

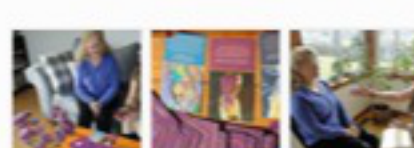
Horsham Spirit Medium Channels Afterlife

Karen Hluchan, a 1991 Hatboro-Horsham High School graduate, connects clients with deceased loved ones.

By Theresa Katalinas

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Karen Hluchan meets new people—both living and dead—constantly through her profession.

A full-time marketing manager whose long-held gift for channeling spirits was recently reawakened, Hluchan never knows who she will come in contact with from one day to the next.

"I've had a spirit come eight hours before a reading," Hluchan, a 1991 Hatboro-Horsham High School graduate said during an interview in her Horsham home.

"They were eager people in life."

And Hluchan, who has begun doing tarot card readings in 1993, said that even in death, people stay the same.

"Your spirit, who you are, never changes," she said, while pointing to her body.

"This is just a shell. It's housing our spirit."

Early beginnings

A lover of horoscopes, tarot cards, spirits and crystals, Hluchan said she spent a lot of time reading books about people channeling. Then, in 1993, two years after her best friend's suicide, Hluchan bought her first tarot card deck.

"I started doing tarot readings on my own," she said. "I always asked for help from my best friend."

In 2003, her father's untimely death at age 52 brought her a step closer to the side business she hopes will one day earn her a living. Although Hluchan said she did not see her father, she "knew without a doubt" that his presence was in her house.

"He used to help me and fix things up around the house," Hluchan said. "Things were breaking all around the house."

On Christmas Day a five-foot-wide and three-foot-deep sinkhole opened in her backyard. During the week between Christmas and the new year, Hluchan said a neighbor alerted her to a water main break at the end of her driveway where water was streaming out "like a river."

Hluchan knew her dad was behind both of those incidents, as well as the lights that were, all of a sudden, burning out more and more frequently.

"I said, 'Dad, stop breaking things,' " Hluchan recalled. "I am not going to forget about you."

After that, nothing happened, she said.

Recognizing spirit

According to Hluchan, spirits of loved ones continue to communicate with us through electricity - flickering lights - as well as other signs, like feathers, which she said indicate that "angels are around." Cardinals and rainbows are "awesome signs for me," while she said dragonflies and hummingbirds are indicators for other people.

"Whoever you think of first when you see these things, that's who it is," Hluchan said.

Distinct smells that coincide with loved ones, or a clock that gains or loses exactly one hour are other signs of spirit, she said.

Hluchan said people shouldn't be spooked by the thought of deceased people roaming about, flickering lights and changing a clock's time.

"Spirit is not here to hurt us," Hluchan said. "They're just letting us know, tap, tap, 'I'm here.' "

Coming full circle

Last year, Hluchan scheduled a group reading with a spirit medium. During the session, her best friend from high school shared a message to "heal the planet, the people and the environment."

Unsure of what it meant, Hluchan and her mother, Janice, Hluchan's Spirit Medium apprentice, scheduled a reading with another medium, Joshua Barber on Sept. 1 of last year.

Barber, who would soon after mentor Hluchan in **Reiki**, a form of energy healing, told Hluchan that her friend's message meant that she was a "light worker," meaning someone who heals people with spirit.

"Since that time life has been on a total fast forward," Hluchan said. "It's kind of like you're playing catch up."

Hluchan said she asked for guidance in the best way to use her gifts. The next day her horoscope suggested that she "do something wild" and not worry about the cost. The first item in her Facebook newsfeed was about **International Mediumship Week** at the Omega Institute in Rhinebeck, N.Y.

Without giving it a second thought, Hluchan said she booked the \$1,500 trip where she attended courses from some of the top Mediums in the world, including **James Van Praagh** and **John Holland** among others.

Before her departure for New York, Hluchan said in her **"third eye"** she saw her dad and he was smiling and laughing. That vision and the talk she had with him told her she was doing the right thing, Hluchan said.

"I felt him give me a hug," Hluchan said. "My world was completely rocked."

Making a connection

For the most part, Hluchan said she does not "see" the spirit she is connecting with during readings.

"Right now imagine a glass of water with ice cubes and condensation," she said. "How you see that image of that glass is how you see them."

Instead of actually seeing the person, Hluchan said she might see an image of something that's meaningful to the loved one in front of her, a cone of mint chocolate chip ice cream for the niece who enjoyed it with her uncle, for example.

So, how does she know a spirit is there?

"I can feel their presence on particular areas of my body," Hluchan said, adding that a best friend or grandmother will be "right next to me" and she will feel a "tremendous warmth."

If the person died of a heart attack, Hluchan said she might feel a tightness in her chest, or a shortness of breath.

The worst thing that people can do for a reading is to be set on connecting with a particular deceased loved one, she said.

"I tell people to come in open-minded," Hluchan said. "I can't control who comes through ... I'm just the vessel."

And that vessel is sometimes connecting with and carrying spirits at the most inopportune times.

During dinner with a friend, Valerie Richards, Richards said that both of her grandmothers and an uncle made themselves known to Hluchan.

"She went out for a cigarette and came back and said, 'your grandmother's coming through really, really strong,' " Richards recalled. "She said, 'she keeps rubbing her neck.' "

Richards said her grandmother had had a pinched nerve in her neck which went untreated - something that Hluchan would not have known other than through connecting with her grandmother.

"I've never discussed my grandparents," Richards said. "My grandparents were long gone before I met Karen."

Hluchan said she prefers to know nothing about her clients and their family.

"I don't want you to give me information, let spirit do the work," Hluchan said. "I am just here to share the love. I'm just here to heal."