

Chapter Six



“Live each moment fully. Then let it go.”

—Pisti

Following our first visions after Pisti’s death, Istvan and I participated in two worlds. One was the world in which Pisti was no longer physically present. The other was the world of Mind, of presence and creativity. Here the unique consciousness of Pisti was present, but always within the context of his larger creating Self. He, as Pisti, was like a living work of art in a large mosaic that fit into an even larger artistic design.

Once I felt him say to me, “Think of my life as a painting.” Together we looked at this painting, and I understood the *artistic necessity* of its basic composition. That is, I was able to have at least some understanding of the organizing principle working in his life to help him realize the intention that gave him birth. However, I also was able to see how the collective nature of creativity complicates the achievement of these intentions. Once again I realized how important it is to “Protect everything that is coming into being.”

This experience reminded me of the image of the old man who, in my dream before Pisti’s birth, had created the painting of the young man I knew would be born as my son. As I pondered this image of the old man sitting in the rocking chair and smoking his pipe, the image began to take on a life of its own. I watched the man slowly and calmly inhale the smoke. As he exhaled, I saw the smoke divide into separate streams of intention and flow out in many directions. Each stream of smoke manifested itself in a living, conscious work of art. Some of the creations remained in Mind while others materialized in time and space.

Sometimes the power and vastness of this creativity undid me, and I fell back into the world where I was Pisti’s mother,

where he was dead, and where we would never be together again. After all, this world also had its reality.

I knew that this world's *reality* was our *perception* of the world that we had historically constructed and collectively maintained. I knew this—even while I experienced its paralyzing effect on me. It was clear that my personal work was to deconstruct these trained modes of perception within my own mind. I was grateful that there was evidently a part of me that always lived in the wisdom of Mind, that knew and understood the process of deconstruction and creation that was working within me. Yet the tension between the two worlds was real and would continue to be real until the creative principles of Mind could flow through me without being intercepted and garbled into the tangled shape of our present worldview.

One afternoon, when I felt frozen in that empty, garbled world, I decided to get out of the house and go to a bookstore. As I browsed through the books, I was unaware of the music that was being played until suddenly my attention was captivated by a piece I had never heard. I sat down and attempted to appear normal, but I felt something open in my heart. The sorrow was overwhelmingly intense, but, strangely, so was the joy. When the music finished, I put the book I was reading back on the shelf, purchased the tape of music, and left the store. I was amused that the piece was called *Miracles*.¹

Later that evening I decided to listen to the music again. I placed the tape in the stereo in Pisti's room and went into my bedroom to change clothes. As I stepped out of my sweats, I was once again overcome by the music. I looked at the pictures of Pisti on the dresser, and suddenly my perspective started to distance itself from everything in front of me. My consciousness seemed to be leaving the room and moving toward the music while my body stood still. I quickly followed "myself" into Pisti's room, closed the door, and lay down on the bed in the darkness.

The moment I closed my eyes, I felt Pisti's presence so strongly that I was startled. I felt him say, "Let's look at all my forms as Pisti. Let's live through them together." I began to

remember him as a baby and then as a very young boy. Soon I was no longer just remembering. I was inside specific moments. While my consciousness fully participated in this past, it was also strangely “located” slightly up in the air to my right where Pisti and I were “surfing” the great creative waves of life together. These waves were energetic and vigorous. One could sink and drown, be ripped apart, or skillfully ride the waves in a state of ecstasy.

Down on the bed I was crying, laughing, then frantically trying to hold onto the moment – to make it last just a little longer. At such times, I began to sink. Then I could hear Pisti say, “Live each moment fully. Then let it go.” These were the critical periods of excruciating tension between holding on and letting go. Then, when I released everything to save myself from drowning, I felt myself rise high on the crest of the life force. It was exhilarating. In these moments I knew how deadly and unnecessary it was to try to hold onto anything. After all, here we were, Pisti and I, alive, participating, observing, and creating together on the vast, eternal ocean of Mind.

