

Autumn 2019: Chaos and Order

livfun

I'm
Worried
About My
Husband
Pg.31

A Season
of Change

Is it time to
consider
a move?

Pg.34

Hideous
Mess or
Artisan
Clutter?

A son learns
the (hilarious)
truth

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Chaos and Order:

"Chaos was the law of nature; order was the dream of man." — Henry Adams

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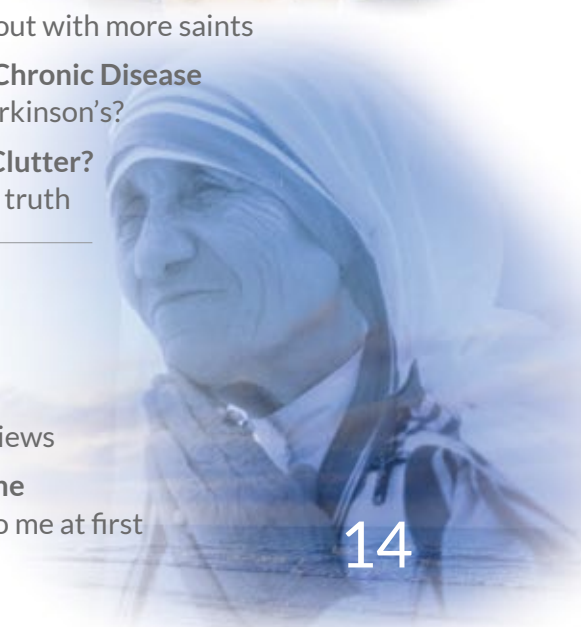
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THOUGHTS FROM THE HOME OFFICE

Staying Centered as the Pendulum of Change Keeps Swinging



Welcome to the autumn issue of LIV FUN magazine. I hope summer was good to you all and you're ready for some shorter days and cooler weather. With every season comes change, and this issue explores how we look at change and the balance of chaos and order. Order is what most of us strive for — where we have everything in its place, just the way we like it. But inevitably, chaos introduces itself and swings the pendulum of change, knocking things off balance. Human tendency is to work to restore the order of things as soon as we can, but that process takes focus.

At Leisure Care, we have experienced some tremendous growth over the past two years — nearly 75% more communities. While we were well prepared with great people and a robust platform, that's a lot of growth, and it came with its share of chaos and change. When things get busier than ever and the curve balls are coming at us, we focus on the core of *who* we are and the *why* of what we're doing. Even though

the pendulum of change will keep swinging, we can always find our center there. Ultimately, for us, it comes down to passionate people striving to make a positive difference in people's lives.

To all of the employees and residents, family members and vendors of our new communities, I would like to welcome you to the Leisure Care family wholeheartedly. We hope that we will make a positive difference in yours. We will try to do that every day, and if we fail, we'll get up and try harder the next day. We ask the same of you — make someone's day better at every opportunity. The magic of living this way is that it feels good to do it — it's a win-win scenario.

We held our annual Leadership Conference at the start of summer, where we brought all of our general managers from around the country together. It's a time for us to strengthen the relationships we have with one another and to build new ones.

Among the many tenured general managers returning this year were many who were attending their first conference with us. We're fortunate to have brought some truly remarkable people into our company who are leading our newest communities. Bringing everyone together generated the most positive energy we've ever had at one of our conferences, and we thank them for the positive impacts they are making every day.

I would also like to congratulate the general managers who were recognized as an Executive of the Year for the way they lead their teams and enhance their residents' lives — and keeping it balanced with family and community. I especially want to thank Steve Battisti, General Manager of Heritage Estates in Livermore, California, for his extraordinary leadership and demonstrating the focus on family first, philanthropy and work. He was awarded the President's Club award at the conference, and we couldn't be happier for him, his family, and his amazing community.

I hope you enjoy this issue of LIV FUN and that you can find your center when chaos presents itself and swings the pendulum of change. Knowing that center helps to restore order and overcome the chaos. Have a fantastic autumn with your friends and family!
Best regards,

Greg Clark
Executive Vice President
Leisure Care



Style Wise: Expressing Your Unique Self



“Mom was a master at applying a veneer of calm and cleanliness over the bumpy disorder of a four-kid household.”

© Roswell Daily Record 1965

Is That What You're Wearing?

There is no easy path through fashion for women — in our culture — at any age.

by Tammy Kennon

Writer, sailor, traveler, photographer and blogger

Mom beams a shiny smile from a yellowed newspaper clipping. The year is 1965, and the Chamber of Commerce's newly crowned “Mother of the Year” rocks a helmet of hair, teased and sprayed into Mary Tyler Moore perfection. With picture-perfect posture, she sits surrounded by three smiling children — and me. My five-year-old self shlumps to her left, bearing the burden of a black-velvet yoked dress; my legs dangle lifelessly, weighted down by lacy ankle socks and patent leather shoes. In contrast to my cheerful siblings, I hunch grim and sullen with, wait, is that? Yes, it is. A bulging black eye.

Moments before the photographer showed up, my brother and I got into fisticuffs for reasons that have been lost to history. However, I do remember that The Mother of the Year was also The Mother of Smiling Through Fury.

Mom was a master at applying a veneer of calm and cleanliness over the bumpy disorder of a four-kid household. She could spin through a house in shambles, leaving order and a whiff of lemon Pledge in her wake. Despite those kids, a three-bedroom house, a traveling salesman for a husband, and a tiny household budget, she always looked impeccable. When she stepped out, for church, room-mother duty, or a peewee baseball game, she was coiffed, coordinated and pressed, an articulate fashion statement.

This trait did not make it into my DNA. Dresses were ill-suited for my childhood pastimes of climbing trees, biking, and running wild in the backyard playing Swiss Family Robinson. My style ran more to shorts and T-shirts, usually in red and blue to match skinned knees and bruised shins. When required to cover my bare feet, it was with sneakers and bobby socks.

Admittedly, fashion sense might not be handed down in DNA, but can it be learned? Are fashionistas born or groomed? I don't know the answer, but there is no easy path through fashion for women in our culture — at any age. From Joan Rivers' catty *Fashion Police* to the modern, gentler version called *gofugyourself.com*, there's always been a racket in criticizing what women wear.

I watch with great empathy as women in the public eye get harassed for their fashion choices. Michele Obama and her \$4,000 Balenciaga boots (but what *was* she thinking?). Melania Trump in her hurricane stilettos and the even more incendiary “I don't really care” Zara jacket (I don't really know what she was thinking).

Ten years ago, I made it easier and somehow harder on myself by employing some serious life-changing magic, long before Marie Kondo told us what it was called. My husband and I shed everything we owned and moved onto a sailboat. I sailed away with shorts, swimsuits and flip-flops, a wardrobe that my five-year-old self

would have applauded. Not fashionable, but appropriate for enacting a real-life version of Swiss Family Robinson (minus the shipwreck). There was just the one problem: Eventually, we moved back onto land — with a kit bag of threadbare shorts, swimsuits and flip-flops. It's what you might call starting from scratch.

While I was trimming sails and plotting courses, things changed. Time marched on, leeching the brown out of my hair and etching lines of joy and sorrow on my face. My body changed. Trends changed. I ran aground in a new fashion decade, where the latest trends are no longer “age appropriate,” and those that are seem boxy, flowery and scream “cruise ship.”

On the other hand, some things haven't changed at all. The 1965 Mother of the Year maintains that perfect helmet of hair and could now appear under the headline Best Dressed in Assisted Living. Shlumped next to her would be a middle-aged tomboy with an enduring distaste for velvet yokes, lacy ankle socks and patent leather shoes.

I'm still in wardrobe recovery mode, no GPS to help me navigate. The struggle is real, plotting a course through — or around — youthful trends with a post-prime body. It's a no-woman's land out here, in the chasm between a sailboat and assisted living, Forever 21 and Dress Barn, Zara and Balenciaga, stilettos and orthopedics. I am a definitive fashion question. ♦

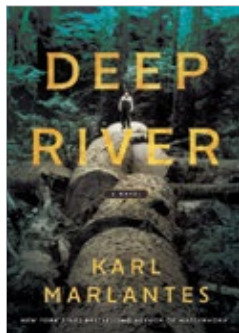
Entertain Your Brain: Books

by Misha Stone

Readers' advisory librarian & Booklist Magazine blogger

“*Chaos was the law of nature; order was the dream of man.*”

— Henry Adams



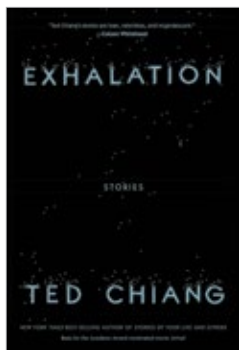
Deep River by Karl Marlantes (Atlantic Monthly Press, \$30)

Washington author Marlantes' previous novel, *Matterhorn*, and his nonfiction work, *What It Is Like to Go to War*, explored themes of men in combat. His latest historical novel delves into the labor history of the Northwest in the early 1900s, which offers a different kind of personal test. After being imprisoned and tortured as a political dissident, Aino flees Russian-occupied Finland to live with her brothers in the logging camps. Fierce, idealistic and strong, she embodies the Finnish “sisu,” or core strength amidst adversity. Watching men die doing the work of their rich overseers, Aino steers her idealism into organizing the men and women of the camp to fight for fair wages and improved working conditions. This rich, panoramic novel captures the nascent logging and fishing industries, the spirit of the Scandinavian immigrants and the ghosts of the indigenous people of the land, the violent and hard-fought history of labor unions, and the mettle and perseverance of all of those who gave their sweat and even their lives on these shores.



