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THE SACRED LONGING
THE COMPANION WORKBOOK



REFLECTIONS. PROMPTS.
PRACTICES. PATHWAYS.
FOR YOUR JOURNEY HOME.



The Sacred Longing: A Companion Workbook

This workbook is designed to be a personal journey, a space for you to reflect, explore, and embrace your own "more-nature" as you read through *The Sacred Longing*. Each section corresponds to a part of the book, offering prompts and activities to help you connect more deeply with the themes and integrate them into your own life.

How to Use This Workbook

- **Read a section of the book first.** Before diving into the workbook prompts for that part, read the corresponding section in *The Sacred Longing*. Let Carlo's words resonate with you.
- **Find a quiet space.** This is your time for introspection.
- **Be honest with yourself.** There are no right or wrong answers. Your reflections are for your growth.
- **Write, draw, or simply ponder.** Use the space provided, a separate journal, or whatever method feels most authentic to you.
- **Revisit.** Your understanding may evolve over time. Feel free to come back to previous sections and add new insights.

Part 1: The Birth of More – Embracing Your Sacred Hunger

This section explores the origins of the "more" within us and the societal pressures that often lead us to suppress it.

Reflection & Exploration

1. My "More" Origin Story:

- o Recall a time in your childhood or youth when you felt an intense longing for "more", more attention, more love, more understanding, more meaning. Describe the situation and your feelings.
- o How did others respond to this longing? Were you encouraged, dismissed, or perhaps even shamed for it?
- o What labels, if any, were placed on you because of your "more-nature" (e.g., "needy," "too sensitive," "dramatic")? How did these labels impact you?

2. The Road to "More" and Unexpected Turns:

- o Carlo shares that his road to "more" wound through unexpected places, including a hospital bed. Reflect on a significant challenge or difficult period in your life. How did this experience, despite its pain, unexpectedly reveal a deeper "more" within you or a deeper understanding of what "more" means?
- o What "fortresses of self-assurance" or attempts to "fix everything" have you built in your life? What happened when they came crashing down?

3. Counterfeits and Authentic Longing:

- o Carlo pursued substitutes for "more" (crime, religious zeal, unhealthy relationships). What "counterfeits" or distractions have you pursued in an attempt to satisfy your deeper longings?
- o What did you realize was missing from these substitutes? How did they fail to touch the "sacred ache"?

Practice: Reclaiming the "More-Child"

- **Letter to My Younger Self:** Write a letter to the "more-child" version of yourself. Acknowledge their hunger, their bravery, and their truth. What would you say to comfort, affirm, and bless them now?
 - **Permission Granted:** Complete the following sentences:
 - I give myself permission to want more...
 - I will stop apologizing for...
 - I will honor the part of me that...
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Part 2: Where Longing Begins – Understanding Familial Contributions

This section peers into the contributions our families' histories and their influence in our development and world-view

Reflection & Exploration

1. **Recognizing the Wounds of Family Members:**
 - Think about someone in your life whose love has been marked by steadfastness, even in seasons of difficulty.
 - What did their "holding on" teach you about love?
2. **Unspoken Promise We Make:**
 - Consider the unspoken vows you may have made in your heart.
 - Where did those vows come from – loss, hope, faith or something else?
3. **Your Personal Family Portrait:**
 - When you picture "more" in the context of family and relationships, what does it look like?
 - Does your "more" look like staying, like leaving, like forgiving?
 - Have you adopted new ways to love? Why?

Practice: Facing Your History

- **Pause in the Quietness, Journal. Write it down. Intentionally Embrace Your Past:**
 - View the “memories that emerge as opportunities for growth, healing and change rather than weapons that cripple.
 - **Be Intentional, Write Down Your Thoughts:**
 - Don’t shrink back from the painful memories, embrace them as tutors for growth and development.
 - **Put a Voice to Your Story and Release Your Past Through Forgiveness:**
 - List Your hurts, pain, illusions, fears and feelings that leads you to “more” each day.
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Part 3: The Rise of More Children – Witnessing Love in Vulnerability

This section delves into the inherent longing of "more children" and the world's tendency to misunderstand their cries for connection.

