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I don't see dead people

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The fact that I don't see dead people, in and of itself, should be of no surprise to anyone.

On the other hand, I am finding e-mails from the recent past, or even long ago, from friends and acquaintances who have since passed away. It is an eerie feeling to literally have someone communicate with you from the beyond, even though they pushed the send button months or years ago.

I suffer from the same uneasiness when, within my Outlook contacts, I find the information of people who haven't been around for many years. It always causes a moment of discomfort in remembering their loss, accompanied — in most instances — with the happiness of remembering that our relationship ever existed in the first place.

Life is fragile. As I discussed a few weeks ago, there is always uncertainty concerning whether we are just feathers being randomly blown about the universe. Ultimately, each of those people who has passed away has added much to my life in one way or another.

Of course, the beautiful part is that I can just delete the ones who didn't.

Part of me just can't delete the others. It's sort of an emotional crutch when I see their names or e-mails, just as reviewing thank-you cards from clients has always been a great happiness in my

life. I recently purged some old personal files and realized I had accidentally thrown several very old thank-you cards into the fire. My first reaction was to be horrified because I always imagined that one day I would be old and gray and retired — well, two out of three isn't bad — and my only solace in life would be reading the cards I so carefully maintained throughout my career. Then I realized that what really keeps me going, what really matters in life, is the sentiment and the incentive that caused those people to be so kind and gracious as to send a card to express their gratitude. It may be difficult to believe but there have been many times when I have cherished those cards much, much more than the mere appreciation of fees any particular file brought in.

So there I stood, staring at the ashes of a few cards I meant to save and, after my initial shock, I smiled as I watched their ashes being blown away in the wind, scattering randomly about the universe.

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