Henry, Himself by Stewart O’Nan (Viking, \$27)

You may have seen Henry Maxwell before. He appears in the background in two previous novels about the fictional Maxwells, *Wish You Were Here* and *Emily, Alone*. A wholly decent man and WWII vet, the retired engineer takes pride that he will live and die in his Pittsburgh community. Henry truly adores the not-always-likable Emily, and nearing their 50th anniversary he is still deeply in love with her, while he laments how their daughter’s addiction divides them at times. The micro-moments of a marriage — picking up dog poop, dealing with roots in the plumbing, angst over their retirement funds, and navigating the petty arguments that crop up between his wife and daughter-in-law — are rendered with equal parts humor and gravity throughout. Life is in the details, and Henry’s life, writ large and small, is unfolded with dignity and humor in this quiet, charming character study.



Exhalation: Stories by Ted Chiang (Knopf, \$25.95)

Chiang is considered by many one of the best science-fiction short-story writers of our time. His work explores themes of science, technology, memory, free will and human connection, and these stories have earned Chiang a reputation for intellectual and emotional acumen. The film *Arrival* starring Amy Adams is based on Chiang’s *The Story of Your Life*. *The Merchant and the Alchemist’s Gate* is a unique take on the classic time-travel trope, looking at the limitations that a gateway into our pasts might pose. *The Lifecycle of Software Objects* explores the potential of artificially intelligent pets and the responsibility we may bear in creating sentient creatures. *The Truth of Fact, the Truth of Feeling* envisions a technology, “Remem,” that allows one to record every moment in their lives and explores the complicated nature of memory and our own self-stories in our relationships. Each story reads with a revelatory grace, unfolding the chaos and order of our world and the possible futures that await. Chiang’s work is remarkable, and the questions each story poses will expand your heart and your mind.

Entertain Your Brain: Movies

by Robert Horton

Member, National Society of Film Critics

“*In moments of quiet I’m strangely drawn to you, but, well, there haven’t been any moments of quiet.*”

— Cary Grant in *Bringing Up Baby*



Sully (2016)

When a passenger jet strikes a flock of birds and loses both engines, a routine flight out of LaGuardia becomes a life-or-death crisis. Yes, this is the “Miracle on the Hudson,” the 2009 incident in which cool-headed pilot Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger landed his plane on the Hudson River, with no loss of life. The film inspired by this event takes an interesting tack: Because the crisis itself is only a few minutes in duration, director Clint Eastwood focuses on the investigation that followed the emergency landing (Sullenberger precisely notes that it was a landing, not a “crash”). Here, the movie reveals its purpose, extolling the virtues of experience and human judgment rather than second-guessing. We watch the emergency sequence twice, first for its white-knuckle suspense, and then to appreciate the grace under pressure of its orderly hero. The film’s style — true to Eastwood’s usual method and certainly befitting Sully’s personality — is utterly plain. In that spirit, Tom Hanks keeps it simple in the title role, bringing a no-nonsense approach to a story in which calm know-how matters more than technology. (Available streaming on Amazon Prime, Google Play, iTunes, Vudu and YouTube.)



Capernaum (2018)

In the teeming streets of Beirut, a 12-year-old boy moves out on his own, like a 21st-century Oliver Twist. Zain (played by newcomer Zain Al Rafeea) finds a surrogate family in an improvised kind of way but very soon must face new challenges, including, improbably, becoming head of a household. Whether Zain’s choice is emigration to a better place or legal proceedings against his biological family, this world does not offer many possibilities for keeping hope alive. Director Nadine Labaki never lets the messy bustle of the city streets get too far out of sight, which makes this Oscar-nominated film tough to watch at times yet brutally honest. Part of what keeps it bearable is the outstanding level of performance by the young actors: Al Rafeea is heart-rending, and a toddler named Treasure Bankole — who doesn’t look old enough to be able to understand the storyline — is a remarkable presence. (Available streaming on Amazon Prime, Google Play, YouTube and Vudu.)



Bringing Up Baby (1938)

One of the inarguable classics of the 1930’s screwball comedy cycle, this breathless farce takes methodical scientist Cary Grant and puts him on a collision course with free-spirited kook Katharine Hepburn. The ensuing whirlwind is a kind of torture for Grant’s bewildered professor — he’d rather just focus on his dinosaur bones — but a kind of liberation as well. Director Howard Hawks (whose *His Girl Friday* is equally fast and funny) gets the most out of his sublime actors, which include a wayward leopard named Baby. The film works as comedy and romance but also as a manifesto for the idea that a serious life must make room for spontaneous play. The film’s anarchic momentum is captured when Grant acknowledges his attraction to Hepburn: “In moments of quiet I’m strangely drawn to you, but, well, there haven’t been any moments of quiet.” (Available streaming on Amazon Prime, Google Play, iTunes, Vudu and YouTube.)

Entertain Your Brain: Music

by John Pearson

Retired musician and lifelong enthusiast

“The trouble with normal is it always gets worse.”

— Bruce Cockburn



Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite (Album cut) — The Beatles, 1967

Much has already been written about the Beatles’ album *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band*, on which this cut may be found, and this tune in particular. The 18th-century poster that was the inspiration for it can be easily located on the internet. What is interesting in our current context, though, is the complex arrangement of the selection — what Lennon described as “... a painting, a pure watercolour.” I clearly remember the first time I heard “... Mr. Kite.” It was under ideal circumstances — no distractions, headphones on, pristine vinyl. I got lost in the complex jumble of circus sounds that comprise the last 45 seconds or so of the song. The sounds seemed chaotic and transporting — musically and instrumentally related to the rest, of course, but strewn about randomly. It was only on the second and subsequent plays that the underlying structure emerged: Although I missed it the first time, the chord structure is quite clear — it’s simply a blank verse with snippets of carnival/circus instruments and sounds overlapped and overlaid. Although I still appreciate the beauty of this creation, never again have I been able to return to the wonderful, swirling carnival chaos of that first listen.



Our Love Was (Album cut) — The Who, 1967

“I Can See for Miles” is The Who’s hit single taken from their *The Who Sell Out* album, but there are at least two other cuts that deserve attention in this reviewer’s opinion. One is “Armenia City in the Sky,” notable for its unusual chord changes and creative bridge. The other is “Our Love Was.” Rock music, especially early rock music, has been criticized for being chordally simplistic — “three chords and an attitude.” Not so for “Our Love Was.” Pete Townshend has created a minor gem exposing a dramatic dichotomy in a personal relationship. His guitar work is crisp and clean as the lyric describes the early period of the relationship as “famine ... frustration ...” before a polar shift to the uplifting positive side, which is, as the song says, “flying ... soaring ... shining ... like a summer morning.” It is interesting as well that the song’s title on the U.S. album is “Our Love Was, Is” emphasizing the shift between past and current relationship status. The simple horn phrase used during the second half of the song is a tasteful addition that somewhat offsets the choice of album cover art.



Creation Dream (Album cut) — Bruce Cockburn, 1979

Individuals from many, if not all, cultures report ancient lore regarding beginnings — beginnings of their people, their familiar environment, the Earth, even the Universe itself. Whether from water, sky or nothing at all; whether as the result of an inevitable singular event or willful act, the stories try to explain or at least account for the structure and order that we see around us. On the album *Dancing in the Dragon’s Jaws*, Cockburn artfully describes in “Creation Dream” his unique vision of the act itself. As expected from Bruce and the musicians he brings to the studio, the arrangement, instrumentation and vocal are professional and tight, sophisticated yet never pretentious. He includes the memorable enigmatic lyrical reference to “questions that contain their own replies,” which I find intriguing. ♦



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LEISURECARE

Out and About: Journeys Completed or Contemplated

Give it Time

Patience is the thing when making sense of difficult places.

by Pam Mandel
Freelance travel writer and photographer

"I can count the number of negative interactions I've had on one hand and still have a finger left to point out where we are on the map."

It was a warm night when I arrived in Nairobi. I stumbled out of the arrivals hall to the curb, where I found the driver assigned to collect me and two fellow travelers. We crushed into the back of his car; the shocks were shot, and every bump in the road threw us up in the air and slammed us back down again. I don't think it was late; the streets were full of traffic, swirling around us like the eddies of a river. I gripped the handle above the window and looked out at passing cars.