Reflection & Exploration

- Think of a child (or even an adult) in your life who you've observed expressing a deep need for attention or connection, perhaps in ways that others dismiss as "too much." How do you now view their behavior through the lens of "more"?
- How has your own "ache" manifested in your life? Can you identify times when your longing for presence was misinterpreted as something else?
- Carlo discusses the dangerous tendency to pathologize deep hunger. Where have you seen this happen in society, in your community, or perhaps even in your own experiences?

- o What are the consequences when a child's or person's need for attention is met with dismissal or control rather than understanding?
- o Carlo views "more children" not as problems, but as "sacred invitations to love deeper." What does this phrase mean to you? How might it shift your perspective on others' seemingly "needy" behaviors?
- o Recall a time when someone truly saw you and *stayed* with you, rather than trying to fix you. What impact did that presence have on you?

Practice: Cultivating Sacred Attention

- Commit to one act of intentional presence this week with someone in your life who might be perceived as "needy" or "too much." Instead of advising or fixing, simply listen and stay.
- Create your own version of the young man's affirmation: "I do need attention. I'm WORTH the attention. And if someone doesn't think so, that's okay, because someone else will. Because I matter. Because I'm worth being loved." Say it aloud daily for a week.

Part 4: The Calling of More – Navigating Misunderstanding & Reclamation

This part explores how the "more-nature" can be misunderstood, weaponized, and ultimately reclaimed through love.

Reflection & Exploration

- o Carlo's name change symbolizes a shift in his being. Have you ever undergone a significant personal transformation that felt like a

"renaming" or a reclamation of your true self? Describe that experience.

- o How has your "more" been misunderstood or even used against you or others?
- o Carlo states, "Love is how more people survive. Love is how more people live." How has love (not necessarily romantic love, but deep, compassionate connection) been a vital force for your survival and growth?
- o What does it mean to "give without controlling the outcome" or to "pour out, even if it left me tired and unappreciated"? Can you recall a time you practiced this?
- o Reflect on Carlo's observation: "Institutions become cruel when they forget to serve the sacred." Where have you witnessed or experienced systems (e.g., educational, religious, governmental) that seemed to prioritize rules or efficiency over the genuine needs of individuals?
- o How can individuals and communities create spaces where the "sacred" is served and human vulnerability is honored?

Practice: Guarding the Flame

- o Identify one area where you might be allowing your "more-nature" to be exploited or misunderstood. What is one small step you can take to set a healthier boundary, ensuring your "more" is nurtured, not manipulated?
 - o Write a short poem, a few lines, or a single powerful sentence that affirms the holiness of your own longing and rejects any societal attempt to "pathologize" it.
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Part 5: The Redemption of More – The Courage to Stay Soft

This section highlights the strength found in vulnerability and the transformative power of love in redeeming the "more-nature."

Reflection & Exploration

- o Carlo describes "staying soft" as a radical act. In what ways have you been tempted to harden, close off, or "be less" in your life?
- o What does it mean for *you* to "stay soft" in the face of hurt, disappointment, or societal pressure?
- o Recall a time when your "softness" (empathy, vulnerability, deep feeling) ultimately led to a positive outcome or a deeper connection.
- o Carlo calls "more people" prophets of presence, lovers of truth, and midwives of healing. Which of these roles resonates most deeply with you, and why?
- o How have you, or how could you, embody these roles in your daily life?
- o "More is not just a desire. It is a mirror of the Divine." How does this statement shift your perception of your own intense longings and desires?
- o Reflect on the idea that "God is love." How does this connect with your own understanding of "more" and the deep longing within you?