Then I returned to time and space. Pisti was a young man. I saw him smile. Pain shot through my heart. I would never see him smile again. I heard Pisti say, “We can always create that smile again.” But I knew that would be another life, another time, and another space. I felt myself sinking, but I could still hear Pisti’s coaching: “Flow with time. Surf with time. Surf on the great force of life.”

As I saw the high school years coming, we both began to laugh. I said I could let go of those years very well. The moment I had this thought, we were living the last years of his life. I felt his joy, his love, his deep desire to create a life of meaning and purpose. And I felt my own relief and happiness that he had made it through the difficult years. Then, abruptly, I landed in the final month—the accident, the days in the Trauma Center. I leaned over his beautiful image and kissed the middle of his forehead. The combined energy of all his images returned. No. I would not let him go.

But, I thought, he has already died, and here we are together. His consciousness filled the room, yet I stood frozen in this last moment. Slowly, Pisti said, "Remember Faust. Remember that it is precisely when he cries out, 'Linger, linger, [this moment] thou art so beautiful!' that he can fall into the power of Mephistopheles." In that exact instant the music was finished. I sat up. The conflict was gone. I realized that something deep in me was in the process of relinquishing the material forms of Pisti. This was occurring, not because I was unusually courageous or strong, but because I had experienced the essence that created those forms. I felt a pervasive peace flow through my mind and body. I lay back down on the bed. I looked out at the stars. I was in awe of the universe.

I thought about what it really means to live each moment fully with open hands, to love deeply and, at the same time, to be able to relinquish it all. This, if anything, requires the exquisite balance of Persephone, she who is bonded through love both to the mother of life and to the husband of death, to form and to nonform. I had been bonded to form, but I could not be bonded to nonform until I had consciously experienced it. I, like Persephone, had to be abducted by the Lord of the Great Void. Anubis, the jackal, had opened the way to the powerful love and creativity in the essence of all life. Now I also belonged to both worlds—but I was still learning how to walk between these worlds in harmony and in balance, how to weave them together into one dynamic, living fabric.

I could see that Persephone is a sacred image of immanent Mind: she reflects life that is lived in balance and harmony with the principles that organize, dissolve, and recreate all life. Now the deep layers of my mind were giving birth to Persephone in me. I had experienced how letting each moment go allowed me to surf the waves of life in a state of ecstasy. Pisti was teaching me to let him go in material time and space so I could experience more fully his essence in "the inner space and time of consciousness." It was becoming apparent that this balance of Persephone, as well as that of the jackal, was the "Opener of the Way" to multi-dimensional consciousness.

I laughed when I remembered that the music was called *Miracles*. I had, indeed, experienced a *miracle*. As I thought about the definition of this word as an event that *appears* to contradict the known laws of science, I marveled at how such events must always be taking place around us, in us, and throughout this infinitely creative universe. Surely no science, however advanced, could ever include all the laws of creativity. I wanted to stay open to such events even though they appeared to contradict what we have agreed is reality. I certainly knew that my experience of Pisti's absence in the world of matter was real, yet equally real was my experience of his presence in the world of Mind. This meant respectfully holding these apparent contradictions in a state of balance so that what I now perceived as two worlds could be experienced as one dynamic process of ebb and flow, of birth and death, of absence and presence, of darkness and light, of inner and outer, of matter and spirit.

In the meantime, however, Istvan and I were very concerned about Jenny. She had been devastated by Pisti's death. While she was convinced that Pisti's consciousness was continuous, his absence was her daily reality. She was fortunate to have a loving and understanding family who did everything they could to help her through the grief she was experiencing. They knew that her life was profoundly changed. I often wondered whether it was more painful to lose a child to death or to lose a child to grief.

Istvan, Jenny, and I were often together during the first two years following Pisti's death. We went to Hungary together to visit Pisti's Hungarian grandmother and our many other relatives in that country. We also carried Pisti's ashes to Mount Baldy, where Pisti and Jenny had spent so much time together, and to Mount Shasta and Sedona. A few weeks before Pisti's accident he had said to Jenny and a few of their friends that if one were to die, the truly wonderful thing would be to have one's ashes scattered at sacred places on the earth. When Pisti died, the three of us vowed to do just that. And that first spring Jenny took my class in mythology and symbolic language. After class we often spent hours talking over coffee. Sometimes she would come by our

92 The Miracle of Death

house to meditate in Pisti's room. It was there that she too stepped into the multidimensional world of immanent Mind.