A packed minivan stopped next to us at a light; a young man, maybe in his 20s, maybe older, smiled and waved. I smiled and waved back, and he laughed. We jolted away into

the night, patches of dark alternating with brightly lit-up office buildings, the car lurching and swaying. Huge bird-shaped shadows sat in the trees, shuffling their wings. Every time the driver tapped the brakes, I was thrown forward against the front seat, my stomach following a micro-second after.

I recently met a young woman who said she did not travel because she was afraid everyone was out to kill her. Without hesitation, I told her she was wrong. In over 30 years of adventurous travel, I can count the number of negative interactions I've had on one hand and still have a finger left to point out where we are on the map. Experience has made me a fearless

traveler. A smallish woman who does not run, even when it means I will miss the bus, would be an easy target were the world out to hurt me. But the world is not out to hurt me; it never has been, so I have traveled alone and without anxiety.

Until I got to Nairobi.

On one side of an intersection is a glassy high-rise; on the other side, a makeshift camp where goats pulled at what dry grass they could find. Out one side of the taxi, a glittering shopping mall like one found in any Western country; out the other side, an outdoor car repair shop under the sprawling limbs of an unknown-to-me tree, hub caps hanging like wind chimes from the branches.

My hotel was an overpriced property with dingy rooms, but the terraced gardens were an oasis where soft-spoken women carried trays with excellent coffee and served a cheap and filling breakfast. The city gave me a sort of existential whiplash, a sense that I was not in one place, but many, all at once; a familiar Western sort of order co-existing with a system I was not capable of understanding.

I have a routine for my first day in a new place. I leave my hotel on foot and walk until I find a café that looks right to me (whatever that means), I get coffee, and I sit for half an hour, maybe longer. I watch this new place solidify around me, or rather, I feel myself solidify in this new place. My

atoms reconnect after being shaken up in flight. I'm glued back together, grounded, and ready for what comes next. I could not do this in Nairobi. It was as if my internal compass had broken upon landing.

It was confounding. In Port of Spain, Trinidad, despite the exhortations of my hosts, I went for a long walk alone. In Delhi, I wandered the old city without a map. Cairo. Karachi. Phnom Penh. Santiago. In all these places, I set out on foot to find out where I was, to connect my feet to the ground. In Nairobi, I looked past the armed guards at the gates of this mediocre hotel with excellent coffee. I looked at the rise of the winding, dusty road, at the neighboring walled compounds,

at my clearly insufficient map and went back inside, back to the terraced garden with a book in hand. I would leave the wayfinding to the tour guide I'd meet the next day.

Some days later, outside Nairobi, my bus passed a donkey cart with big, wooden wheels. It was sharing the road with brand new Land Rovers, buses like mine, pedestrians, leggy Masai men in their red cloth and beads, talking on cell phones. The country seemed to exist in multiple eras at once.

My enemy was impatience, not Nairobi. I wanted a map, geography, to solve the city, but what I needed was time. At the end of the trip, my only regret was that there was not more of it. ♦

Be My Light

If we really do become more like the people around us,
we should all hang out with saints.

by Skye Moody

Novelist, essayist, photographer and world traveler

*“We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean.
But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.”*

— Mother Teresa

The train from Calcutta to Darjeeling climbs high into the Himalayan foothills where bright-green tea plantations and Buddhist *stupas* mark the scenery, piercing lofty clouds just 150 kilometers distant from Bhutan, the country of the “Gross National Happiness” index.

On September 10, 1946, a slight, fragile figure was riding this train from Calcutta (“Kolkata”) to Darjeeling, when the “call” came to her. Albanian by birth and a school-teaching nun from a convent in Calcutta, she didn’t question the call’s mystical origin nor consult anyone for an opinion, because the call came from the highest authority she knew.

Upon returning to Calcutta, Mother Teresa informed her superiors of her intentions, took up a nursing course, and from cloth of white cotton bordered with three blue stripes she fashioned a simple Bengali sari, the uniform she would wear for the remainder of her life. At age 44, the tiny woman with the enormous call quit the security of her convent and ventured out alone into Calcutta’s appalling slums, where the Dalit, the Untouchables, the “outcastes” live and die in appalling poverty. Teresa’s single purpose in life would be hands-on caring for these lowly victims of a caste system that today still numbers some 300 million Untouchables, despite India’s constitutional laws banning the caste system.

Unprotected, she witnessed horrific conditions but never hesitated to reach out to the sick, diseased and dying masses. Guided by that mystical voice, Mother Teresa would never turn back.

The Call Becomes a Movement

When word reached other nuns of Mother Teresa’s courage and compassion, one by one sisters followed her into the slums. Mother Teresa soon founded the Order of the Missionaries of Charity. The sisters adopted the humble white sari, but the distinctive three blue stripes had to be earned over time, laboring in the hospices Mother Teresa opened, serving the poorest of the poor.

As her reputation spread and the numbers of her followers grew, an onslaught of scoffing and derision fell upon Mother Teresa from her worldly critics, led mainly by the widely read author Christopher Hitchens (now deceased), a popular professed atheist, who asserted the little nun simply wanted to become famous, that she was only trying to convert her patients to Christianity, even charging that she was hoarding charitable donations sent to aid her work. Teresa uttered no response to the criticisms — not even to explain that those early donations financed the order’s first charity hospices.

In the 1960s, Mother Teresa sent her nuns throughout India to open more hospices. Soon after, she opened hospices in Venezuela, then Rome, then Tanzania. Before long, the Missionaries of Charity were seen laboring in the world’s slums, including in communist countries like USSR, Albania and Cuba, under the secular mantle of the “Co-Workers of the Sick and Suffering.”

Teresa’s followers included agnostics and humanitarian-minded people who went to work on every continent. She founded orders of multi-religious, agnostic humanitarians, instructing them to “live in simplicity, sacrifice, prayer, and humble works of love.”

In 1975, Mother Teresa was awarded the Albert Schweitzer International Prize.

In 1979, Norway awarded her the Nobel Peace Prize.

By the time of her death in 1997, she had received more than 100 major awards, including the United States Presidential Medal of Honor in 1985.

In 2016, she was canonized by Pope Francis as Saint Teresa of Calcutta.

A World Health Crisis

In the early 1980s, the world was reeling in panic as a new, unknown and deadly malady called AIDS spread globally. Families, fearing contagion, deserted loved ones who contracted the disease, abandoning bewildered victims whose own physicians could say nothing more by way of explanation than: “This is going to kill you.”

In places like New York City, the AIDS population mushroomed, and borderline hysteria filled hospitals and physicians’ clinics.

In 1985, Mother Teresa stepped in, opening New York City’s first AIDS hospice in Greenwich Village, the epicenter of New York’s AIDS crisis. Governor Mario Cuomo even freed prison inmates with AIDS so they could be cared for in Mother Teresa’s hospice.

An admiring Princess Diana visited Mother Teresa on several occasions, in Calcutta, again in Rome, and in the United States. The two women, who shared little in terms of physical appearance or lifestyle, shared the virtues of compassion and charity; they soon formed a close friendship. Yet they shared more than good works; though the public was largely unaware, both Princess Diana and Mother Teresa suffered serious interior crises of the spirit.

The Darkness

What few knew, including many helped by her works, is that Mother Teresa frequently suffered from what she called “the darkness,” the “painful night of the soul.” At times she was convinced her God had rejected her, constantly battling against a feeling of separation from His grace. Yet she didn’t allow this interior agony to affect her work, and she never spoke of it. She recalls how the voice often whispered to her, “Come, be my Light. I need you to help me. I cannot go alone.” He couldn’t work His good deeds except through human intervention, the kind that Mother Teresa and her followers practiced. Eventually, she came to understand that her suffering derived from “sharing ... the interior desolation of the poor.” (Kolodiejchuk, 2007)

The world knows of Princess Diana’s public humiliation, and something of her dismal interior crises, but no one understood Diana’s suffering more than Mother Teresa. Their bond would last until their deaths. Mother Teresa and Princess Diana passed away within six days of each other; Diana on August 31, 1997, and Mother Teresa on September 5.

Each Call Is Unique

Dragging a hospital bed up a flight of stairs one day in Calcutta, Mother Teresa noticed a young woman who seemed to appear from nowhere, a Caucasian, definitely not a nun, her brown hair fashioned into long dreadlocks surrounding a youthful face, her clothing that of a nomad. What the nun first noticed was the woman’s beautiful smile. And then her strong arms.

“Help me pull this bed upstairs,” said Mother Teresa.

Together, the two struggled with the bed and finally reached the upper floor. The stranger stayed on for a short time, helping around the hospice. Then one day, she was gone, vanished as suddenly as she had appeared.

