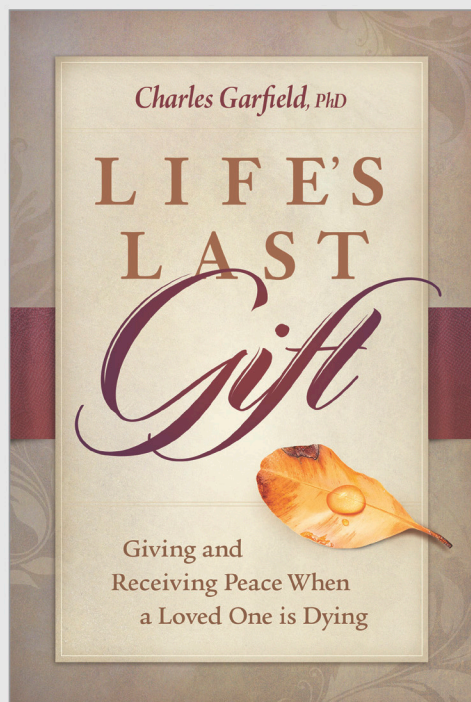


Life's Last Gift

GIVING AND RECEIVING PEACE WHEN A LOVED ONE IS DYING

Charles Garfield, PhD

A practical, compassionate end-of-life resource that explores the reciprocal and healing relationship between the living and the dying.



By Charles Garfield, PhD
Central Recovery Press

The Nine Commitments

- Commitment 1:** I Will Listen from the Heart
- Commitment 2:** I Will Speak from the Heart
- Commitment 3:** I Will Act from the Heart
- Commitment 4:** I Will Treat You with Empathy
- Commitment 5:** I Will Value Small Acts of Kindness
- Commitment 6:** I Will Listen to Your Stories
- Commitment 7:** I Will Use My Pain to Connect with You
- Commitment 8:** I Will Allow Love to Sustain and Heal Us Both
- Commitment 9:** I Will Accompany You as Far as We Can Go Together

After four decades of training volunteers to offer comfort at the bedsides of the dying, psychologist and Shanti Project founder, Charles Garfield, has created an essential guide for friends, family, and healthcare professionals who want to ease someone's final days but don't know how to begin.

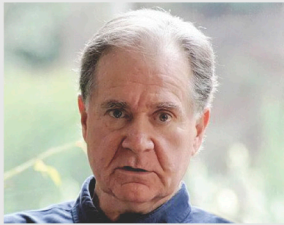
Garfield presents practical advice about finding connection, honesty, and peace while being of the greatest service to those at the end of life. By focusing on the reciprocal and healing relationship between the living and the dying, which continues until the last breath, he offers a path toward clarity and wholeness, and even growth. *Life's Last Gift* is an emotional lifeline for anyone who feels lost and filled with grief during this final stage of life.

"Charles Garfield offers all of us the concrete guidance we'll need to skillfully and compassionately support those we love at the end of their lives."

—David Sheff, author of the
#1 New York Times bestseller *Beautiful Boy* and *Clean*

FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT

Kae Tienstra, kae@ktpublicrelations.com
610-395-6298



About the Author

Charles Garfield, PhD, is a psychologist, author, and founder of Shanti Project, a widely acclaimed AIDS and cancer service organization. A clinical professor of psychology in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of California School of Medicine at San Francisco for nearly four decades and a fellow of the American Psychological Association, he is currently a research scholar at the Starr King School for the Ministry at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley.

Q & A with Charles Garfield, PhD

Why did you write *Life's Last Gift*?

Friends and relatives often lose their bearings when they learn that a loved one is dying. They and the person who had long been so close to them now stand on opposite sides of a great divide, one of them in the kingdom of the well, as Susan Sontag put it, the other in the kingdom of the sick—on the night side of life.

Suddenly, identities are blurred, as friend or parent disappears into the startling and unfamiliar role of “the dying one.” As days fill with physical care and decisions that can’t, ultimately, save this precious life, those who are well look for any kind of guidance about what to say, how best to help. Scared, anxious and grieving, they long to offer support, but very often, they retreat emotionally—even in the midst of busily working for a “good death”—because they don’t know how to stay present through the pain. They often know what to do—what tasks they need to perform—but they no longer know how to be.

What makes this book unique?

It is unique in that it is simple and uncluttered, an emotional and spiritual lifeline for friends and family who want peace and comfort for themselves and those they love. Although many useful books describe the dying process and its challenges from the perspective of the dying person, none are fully dedicated to helping family members and friends navigate their own emotional experience and deepen their relationship with a dying loved one, which can evolve to the end.

Who is your target audience for this book?

The primary market is the thousands and thousands of people each year who find themselves suddenly in the dying time, friends and family caring for those at the end of life. A secondary market is the hundreds of thousands of professional caregivers and volunteers in hospices, hospitals, nursing homes, and skilled nursing facilities who care for those at the end of life.

Sales Points

- End of life is defined as the period when healthcare professionals would not be surprised if a person’s death occurred within about six months. (APA)
- More than 90% of Americans believe it is a family’s responsibility to provide care for a loved one who is dying, and more than 650,000 people in the United States each year die at home, where much of the caregiving is done by family members and friends.
- 85% of caregivers care for a relative or other loved one: 42% care for a parent (31% for a mother, 11% for a father); 15% care for a friend, neighbor or another non-relative; 14% care for a child; 7% care for a parent-in-law; 7 percent care for a grandparent or grandparent-in-law. (National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP, 2015)
- *Life’s Last Gift* will provide a psychological lifeline for healthcare professionals who support patients and families with end-of-life care. They will turn to this book not only as a resource for loved ones of the dying but to gain relief from confusion, isolation, and overwhelm themselves.
- *Life’s Last Gift* addresses the nonclinical concerns of caregivers, which are often difficult to find support and resources for.

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