Her experiences in "the inner space and time of consciousness" formed the path that brought Jenny back to life and balance. The first time she had such an experience, she said she wanted to run out of his room and tell us that he wasn't dead, that not only was he creating with us but that he was creating in other dimensions as well. "But," she said, "I didn't dare move. I wanted to experience him as much and as long as I could." The following description of her experience is from her journal and notes in her words that I wrote down at that time:

At first I know that Steve (Pisti) is present, but there is no image. I wait. Then I see a sandy beach and the ocean. Now Steve and I both have bodies, but they are spirit forms, sort of transparent, yet I am able to see if I choose to see. I can see all other physical forms. Everything is still and beautiful.

I am so excited because I know he isn't dead and we are together again. He picks me up and runs into the ocean with me. We hold each other for a long time. It is so personal and real. Finally, we are sitting on the beach together, and he says, "I have so much to tell you."

Then we go together into lush mountains and then out into space. I look down, and I can see the earth. Steve wants to show me the disease of the planet. He says the illness is getting worse – both in human beings and in the environment. I can see the dirt and pollution all around the earth. I realize that this is a spirit picture from space. The earth is so small, but we can see the damage we have done to it. I realize that this kind of pollution gets in the way of our communication with "the other side." He encourages me to take care of my body, to nourish it and to nourish the earth and its precious resources, to love myself and to love the earth.

When Jenny told Istvan and me about this experience, Istvan related to Jenny the similar vision of the earth that he had experienced. This was a powerful moment for all three of us: Pisti

was urgently focusing our attention on the stressed condition of the earth and the role the human species plays in that condition.

Jenny said that this part of the vision was a surprise to her because she had not been conscious of the seriousness of the problem before this experience. She felt such love coming from Pisti for her and for the earth. He talked with her in detail about taking care of herself emotionally and physically. Jenny now understood that taking care of herself was the first step toward taking care of her larger body, which was the earth.

I wanted to tell everyone about these amazing journeys into “the inner space and time of consciousness,” but I soon realized what I was up against. The same struggle with doubt, denial, and outright rejection that I had experienced in myself now stood before me in the images of friends with whom I thought I could share these experiences. These friends were like mirrors for my own rational mind in its effort to deny and destroy any experience that contradicted its accepted view of reality. Yet they were my friends, people who loved and trusted me. I knew they wanted to be supportive, but they could not be if I continued to inject the disorganizing principle of these experiences. There were, of course, other friends who could and did listen to the stories, but it soon became clear that such experiences are difficult to hold in consciousness if there is not a worldview into which they can fit. Istvan talked with only a few people, and Jenny, quiet and private as she was, talked with no one for a very long time. She simply *knew* that what she had experienced was another dimension of reality, that she could not have understood it without experiencing it, and, therefore, there was no possibility of sharing it.

The three of us realized that Pisti was trying to awaken in us a worldview into which our experiences would not only fit but would be understood as natural expressions of the essence of that worldview. Pisti worked with us in the mode of an ancient Celtic Bard in his effort to awaken our deep memory, to ignite our intuitive, artistic consciousness, to create the conditions necessary for Baraka to magically and spontaneously occur in us. In our dreams and visions he miraculously appeared and told us

94 The Miracle of Death

stories, showed us images, joked with us (especially with Istvan), danced, played haunting music, and we created living, visionary narratives in which he and we participated. He communicated with the greatest urgency that our world had lost its intuitive consciousness of the creative principles that organize and balance the marvelous and complex forms of all life. We had lost our “ordered” structure, and the world had become a “wasteland.”

One evening I dreamed I saw Pisti dancing wildly and yet effortlessly out of the North and into the room where I was sleeping. His arms and legs, hands and feet were flying through the air in perfect harmony with a music I could feel but could not hear. His every muscle vibrated with this unheard music. When I was able to see his feet more clearly, I realized that he was dancing in the snakeskin boots he had liked so much. I began to feel the pure joy his presence brought into the room, and, as he continued to dance, I felt him say, “Dance life in snake boots!”