Many years later in 1985, when Mother Teresa was opening the AIDS hospice in Greenwich Village, a busload of nuns from the Missionary of the Poor was moving down a street in New York City. On a sidewalk among the crowds watching the nuns’ arrival to the AIDS hospice stood a Caucasian woman with long brown dreadlocks. As the bus came parallel with the woman in dreadlocks, Mother Teresa’s face appeared in a bus window, looking out at the crowd, fixing her eyes directly on the woman in dreadlocks, whom she immediately recognized as the nomad who once helped



her carry a bed upstairs in Calcutta. As they made eye contact, Mother Teresa reached up a hand and with her fingers made a scissors gesture. Her message was clear: “Cut off your hair and come work with me.”

The Legacy of Love

The woman, whose name is BB St. Roman, today lives in New Orleans’ French Quarter ... and she still has dreadlocks. Her constant companion Iko, a white cockatoo, rides her shoulder. Iko often mimics BB’s gentle yet powerful voice, and through the years of financial and personal hardship BB’s only expression is the wide, engaging smile Mother Teresa so admired.

BB St. Roman performed good works for anyone and everyone in need. She often drove Miss Inez, a crotchety nonagenarian, on shopping forays; it was a sight to see, the diminutive Southern belle in her proper hat and white cotton gloves riding beside BB in her stripped-down, open-air Jeep. If it wasn’t Miss Inez in the passenger seat, it might be an ill or hungry or homeless person BB rescued from Jackson Square in front of St. Louis Basilica-Cathedral, where they slept on iron benches or on the ground, sheltered only by plantain leaves. She’d appear in the night, talking the homeless off the benches, driving them to food and shelter.

Everyone in New Orleans recognizes BB, the “night angel,” now a beloved spirit of the “City That Trouble Forgot.”

For decades, St. Roman has been venturing out at night into the often-dangerous streets of New Orleans, delivering aid and compassion to the poor, the homeless, the dying. (Bynum, 2015) With little resources, she does everything from finding them housing and food, to signing them up for public aide, to treating wounds resulting from knife fights or bullets. Her work has become so important to the city that the New Orleans police department finally gave her a title (director of the NOPD Homeless Initiatives), a uniform (sans weapon), and a tiny salary that barely covers the gas for her decrepit Jeep.

I don’t know exactly when or where BB St Roman received the call. I am awed, though, by how much her acts of compassion, her loving embrace of her own city’s “untouchables,” remind me of Mother Teresa. And I wonder if perhaps there’s a trickledown effect when one saint meets another. ♦

Read more:

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Brain Games

John Pearson, Puzzle Editor

Crossword Puzzle

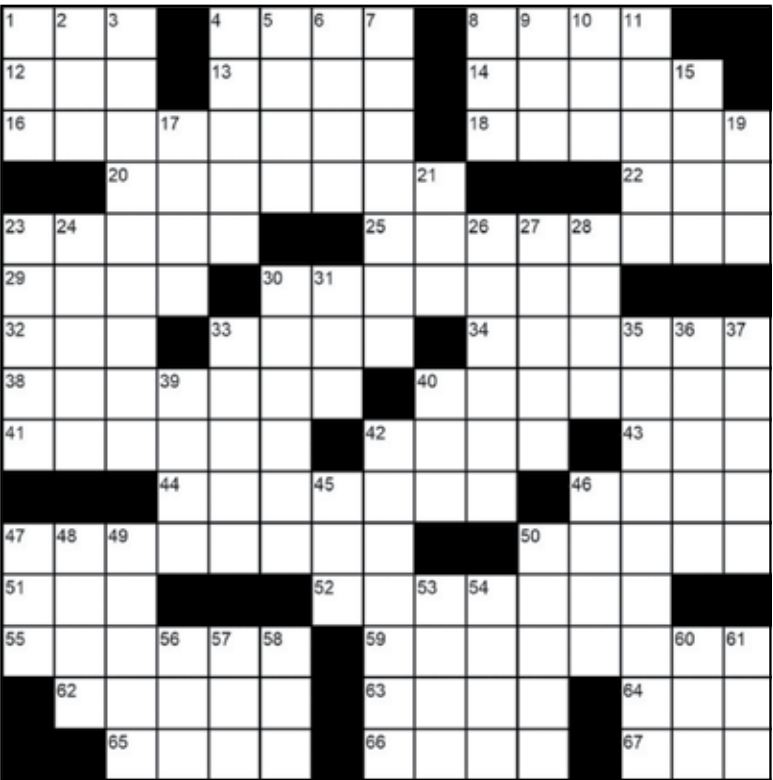
Things Will Clear Up Soon

ACROSS

- 1 Slangy time unit
- 4 Garbed
- 8 First part of a Dean Koontz quote
- 12 "Born in the _____"
- 13 Sole
- 14 Bode
- 16 Cites
- 18 After third or college
- 20 Second part of quote
- 22 Place for some "me time"
- 23 Got up
- 25 Worm eater?
- 29 Tendency
- 30 Inuit weapon
- 32 The loneliest number
- 33 Money
- 34 Third part of quote
- 38 Breathe
- 40 One of the synoptic gospels
- 41 Pluck, in a way
- 42 Algal and welcome
- 43 Wrath
- 44 Fourth part of quote
- 46 Not good, by any means
- 47 Spread strategically
- 50 Online action
- 51 Jazz or Disco
- 52 CPA, usually
- 55 Most like Solomon
- 59 One way to open your champagne
- 62 Last part of quote
- 63 Aroma source
- 64 BIC component, traditionally
- 65 Saturn or Mercury
- 66 Awkward intellectual?
- 67 Matter state

DOWN

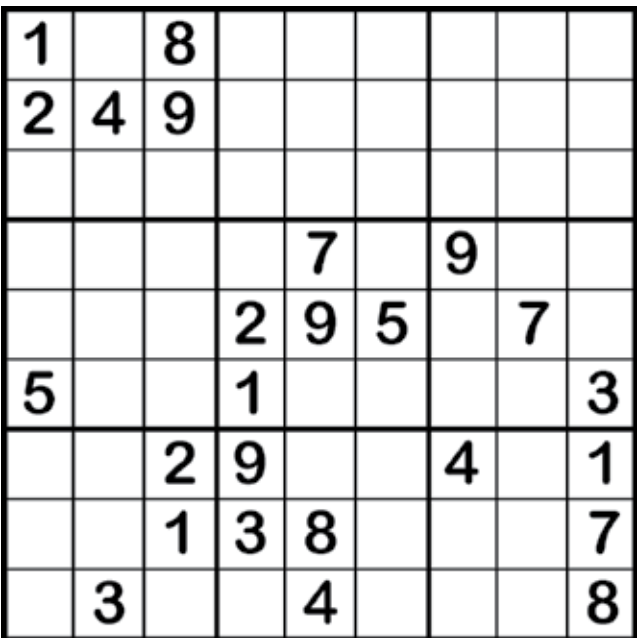
- 1 Tally
- 2 Compass point
- 3 Chinese dialect
- 4 Region defined by its weather
- 5 Where an el runs, with "the"
- 6 Green Gables dweller
- 7 One course
- 8 Roll of cash
- 9 Shade
- 10 The hummingbird produces the smallest one
- 11 Take care of
- 15 Workout units
- 17 Proficiency evaluator
- 19 Ingest
- 21 Bug
- 23 Call off
- 24 Continue a subscription
- 26 Volleyball team action
- 27 Plunders
- 28 Relative of org., soc., or found.
- 30 As a result of
- 31 It may be amber or pale
- 33 Contraption
- 35 Warming action
- 36 Not easily explained
- 37 Stayed
- 39 The Avengers' Emma
- 40 Bud, bub, or pal alternative
- 42 County mentioned in an East-wood film
- 45 Whistle blower?
- 46 Basin go-with, sometimes
- 47 Condensation
- 48 Little Mermaid's love
- 49 Highest title in the Ottoman Empire
- 50 Latest tendency
- 53 Was charitable
- 54 Modern ride
- 56 Mer contents
- 57 One unable to pass the bar?
- 58 Chicken General?
- 60 Ms. Peeples
- 61 Literary inits.



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Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.



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BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS ON PAGE 42



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Visual Hallucinations in an Otherwise Healthy Brain

by David Tumbarello

Freelance writer in Michigan

You see someone in the room even though you *know* the room is empty. Maybe you tell someone what you're seeing, and they reply, "I don't see anything. It's not there."

While you might be worried that you're having delusions, the problem could have nothing to do with your mental state and everything to do with your eyesight. These kinds of visual hallucinations could be an indicator that you might have Charles Bonnet Syndrome, or CBS.

CBS occurs in people with decreased eye sight, when their brains take in visual cues and create pictures of things that are not really there. This type of visual hallucination often occurs in people with vision loss associated with cataracts and other correctable issues.