Practice: Embracing Radical Softness

- Choose one relationship or situation where you tend to "walk away when it gets messy." This week, commit to a small act of "staying"—whether it's listening a little longer, resisting the urge to offer a quick fix, or simply being present without judgment.
- Engage in an activity that helps you "stay soft" and connected to your senses: spend time in nature, listen to music, savor a meal, or engage in a creative pursuit. Notice how this practice connects you to a deeper sense of "more."

Part 6: Voices of More – A Manifesto for the More-Hearted

This section celebrates the collective power of "more people" throughout history and encourages you to claim your place among them.

Reflection & Exploration

1. My Personal Manifesto:

- o Re-read Carlo's "Manifesto for the 'more-Hearted.'" Which lines or phrases resonate most powerfully with your own experience?
- o If you were to write a personal manifesto for your "more-hearted" self, what would be its core message?

2. Historical Voices of More:

- o Carlo lists historical figures who embodied "more." What characteristics do these individuals share that align with the "more-nature"?
- o Who are other historical or contemporary figures (public or private) who inspire you as "voices of more"? Why?

3. Your Song, Your Truth:

- o Carlo urges us: "Sing your song. Shout your truth. Stay soft. Stay strong. Be the voice of more." What "song" or "truth" is rising within you that the world needs to hear?
- o What are some small, actionable steps you can take to begin "crying out" or sharing your unique "more" with the world?

Practice: Declaring Your "More"

- **Voice of More Affirmation:** Create an affirmation or a short statement that embodies your commitment to being a "voice of more." Place it where you will see it daily.
- **Share Your "More" (Safely):** Consider one safe way you can share a part of your "more-nature" with someone you trust this week. This

could be expressing a deep feeling, sharing a dream, or simply being authentically present.

Part 7: You, Too Are More – The Sacred Invitation Continues

This final section brings the journey to a personal crescendo, affirming your inherent "more-ness" and your purpose in love.

Reflection & Exploration

1. **"Is This All There Is?" – The Holy Restlessness:**
 - o Reflect on moments in your life when you've felt that restless question: "Is this all there is?" How has this question, rather than being a sign of discontent, served as a "compass" or "spark" guiding you toward deeper meaning?
 - o What insights from *The Sacred Longing* have most helped you answer this question with a resounding "NO, there is more"?
2. **"Made by Love, for Love, to Give Love":**
 - o Ponder this core truth. What does it mean for you to believe that you were "made by Love, for Love, to give Love"?
 - o How would living from this belief fundamentally change your daily interactions, decisions, and overall perspective on life?
3. **Your Future, Rooted in "More":**
 - o Imagine yourself fully embracing your "more-nature." What does this look like? How do you feel? How do you interact with the world?
 - o What is one tangible way you can begin to live more authentically from your "more-nature" starting today?

Practice: Living the "More"

- Choose one small, consistent daily practice that embodies the idea of being "made by Love, for Love, to give Love." This could be a

moment of gratitude, an act of kindness, or a conscious effort to see others through the lens of love.

- Write a final entry in your workbook, reflecting on your journey through *The Sacred Longing* and this companion workbook. What is the most significant insight or shift you've experienced? What is your commitment moving forward?

Not for Sale

There is something deeply troubling in the way mankind has monetized nearly everything. It isn't just about price tags on goods; it's about the quiet conversion of *care* into *currency*. We sell what should be freely given, we charge for what should be willingly shared, and in doing so, we lose a part of our soul.

We've monetized **faith**: Churches preach tithes as taxes, not as acts of joyful surrender. Pulpits build empires that, according to churchtrac.com: "allocate 40-60% of their contributions on salaries and 20-30% on facilities and operations." Ministries and denominations seek to brand themselves, to *keep up with the joneses*, striving to attract their next victim. We've traded communion for consumerism, and in too many places, people exit our places of worship not more loved, but more burdened.