When I awoke, I remembered a conversation Pisti and I had one afternoon about the symbolism of the snake. He had invited me into his room to see two beautiful rattlesnake skins he had just hung on his wall. The snakes had been run over on Mount Baldy, and Pisti had skinned them. I mentioned that people of the ancient world had viewed the snake as a powerful manifestation of the divine and that they had honored the sacred mystery of death and birth in the snake’s ability to shed its dead skin and allow the soft, new skin to come into being.

I wanted to be able to dance life in snake boots, to be able to release the dead forms so that the new forms could live in me. I had experienced the exuberance and joy this ability releases. All three of us wanted this. Istvan, Jenny, and I wanted to do whatever was necessary to allow this new vision to be born in us. We understood that we needed to heal ourselves of the damage of our present worldview and to learn how to heal our larger selves, the earth, of this same damage. We wanted to achieve a balance in our lives and to extend our connectedness with this multidimensional world. We continued to be attentive to our dreams, our waking visions, and our precognitive and synchronistic experiences. Sometimes we did not understand

what we were going through, but we recorded everything, the chaos as well as the order, with as much detail and accuracy as we possibly could. Another world had opened to us, and we wanted to be good cartographers.

Istvan and I spent most of our free time talking about our experiences, listening to music, reading and meditating. We studied different forms of meditation, and we used techniques from some of the ancient shamanic traditions of Mexico and South America. We felt comfortable and strangely familiar with these traditions because they connected us to nature and to the earth. Gradually we each settled into the form of meditation that suited us individually, and we discovered our own particular needs.

Jenny needed to be in nature, especially in the mountains where she had spent so much time with Pisti. I discovered that my body needed to move with music in a form of dancing meditation, and Istvan, in addition to meditation, discovered books: he read more in the next two years than he had read during his entire life. For several months Istvan meditated lying down in the panther position, which was the “bridge” position of Istvan’s vision of Pisti in the hospital. When that no longer worked for him, he used another form of meditation. He often meditated in Pisti’s room, but from time to time I would hear him blissfully snoring. When I kidded him about this, he laughed and reminded me of my own words, that “this world also had its reality.” This happened so often, however, that we finally came to use the Hungarian word for meditation, *meditacio*, for *nap*. Istvan insisted that this was his own personal technique for keeping the “balance.”

After his *meditacio* one Sunday afternoon, Istvan emerged from Pisti’s room to tell me a dream he had just had in which Pisti showed him a film. He sat down at the table, folded his arms in front of him, and closed his eyes. I sat down quietly and waited. Something big was happening inside Istvan. I looked at his face and watched the tears push through his closed lashes. His folded arms seemed to hold him in this time and this space. I did not feel

96 The Miracle of Death

it was sadness that Istvan was experiencing, but rather something so profound, so sacred, that he could not speak.

And we did not speak that afternoon about the dream. Only later that evening as we lay in bed, neither of us able to sleep, did I urge him to try to tell me what he had experienced. Then he explained how, during the dream, he felt as though he “understood everything.” Yet, later, when he wanted so much to tell me, he simply could not speak. This is what he finally did say:

I saw universes creating themselves, absorbing themselves, and recreating themselves – but not necessarily in that order. It all seemed to be happening simultaneously. There was only Now. Everything was energy, but this energy was love. This love was so powerful that it shot out of itself as material worlds, universes, but no matter how much it expanded or changed its forms, it could never lose itself because there was nothing but itself. I experienced this from the inside out, from the heart, but I had the mind of a physicist and was able to understand what I was seeing. Pisti said that I would not be able to hold onto this kind of knowledge when I woke up, but he said that there are physicists and other scientists on the earth now who are beginning to understand some of the basic principles of life that have not been understood in the past.

There was so much, but I don't have the words. Instead of just part of me experiencing the film, all of me was experiencing it, but somehow I was the film, Pisti, myself and everything in the film, and all of that was experiencing “it” at once.