For example, in some cases, CBS is associated with prior stroke or diabetic retinopathy, a complication that occurs when the diabetes damages blood vessels within the back of the eye and causes vision loss. (Duffy, 2019) In other cases, deteriorating eyesight occurs on its own as we age, which explains why older people seem to be more prone to these visual hallucinations.

The disease doesn't just target older people, however. Kristy James was a young woman when her vision problems and hallucinations started. In a visit with a low vision specialist, the optician asked her to read a paragraph out loud. She knew she had trouble with small font but thought she did pretty well with the reading. She was stunned when the optician told her what she read was completely different from what was printed on the page.

Because she couldn't "see" the actual words very well, her brain compensated by hallucinating words that weren't really there. They discussed CBS, and she was relieved there was a reason for her hallucinations, since she was trying to "make sense" of images she was only partially seeing. (McDermott, 2018) "I thought I was losing my mind, but I was actually losing my sight," Kristy said. "I'd go food shopping, and I'd buy everything that was on my list. But when I'd get home and open the packaging, it would be something completely different."

Next time, when you see things that aren't there, you may want to first pause and realize it might not be a delusion, but an illusion brought on by

CBS. If so, it's possible that treatments can correct your overall vision, which will help alleviate the hallucinations. And if a loved one is seeing things that aren't there, insist on an eye exam to rule out CBS. As with any medical problem, please bring your concerns to your primary care provider. ♦

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Read more:

The Charles Bonnet Syndrome Foundation provides a wealth of information about CBS at its website, www.charlesbonnetsyndrome.org.

Read more about CBS at the National Institutes of Health website at www.rarediseases.info.nih.gov.



Wrangling Those Finances

Successfully managing your money requires focus, organization, financial literacy and problem-solving skills — all of which tend to slip as we age.

by Kelly Dilworth

Personal finance journalist

When's the last time you combed through your credit-card statement looking for errors or pulled a copy of your credit report to make sure no one's stolen your identity?

If you're embarrassed to admit the answer, you're not alone. I write about personal finance for a living, and even I routinely fail to keep up with my financial hygiene.

The older I get and the more complicated my finances become, the harder it is to stay on top of my accounts — even when I have technology set up to help me, such as text message alerts on my cell phone, automated bill payments, and budgeting apps to help me track my spending.

Successfully managing finances requires more than just patience and good judgment. It also requires organization, knowledge of financial products, basic math skills, and a tolerance for tedium.

The Law Is on Your Side

Lawmakers have passed a number of laws designed to help people with their finances and protect them from financial deception, fraud and costly administrative mistakes. However, many of those laws require people to be exceptionally organized and proactive.

For example, did you know that if you're overcharged for something, you have the right to dispute that charge with your credit-card company and potentially get reimbursed? However, you only have 60 days from when the bill was mailed to you to file a dispute. (FTC, 2012) Similarly, if your credit report contains an error that's hurting your credit score, the Fair Credit Reporting Act gives you the right to dispute that error and get it corrected. (FTC, 2017) However, you need to have actually checked your report

“The older we get, the more vulnerable we may become to making financial mistakes and getting taken advantage of by bad actors.”

in the first place to see if anything is amiss. Your chances of getting errors removed are also greatly improved if you saved evidence that helps prove your case.

Banks and lenders have put in place their own customer protections, such as promising not to hold you financially responsible if your credit-card details are stolen. But try as they might, they aren't always able to catch when something is wrong with your accounts. They also rely on you to spot an error or an unauthorized transaction.

That can be tough to do — especially as we grow older and have a harder time juggling our financial lives. Our ability to make wise financial decisions declines as we age, especially as retirement finances have become more self-directed and complicated. (Laibson et al., 2010) Researchers have noted specific difficulties for people who had to take over managing the finances after a spouse dies. (Belbase and Sanzenbacher, 2017)

Going With the Flow — Our Changing Fluid Intelligence

Our fluid intelligence, which supports our ability to problem solve, tends to deteriorate with age. So does our ability to make error-free calculations and remember important financial concepts. Executive function — the part of the brain that helps us plan, stay organized, and remember to check our credit reports — may also suffer as we age. (Murman, 2015)

As a result, the older we get the more vulnerable we become to making financial mistakes and getting taken advantage of by bad actors. We may not even realize it either; older adults are often unaware of just how much their financial abilities have declined. (Gamble et al., 2015)

The good news is there are a variety of tools available to help us better manage our finances. Ask a trusted loved one to set up digital alerts for your accounts and help you monitor them. If you notice your mail piling up or bills going unpaid, ask for help from a close family member or trusted friend, or consider hiring a money manager. If you're wor-

ried about having enough money to do the things you want to do, talk to a retirement financing expert. Banks and credit unions often have someone you can talk to.

As we get older, it takes that proverbial village to help us manage our homes and financial lives. Ask for help, and keep your financial house in good order.

Five Smart Moves to Make Today

If you feel your money management is getting away from you, start here to regain control and ease your worries.

1. Check your credit report.

Visit www.freecreditreport.com to order a copy of your credit report. It's free to check and won't hurt your credit score.

2. Set up a budget.

Knowing where your money is going can help ease anxiety and help you feel in control. Mint.com (www.mint.com) has an easy-to-use app to manage your monthly spending.

3. Organize your bills online.

If you find the mail piling up, consider an online bill-paying system like Silver Bills (www.silverbills.com). They will help you get all your bills paid on time, and you'll get a monthly report of what's been paid and when.

4. Hire a professional money manager.

Get ongoing help paying bills, filing taxes, and even submitting insurance forms. Your bank may have someone on staff to do this, or contact the American Association of Daily Money Managers (www.aadmm.com) for guidance.

5. Set up free account alerts.

Check with your credit card company to see if they offer free credit monitoring and other account alerts. If you don't have a credit card, Capital One's free CreditWise service offers free credit alerts to non-customers. ♦

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Living With the Losses of Chronic Disease

She showed me that instead of trying to talk me out of my feelings, she was willing to talk me through them.

by Laurel Saville

Author, communications consultant,
and trainer of dogs and their humans



Advances in medical care have given each of us the promise and benefit of longer, healthier lives. But, paradoxically, because we can cure, treat and manage diseases that were, once-upon-a-time, deadly, these same advances are also giving many of us longer, *unhealthier* lives.

“Back in the day, people died of infectious diseases before they had a chance to get chronic disease,” notes Dr. Steve B. of Oklahoma, who has Parkinson’s. Statistics back this assertion: Using data from the Rand Corporation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that six in 10 adults in the United States have a chronic disease, while four in 10 have two or more. (Buttorff et al., 2017)

Most of us will, at some point in our lives, watch a loved one steadily diminish by illnesses like Parkinson’s, multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer’s, fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, and many others. For some of us, the process happens to the person we see every day in the mirror.

Stuck in the Sand of a Chronic Diagnosis

Ten years ago, I was successfully treated for an acute and often deadly form of breast cancer; today, I’m living with the chronic, incurable and progressive disease of Parkinson’s. The emotional journeys of the two experiences have been completely different.

Acute illness draws lines in the sand. There is the before

and after of diagnosis, the before and after of either death or cure. Chronic illness, on the other hand, feels more like being stuck thigh deep at the beach, pummeled by wave upon wave of physical insults.

Kate Jackson, writing in *Social Work Today*, explains it this way: “A person with a chronic illness [is] forever walking down a dividing line between the past and the future. The experience ... is invariably one of accruing myriad losses.” (Jackson, 2014)

The farewells have been numerous and wide-ranging for LaurelAnn B. of Oregon, who has multiple sclerosis. “People, friends, animals, work, abilities, adventures, and so on,” she says.

Simon W. of the United Kingdom, who has lived with chronic fatigue and other ailments for almost 30 years, laments what didn’t happen. “I feel so much sadness when I consider what I might have done in the last quarter-century,” he says.

And for those with chronic diseases, there is no pretty picture out of the windshield ahead of us to mitigate what is falling away in our rear-view mirrors.

“I feel like I’ve already lost so much, what’s the Universe going to throw at me now?” LaurelAnn says.

“That anxiety is overwhelming and exhausting,” Simon concurs. “I may well live another 25 years. The thought of what is going to happen to me in those years is horrifying.”

The Grief We Cannot See

The understandable onslaught of grief over the degradation of the self can in fact be difficult to recognize for those with incurable illnesses. Doctors focus on addressing and alleviating physical manifestations, like a mechanic fixing a broken machine. Friends and loved ones barrage us with often misguided, unhelpful and dismissive pats on the back and things to try, from the obvious to the out-there. Books and websites recycle the same generic lists of self-help pabulum. Self-care. Support groups. Focus on what you can do. Get out in nature.

Much of this hopeful advice simply adds another “to-do” to a list already brimming over with tasks related to managing a disease. And plenty of it may be more difficult to implement than people realize — some days we’re too tired to “keep fighting” or too sad to “focus on the positive” — giving the ill yet another reason to feel defeated. Even compliments can back-fire.