We've monetized **healing**: Doctors "practice" medicine, while the unsuspecting fail to realize the "practice" is on or with their welfare, while insurance companies and pharmaceutical giants orchestrate the real symphony behind the scenes. Treatments become guesses; prescriptions become products; patients become statistics. Meanwhile, drug reps walk into clinics seeking to "incentivize" with golf invitations and steakhouse lunches, and no one blinks. Prescriptions are written to satisfy the industries greed for more, an inverted twist on healthcare.

We've monetized **mental health**: Counselors and Therapists, too often bound by billing codes and progress notes, stretch their clients suffering into twelve sessions instead of one moment of breakthrough. We prolong pain, not always to heal it, but sometimes to preserve the business of it. Worse, we create dependency when we should be empowering healing and growth, the journey towards wholeness.

We've monetized **ministry**: Religious leaders collect six-figure salaries while preaching sacrificial living, attempting to sell the perverted lie of "multiplication" resulting in monetary prosperity. We build sanctuaries of stone while neglecting the living temples of people. We manufacture followers and dependents, instead of forming sons and daughters of the Divine who demonstrate love through their day-to-day interactions. Sermons soothe, but they fail to empower, they fail to send, instead they seek to create religious adherents to duplicate their shades of grey.

What we need now is not more monetization, but **re-sacralization**: *a return to the holy ground of human dignity, where care is offered freely, where healing is not withheld for profit, and where love is never charged by the hour*, thus restoring the reverence and meaning of our existence.

This is why I cannot sell "*more*," it is not mine to sell. More is something I've been given, through fire, tears, and presence, and it must be given again, reinvested. The people who most need to hear, that they are not too much, that they are seen, that they are sacred, are the ones least likely to afford a book, a counselor, or a retreat.

This is for them.

So let it be known, I will not monetize this sacred offering. If anything within these pages stirs something in you, you may offer a gift, not to me, but to the work of compassion, to the continued circulation of love that costs nothing, and is worth everything.

A non-profit will soon be named to direct all funds to be distributed to needs related to a "more" needs and will be scrutinized to ensure its gifts are solely used for these purposes, void of salaries, operational costs or ancillary expenses.

Author Bio

Carlo Griseta is a companion and lifelong advocate for the misunderstood, the misnamed, and the “more” hearted. A former pastor, hospice chaplain, bereavement coordinator, teacher, probation officer, adolescent psychiatric hospital manager who continues to unashamedly profess his love for the entire human race. Carlo’s life has always orbited around one core calling: to love and be loved deeply.

Carlo has walked alongside grieving families, foster children, troubled teens, wounded, addicted and forgotten souls. His sacred vocation is not bound by religion, but by a longing for the Presence, healing, and Truth. *MORE* is Carlo’s heart-song, a poetic reflection of a boy who always needed more, a man who gave more, and a soul who believes we were all made for something deeper, something “more”.

Carlo lives with his wife Amy, his “more girl” and life companion, and continues to serve and bless the “more” of the world, wherever they may be found.

Dedication

To my wife, Amy: my love, my more girl, my dream girl who loves so deeply, so hard and tender, who dispelled all doubts that there could be such a life as “more” on this planet.

To my parents, Vito and Gloria: who tended to my fire and embraced my more-nature.

To my brothers: Vito, Mario, Fred, and Kenny, faithful companions, encouragers in the journey of life.

To Bobby Poe who saw the “more” in me as a boy when others were distracted by the noise.

To my children: Meagan, Melodie, Noah, Sabrina, Gina, Jonathon, and our son Anthony, who has already graduated into the Eternal Presence. You are all the breath behind these words. Thank you for the lessons you all teach me each day as I celebrate the “more” in you.

To all the Angels at Monarch Hospice and Palliative Care and Eden Home Care who masquerade as people and reflect an exceptional service of “more”.

And **last**, but never least, to all the “more people” of the world: the ones who stayed by the door, who wanted too much, who felt too deeply, who were told to be less; may you finally believe: *you were right t*