Pisti told me that consciousness on the earth is going through a powerful transformation. He said that there is now enough energy on the earth, that is, love and longing for love, to hold the beam of light that is coming – whatever that means. I understood it in the dream. What I do remember is that light is energy that is conscious and loving, but it was more than that. Pisti also said that the new child of the human species will have another ring of DNA. Maybe that was a symbol, some way to tell me that the children of the future will be born knowing

what we are struggling to understand. I felt that if we can heal ourselves, we can give them this gift.

All that night I lay close to Istvan's body. His telling of the dream had created such vast spaces in me that I felt a need to be grounded in the present moment. Once again I had been undone by the vast and powerful creativity of the universe. I longed for Pisti to be present in the material world of time and space. I longed for the known world, the familiar world—with all its limitations. It was true that I wanted to make room in myself for "the immensities of the universe," but tonight it seemed to me that my relationship to these immensities could only exist through my love for the individual forms here in my time and my place.

I knew Pisti's essence existed even though he was no longer in the body. I had experienced his presence, his love, his consciousness, but now, this evening, I felt such a need to *see* him, to see his earthly form. I had trouble sleeping, and when I did sleep, I had strange, confusing dreams. Finally, in the early morning I dreamed Pisti came home. He walked into the kitchen where I was making breakfast. I could see him clearly. He was wearing the white Tibetan shirt he loved, jeans, and his old, dirty Nikes. I asked why he was wearing his old shoes when I had bought him new ones before he died. He smiled and asked me in return, "Am I real enough?" We both laughed at his joking response to my need as we embraced each other. I was prepared to feel empty space, but much to my surprise, he was solid, and I was not.

That morning before Istvan left for work, he made coffee, brought it into the bedroom, and sat down. I told him the dream. I explained how I had longed for the particular, and I got it, right down to the dirty shoes. But I had been in for a surprise: Pisti had walked into the dream as a trickster Bard. What was "real" anyway? Pisti appeared in a very clear, specific image, but did such an image make him more real? Was an image ever more real than the presence of love and consciousness? Even in the dream I did not expect the image to have substance, yet the image was

solid and I was empty space. My very “real” material body had no substance at all. But was *it* not real? Then, suddenly, I realized that Pisti’s old, worn-out shoes were probably a symbol of the old, worn-out image that I thought I needed. I was not dancing in snake boots.

As Istvan and I talked about the dream, I was reminded once again of the quotation on Pisti’s pen and ink drawing: “Listen to the force behind the force of pure creativity. It is the essence of Life.” As we talked about this quotation, Istvan and I began to realize that it had become the theme of our journeys into “the inner space and time of consciousness.” Istvan said that he now felt that if a person stayed centered in the “essence,” there would be no question about what is real. Everything is real, whether it has form or not. Suddenly, the word “listen” took on new meaning. If we could remember to *listen* to the force behind the force that creates all forms, perhaps then we really could “Live each moment fully. Then let it go.”

I realized that I had been overwhelmed with the vastness of Istvan’s dream because I had not been centered in the essence, the heartfelt source, as Istvan had been. I was overwhelmed by too much form, and I longed for the one beloved form that I had lost. As we talked, I felt an urgent need to look more closely at Pisti’s drawing of Dali and himself where this quotation appeared. I jumped out of bed, ran into Pisti’s room, and removed the drawing from the portfolio.

I took it back to Istvan, and we looked at it together. While I had seen the background before, I had not really taken it in. Now I saw that the entire design bursts forth from a central point and emanates outward in ever larger, somewhat geometrical shapes. Dali’s and Pisti’s forms are a part of this bursting forth. Integrated into the background shapes are the words “Élan Vital.” They are shaped to give the impression of a powerful resonance coming from the center. Istvan said that he had never really paid attention to the background either. “Now,” he said, “after our experiences, it’s impossible not to see it, but,” he asked, “what is ‘Élan Vital’?” I only knew that it was from Henri Bergson’s philosophy and that it meant “vital force,” so I quickly looked it up in the dictionary,

and together we read: "the original vital impulse which is the substance of consciousness and nature."

*This is the moment of Baraka:
all worlds are One, and its essence dances in every atom.
Live this moment fully. It is so beautiful.*