretty simple. Ask Reiki! As others in the family worked on the physical logistics of the party, I began to work with Reiki on the "energetic logistics." I started off by asking my community for help at a Reiki Circle run by Colleen Benelli. I asked to be filled with Reiki so that my heart was in a place of love and support of this event and I asked that the event be surrounded by Reiki; that there not be tension and that my grandmother feel honored and appreciated. Distance Reiki immediately transcended time and space to surround the event itself and to shower all of the participants with joy and love.

At the same time, Reiki worked within my body to gently remove my resistance to being a part of this event. It then filled that newly created space with ideas of how to honor my grandmother. Bring her 90 flowers, one for each year... maybe in her favorite color. Find and play music that she loved. Have each person bring their favorite picture of her or of them with her. Find a way to capture people's fondest memories of time spent with her.

And so I arrived in California for the party with a new sense of enthusiasm and with one of my handmade baskets, woven with Reiki, to serve as “Palmyre’s Story Basket.” With Reiki on the job, we effortlessly found a florist that could provide us with 90 blue flowers. Shortly thereafter we found the perfect picture frames that guests could easily add photos to as they arrived.

These along with the story basket and instructions welcomed you as you entered the party:

Palmyre’s Story Basket

The story basket is one way for us to share and reminisce and celebrate this marvelous woman and how she has touched our lives.

Once the birthday party is over, she will have the basket and all of its stories to keep. That way, even though we may not all be with her in person every day of her 90’s, she will be able to see the basket and read the words and know that we all love and support her throughout this new decade of life.

Story Basket Instructions:

- 1) Get a piece of paper.
- 2) Write on it something about Palmyre...
 - Your favorite story about her
 - Something you admire or like about her
 - A positive way she has influenced your life
 - Or just something nice!
- 3) Place the paper with your Palmyre Story in the basket.
- 4) If you feel like it, take one of the stories out and share it with others or share your story with others. (Just make sure you put them back when you’re done.)



We all had lots of fun that day, sharing a meal, catching up, and enjoying each other’s stories. At the end of the party a small group of us sat together and smiled and laughed as my mother read each of the story cards to my grandmother.

That story basket has become, in essence, a family time capsule and those stories are now a cherished and preserved part of our family history.

We know that another day will come when we will call on that basket to share with us its contents and create a testimonial to a woman’s life. Until then we know those stories are held in trust by the many blessings of Reiki.