Jackson points out that “well-meaning individuals ... may try to add a helpful perspective by saying, ‘It could be worse’ or ‘You look fine,’ statements that invalidate a person’s physical and emotional suffering.”

Difficulties with processing grief also come from inside ourselves. Dr. Steve says he rarely researches the illness he lives with every day. “I want to

read about diseases other than my own.” Further, he feels a kind of ironic relief that he has no family. “It’s helpful to live alone because there is an advantage to not having someone around who is worried or depressed about me, or watching me have trouble.”

LaurelAnn says, “I focus on the positive because that’s all anyone wants to hear.”

Linda R. of New York, who has fibromyalgia, went through a deep mourning over the loss of several very valued hobbies. Yet, when she considered attending a support group, she realized, “The last thing I want to do is sit around with others and complain about my ailments.” Her observation reveals yet another common absurdity to living with chronic disease: As it takes up more and more of who you are, you may want to talk about it less and less, thereby further erasing your sense of self.

And yet, not talking about “it” has the potential to make everything worse. Jackson points out, “Many ill individuals fail to realize that the anger, denial, depression or guilt they experience may be manifestations of grief. Although the losses may be vast, the grief they arouse likely will go unrecognized or unaddressed — oversights that can have severe consequences,” including everything from depression and suicidal thoughts to an increase in symptoms or worsening of the disease.

“How does it feel to have Parkinson’s?”



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Validating the Real Journey

While we encourage grieving when someone loses a loved one to the ravages of an illness, the same mourning process, when applied inward, is often framed as self-pity, something to be avoided at all costs. Sarah W. of the United Kingdom, who is living with chronic fatigue, knows the opposite to be true.

“Having done my share of grieving for parents and others, I’m aware that it’s a process. This is exactly how one feels for the loss of parts of oneself,” she says.

Then there’s the added complication that new losses keep piling up, forcing you to confront — or avoid — the entire emotional ordeal again. And again. And again.

Jackson’s advice for social workers is equally applicable to those of us with disease and those who

care about us. “Social workers must have patience and compassion, and they must be able to sit with clients through tough times to help them adapt ... while validating how hard their journey is.”

So how does one validate the journey of another’s chronic illness? Simon points out how straightforward it can be. “The most helpful thing is for people to ask questions,” he says.

For myself, I regularly revisit the moment a friend looked at me, her face full of genuine concern and interest, and simply asked, “What does it *feel* like to have Parkinson’s?” And then she sat with me, listening, nodding, squeezing my hand in encouragement to continue as I told her. And kept telling her.

She showed me that instead of trying to talk me *out* of my feelings, she was willing to talk me *through* them.

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Words of Wisdom

What to say — and not to say — to someone with chronic illness.

When I posted on my Facebook page asking for anyone dealing with chronic disease to tell me the most helpful response when they tell others about their health issues, I did not expect hundreds of comments. Most came from people I had assumed were perfectly healthy. The responses, the majority of which railed against the various rude, thoughtless, clumsy and insensitive remarks they’d had to endure, creates a clear picture of how difficult it is to discuss disease.

The common denominator to all the unwelcome remarks? While perhaps well-meaning, people often say things that minimize the ill person’s experience. Telling someone they “don’t look sick,” questioning their diagnosis, or comparing their symptoms to those of great Aunt Matilda suggests they are exaggerating their suffering. Offering advice on lotions, potions or other magical cures, from bone broth to CBD oil or vegetable smoothies, shows a lack of understanding of disease itself and disrespects how much time, energy and research an ill person has undoubtedly already put into understanding their options. Asking if it runs in the family or trying to ascertain other, possibly self-inflicted causes is a none-too-subtle blame game. Demonstrations of pity, sadness or discomfort make the ill person feel they need to care for you, as well as themselves. Exhortations to “be positive,” “look on the bright side,” “remember, it could be worse” are dismissive pabulum.

So what should you say? Actually, nothing. Instead of talking, listen. A simple acknowledgement and an encouraging question or two are really all anyone struggling with disease wants to hear.

“That sounds really tough.”

“I’m sorry you have to deal with this.”

“What helps you feel better?”

“Is there anything I can do to help?”

“How are things going these days?”

Make gentle queries and pay attention to the answers. Ask if it’s OK to ask questions. Show concern. Be empathetic. Don’t make too big of a deal of things. Go ahead and crack a little joke. And then, naturally move on to other subjects. At the end of the day, the rules for discussing disease are simply those of any good conversationalist: Speak less, and listen more. ♦

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Advice for the Journey: Personal Advice and Expert Opinions



by Julia Hogan, LCPC

Chicago-based counselor and author of *It's Okay to Start With You*

Question: I've noticed some changes in my husband, and I'm worried about him. I think he might be depressed, but it's hard to tell. Since he's started using a wheelchair, he seems quieter and doesn't want to leave our apartment very often. I catch him staring off into space a lot, and he seems a lot more irritable lately. What worries me the most, though, is that he seems to have lost his joy for life and often says he is afraid of "wasting away." He's always quick to change the subject whenever I try to talk to him about what's going on. I know that people who get depressed sometimes attempt suicide. Is that true? Should I be worried?

Answer: Thank you for raising two important issues for older adults like your husband: mental health and suicide awareness. While I can't determine your husband's mental state from your question alone, you are right to be concerned. He may be suffering from depression, which can have serious outcomes if left untreated.

Older adults are more prone than most age groups to attempt or commit suicide. The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT, 2018) notes that elderly white males, and in particular those struggling with the changes that aging brings, are most at risk. From what you've described, your husband may be exhibiting some of the warning signs of depression:

- Loss of interest in daily activities
- Decline in social interaction and health
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness
- Putting affairs in order, giving things away
- Preoccupation with death, lack of concern about safety
- Expressing suicidal intent

Anytime you notice these signs, it's important to help your loved one seek treatment from a qualified mental-health provider. Contact your husband's primary-care provider to help connect him with someone who specializes in working with older adults.

Strong social connections are an important factor in promoting better mental health and preventing suicide attempts. Not

only do they reduce the risk of your family member developing depression, but family, friends and caregivers play key roles in helping to spot mental-health issues. (Bergland, 2015) They are often the first ones to notice any type of change in their loved ones. For example, a family member is more likely to notice a loved one is losing interest in things they used to enjoy and can bring this information to their next doctor visit.

You were able to notice your husband is isolating himself and avoiding social events he used to look forward to; this might have gone unnoticed if you didn't catch it. Check in with your loved one frequently. Don't be afraid to ask how they are doing, especially if they are experiencing any of the above symptoms.

If you or a loved one is feeling suicidal, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255, or call the Institute on Aging's 24-hour, toll-free Friendship Line at 800-971-0016. ♦

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The Care and Feeding of Orchids

Perhaps these gorgeous flowers
know the secret to self-care
... rest, recover, bloom, repeat.

by Nancy Gertz

Health and well-being coach in Boston

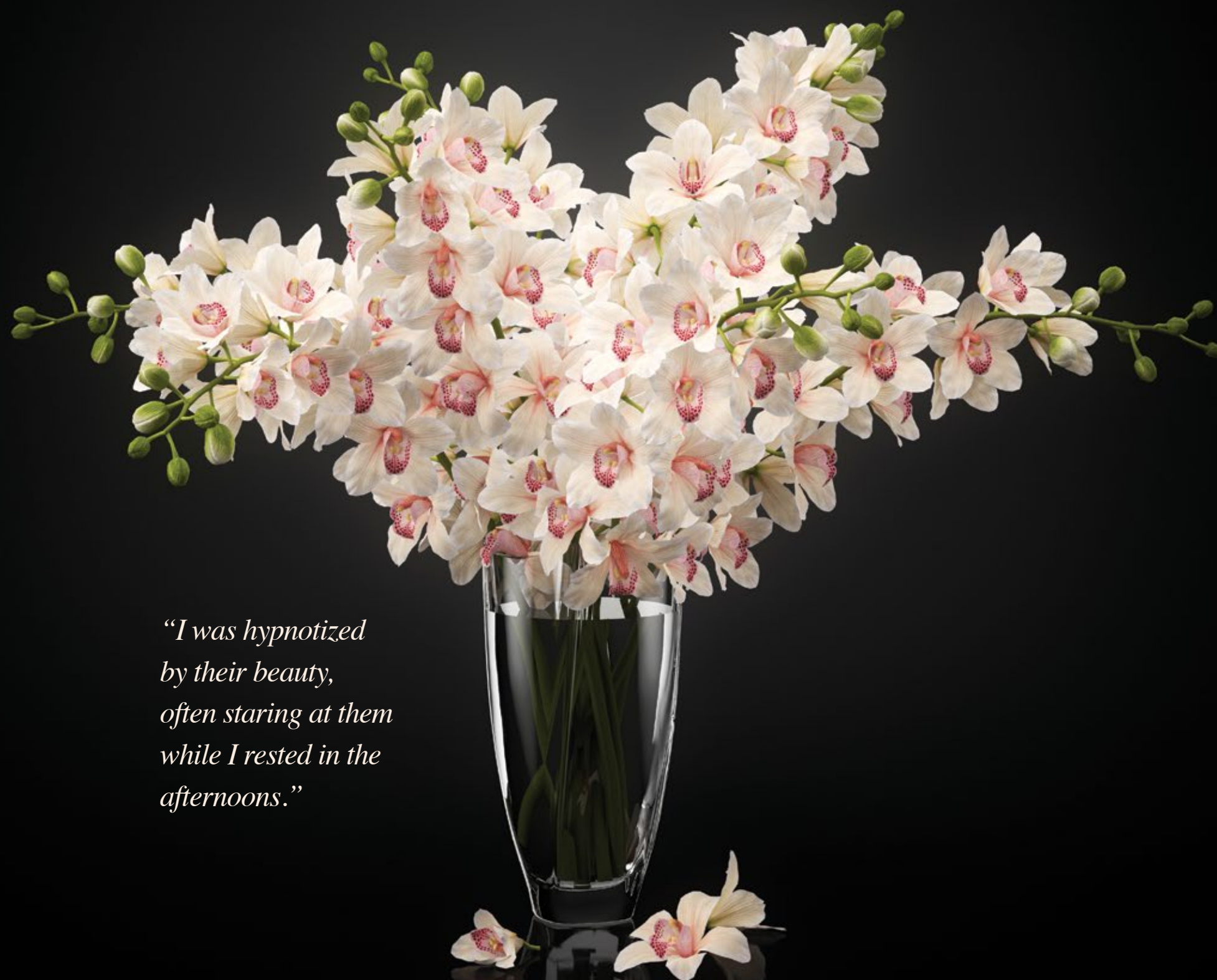
A diagnosis never comes at the right time. You're just going along with your life when an invisible trapdoor suddenly lurches open under your feet. You feel the whoosh as you drop out of your world into a different one. It was just another regular day until I heard the words, "You have cancer." Then I promptly, and without any shame, vomited.

I was in my early 40s — a full-time mother who had given up her career to take care of her kids. We had just moved into a new suburban neighborhood, the boys were in new schools, and, just like in the storybook, we had a new puppy. Life was good and challenging in all the right ways.

After the trapdoor descent, chaos followed. It moved into our lives like a squatter, refusing to leave for a good long time. The initial emotional frenzy evolved into organizational busyness, with calls and appointments to marshal my medical team. We needed strategies to keep homelife afloat, medications to ensure sleep and comfort, and well-organized support systems for each of us in the family, including the new puppy. While exhausting and often confusing, this fierce and focused energy helped to settle the inaugural feelings of being totally out of control.

Two surgeries were followed by chemotherapy, then radiation, and then medication for the next five years. The chemotherapy infusions, according to my oncologist, would have a cumulative effect, so I was advised to prepare for life to get more and more challenging, not less. My children were young, and I was already holding that sort of perspective. Their baby years brought a certain kind of parental stress; by ages 5 and 10 things had gotten more complicated, and I knew what adolescence might be like. I was all-in as a mom. It was a replacement job for the career position I had sidelined, and I was determined to be a Great Mother. It was my new and deeply revered identity.

Care of Orchids: Continued on page 42



*"I was hypnotized
by their beauty,
often staring at them
while I rested in the
afternoons."*

Live Big. Live Bold.

Your Life, Your Rules

A Season of Transition

So many questions ... but how do you really know if it's time?

by Alissa Sauer

Blogger and Leisure Care writer

From the summer sun to crisp autumn days, nothing symbolizes change better than fall. For many, it's a time to set new routines, go back to school, and maybe elect new governing officials. The colors are changing, the scenery is changing ... life itself is changing. A period of transition between the long, warm days of summer and the cold of winter, fall is nothing if not a season of change.

Just like the changing seasons, we also have seasons in life where periods of transition bring new growth. A move to senior living is one of those transitions. With so many senior-living options to choose from and so much to do before a move to senior living, this time of life can seem busy and chaotic. From selling a beloved family home to downsizing your estate, this is certainly a season of change. But how do you know it's time to move? What should you bring with you? What should you do with the rest of your possessions? All of these questions are important, and sometimes answering them only results in more questions.

That's where we come in. We are experts in senior living and are here to help you work through this season of change and enter a more settled and comfortable way of life.



Is it Time to Consider a Change?

Deciding to move to senior living is the first step in what can feel like an intimidating process. How do you know if now is the right time to consider a move? Start by answering these questions:

- Do you feel lonely?
- Are you tired of the hassles of homeownership and desire a more carefree lifestyle?
- Do you miss a sense of community because friends have recently moved or passed away?
- Does the idea of living among peers seem exciting and fun?
- Are you finding it hard to keep up on housework?
- Have you found expired or rotten food in the refrigerator?
- Has your yard maintenance been slipping?
- Are there piles of unopened mail and unpaid bills lying around?
- Are you concerned about your safety and security, and would you appreciate a 24-hour care team?
- Are you neglecting personal grooming habits and bathing or forgetting to change clothes daily?
- Have you lost or gained a significant amount of weight?
- Have you noticed that you are forgetting to take medicines or turn off the stove?
- Have you fallen recently, or are you concerned about falling in your home?

If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, it may be time for you and your family to consider the comfort and safety of a senior living community.



*“How do you know it’s time to move? How do you actually move?
How do you leave a family home that you have loved for decades?
What should you bring with you?”*

7 Tips for a Successful Move

Like most things, one of the hardest parts of moving is getting started. Beginning the moving process often means sorting through decades’ worth of items to decide what will stay with you and what will have to go.

When it comes to downsizing and making the hard decisions about beloved household items, start small and work your way through the house slowly. These seven steps will help you plan an efficient and less-stressful move into senior living.

1. Buy a moving notebook.

Here is where you can track important phone numbers, notes about miscellaneous items, donation ideas, etc. This will help you keep everything organized in one spot, and writing lists can help you de-stress and tackle the task at hand.

2. Consider hiring a moving manager.

If finances allow, a senior move manager will help you sort through the home and provide an unbiased third-party opinion on items. Professional senior move managers are well-equipped to ease stressful family situations and are skilled in the sorting and packing that comes with a move to senior living.

3. Request floor plans.

Having an accurate floor plan with room measurements will help you decide what can come with you to your new home. Keep this accessible as you begin downsizing; it will help you stay focused on how much space you’ll have for furniture and household items.

4. Tackle one room at a time.

Don’t take on too much at once. Start sorting the easiest room to get a small taste of success and encourage you to keep going. Remember, though, sorting does not mean packing. It means deciding whether each item will be sold, donated, discarded or moved with you into your new home. Make notes in your notebook on anything you need to follow up on.

5. Purge useless paperwork.

Don’t attempt to sort through years of receipts, checks or paperwork at this stage. Stack important papers in a separate pile and go through it later when you will be able to shred those old documents. Keep the momentum, and don’t be hindered by tedious sorting now.

6. Donate what you don’t want.

For items being donated, decide where to take your donation. Goodwill, Habitat ReStore, The Salvation Army or a local charity will often take household items; many are even willing to pick up your donation at your home. Consider having an estate sale to help clear out the home of unwanted items.

7. Start packing!

As your move date approaches, ask friends and family to come help. Once everything has been sorted and marked, it will be easy for helpers to come in and put the remaining items in boxes. Label each box with a room and brief item description (i.e., kitchen/dishes) so movers will know where each box goes in your new home. Keep important items, such as keys, cell phone, relevant contracts, first-aid kit, medications and your notebook, separate and accessible so they don’t get packed away.

We know that there are a lot of small details involved when moving to a senior living community, and we are committed to helping you every step of the way. This transition can feel like a season of uncertainty, but know that you are not alone. We have done this before, and we are here to help you work through this season of change and begin the next part of your life. It’s time to step into a great adventure in one of our premier senior communities. Start your journey by exploring our communities today at www.leisurecare.com/our-communities, or call the community nearest you for more information. You can find our list of communities and phone numbers on the back cover of this issue. ♦



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A son learns the painful truth about the family curse.

Hideous Mess or Artisan Clutter?

by Jeff Wozer
Humorist and stand-up comedian

My dad was the Tom Brady of hoarding. He possessed the mindset of a municipal landfill. He could not bear to throw anything out, a trait he attributed to growing up during the Great Depression.

Come October it will be two years since he passed. I miss him. But to be honest, I'd miss him more if he took with him the mess he left in the basement that, in terms of interior-decorating styles, could be best described as junk-constipated.

Every available space is haphazardly piled with boxes and bags, broken table lamps, busted chairs, random golf clubs with unraveled grips, faded Eisenhower-era sleeping bags, tangled nests of Christmas lights, massive wine-making fermenter jugs, rucksacks, Smithsonian-worthy skis and ski boots, sketchpads, empty picture frames, wood scraps of every size, chunks of Styrofoam, old camera bags stuffed with rolls of undeveloped film and leaking alkaline batteries, egg cartons filled with scuffed golf balls, Cento sardine tins jammed with everything from golf pencils and push pins to hinge bolts and Monopoly tokens, and toppled stacks of dusty hardcover books from his Penn State days with such soon-to-be-a-major-motion-picture titles as *Applied Elasticity* and *Strength of Materials*.

I'm convinced archaeologist Howard Carter had an easier time accessing King Tut's tomb than my mom currently has accessing the basement's washer and dryer.

It's a massive ground zero of embarrassment. I thought once my dad passed, my brother, sister and I would return the basement to its former glory, free of junk, with enough open space to allow the grandkids, as we did in our youth, to play ping pong or access the back of the bar and steal sips of peppermint schnapps. Almost two years since his passing it remains a dust-collecting monument to disorganization.

My sister theorizes sentiment as the cause of our inaction. My brother blames lack of time. I suspect something direr.

They say soon after entering Tut's tomb, Carter and his fellow archaeologists fell victim to a relentless plague of disease, bad luck and death — the Curse of the Pharaohs. I believe the same has befallen us. Only instead of the Curse of the Pharaohs, we're suffering from the Curse of the Packrat Dad, a malady that causes anyone who enters the house with the intent of cleaning its cluttered basement to be crippled with distraction and delusion.

"I'm coming over to clean the basement," I'll tell my mom on the phone. Six hours after arriving I'll still be upstairs, never once entering the basement, too busy convincing my mom it was my brother and sister, not me, who, as kids, pilfered her peppermint schnapps.

The one time I managed to escape distraction occurred when the house was empty. I think my mom was socializing with her senior church group, the Golden Nuggets. Or maybe she was out buying schnapps. Or both. I'm not sure. The point being, I made it into the basement.

Hideous Mess: *Continued on page 43*

The Stifled Sniffle

The world ended a little bit the day Tammy moved away.

by Rabbi Elana Zaiman

Seattle-based Rabbi, chaplain and author

Tammy had been my best friend since nursery school. We were always together. At school or at each other’s homes, with Tammy I felt whole, complete and heard, and I felt I could be myself. She felt the same way.

I remember many afternoons eating lunch at Tammy’s house, and, much to her mother’s dismay, every time we would look at each other we would burst into uncontrollable giggles. Our solution: One of us would unfold a napkin and hold it between us so we could not see each other’s faces.

Tammy and I loved each other like sisters, and, perhaps at that time, we loved each other more than we loved our own sisters.

Tammy was also beloved in our fourth-grade class. On the day that she left to move away, we were

sad. So sad. All of us. When she left our classroom, we were bereft, in tears. It was probably the first major loss that most of us had ever experienced.

I felt as if a piece of my heart was being ripped out of my body. I couldn’t imagine what life would be like without my best friend by my side. I was not looking for a replacement. I knew no one could take her place, and I wondered who I would be without her. We defined each other. We *were* because we had each other.

Our afternoon teacher arrived right after our lunchtime goodbyes. She had grayish hair and was in her mid-to-late 50s, possibly 60s — a stern, tall, large woman who was put together just so, and she rarely smiled.

Stifled Sniffle: *Continued on page 43*



Still, with the doctor’s warnings, confidence in my superpowers started to waiver. How could I be a good mom to these kids while my immune system was under attack? How could I make my own needs so much more important than theirs?

After the first chemo session, I received a delivery of white phalaenopsis orchids from my mother and father. The blooms were magnificent; stem to stem, each silken face the perfect twin of the next. I was hypnotized, often staring at them while I rested in the afternoons. The plant was beautiful and precious ... and I had absolutely no idea how to be its caretaker.

The first time I noticed that one of the blooms was wilting, I worried I had let the plant down. Perhaps I had overwatered or it was in too bright a window. As blooms began dropping onto the table around the pot, I was sure the plant was dying. I felt helpless and enormously guilty that I had failed at nurturing this gorgeous specimen that had brought me such delight. A friend reassured me, telling me to just let the plant rest. I put it in my office, a room I wasn’t currently using, and closed the door.

The first delivery was followed by three more, each one arriving after a chemo infusion. Others jumped on

the “bring her an orchid” bandwagon, and by the time radiation was over, I had collections of orchids in bloom, orchids whose blooms were dropping, and orchids with bare stalks showing little promise of anything other than death. Utterly loyal to these generous plants, I put more effort into being a good caregiver. An orchid super-Mom.

I experimented with the care of the plants under the guidance of expert bloggers. I was careful not to over-water. I trimmed the stalks at just the right time. I misted them, whispering sweet things in the early morning quiet. Learning that humans can mess it all up by trying to take control of the orchids, I tried benign neglect. Too much “parenting” undermines the orchid’s natural cycles of blossom, rest, recovery, re-energize and blossom again. All the while, my kids were flourishing despite the disruption in our normal lives, embracing their own natural cycles of rest and growth.

Years later, I still display whatever orchids are blooming over my kitchen sink. I’m still swept away by their magnificence. And it’s still sad when the first blossoms turn thin, like tissue paper, sag a little, and then drop off. Yet now I know this cycle is an essential part of the plant’s survival.

There are still bare orchids in my office in what I call the Rehab Unit. The stalks stand naked for months, while spikes reach for the air and roots pull nutrients from the richness in the pot. When the time is right, that bare, exposed vulnerability will be graced by the splendor of new blooms.

These unlikely teachers remind me that life is sure to have these periods of bloom, loss, recovery and re-emergence. I might be shocked and break down when bad things happen, and they most certainly will. But like the orchids, I will bloom again. ♦



“I’m convinced archaeologist Howard Carter had an easier time accessing King Tut’s tomb than my mom currently has accessing the basement’s washer and dryer.”

Though I knew what to expect, the audacity of the mess still shocked. I felt like Hugh Jackman standing before the barricade in *Les Misérables*. Fearing if I lingered I would become overwhelmed, or worse, a musical would break out, I grabbed two cardboard boxes from atop a toppled golf bag and hurried upstairs.

Rifling through the first box confirmed everything I knew about my dad — he was a mastermind in disorganization. The box housed a mishmash of wine-making catalogues, *Newsweek* magazines, golf scorecards, and unopened packages of car deer whistles. And just as I was concluding all this

could be tossed, I spied a never-seen-before black-and-white wedding photo of my parents walking down the aisle, beaming, without a worry or a cluttered basement in the world.

The next box was the same — 99% junk, except for three letters my dad wrote to his parents in 1945 while fighting in the Battle of the Bulge, found stuck between a 1997 Sierra Club wall calendar and a Radio Shack catalog.

Good God, I thought; my dad has deliberately booby-trapped every box with hidden, must-save mementos; no doubt a deliberate tactic for stalling the ridding of his junk. It made me wish that, just as there are cadaver

dogs for sniffing out bodies in earthquake rubble, there were sentiment dogs trained to sniff out keepsakes and remembrances from basement messes.

As I was mulling this I realized I was running late for an appointment. So as to maintain the cleaning momentum, I loaded as many boxes and bags as could fit in the car — 13 total — to bring home with me to inspect on my own time.

That was six weeks ago. The 13 boxes and bags sit untouched in *my basement* ... a cold acknowledgement that in addition to distraction and delusion, the Curse of the Packrat Dad also includes disquieting irony. ♦

“The next person who sniffles will be sent to the principal’s office.”

She liked order in her classroom, and when order did not exist, she was not happy.

She wanted to know what was going on. Through our tears we told her that we had just said goodbye to Tammy for the last time. She looked at us as if we were a ghastly bunch and told us to pull ourselves together for our lessons. So, we wiped our eyes and stuffed our sadness deep down inside until the end of our school day, yet our sniffles continued.

“The next person who sniffles will be sent to the principal’s office,” our teacher commanded. Yes, this is the elementary school I attended. Hard to believe.

I can’t remember who sniffled. I just remember that someone did and that our teacher carried through with her threat and sent that person to the principal’s office. At the time, I remember thinking her threat and her action ridiculous. Our world as we knew it was falling apart, and she

could not let us be in the hurt, the sadness, the pain, and the chaos of it all. She was adamant that her orderly classroom reign.

A seasoned educator once told me something about classrooms I will never forget. She said, “You can have an orderly classroom where no learning is taking place, and you can have a chaotic classroom where tons of learning is taking place.” Imagine a science lab or an English class where groups are creating skits based on a topic they are studying. Can you hear the enthusiasm, laughter, creative energy and noise?

Now imagine our fourth-grade classroom that day as we all wiped our tears, held in our sniffles, looked into our books, and did whatever our teacher asked us to do, because she was our teacher and we had to listen to her.

Had someone looked into our classroom about half an hour later, after our faces had cleared from tears

and our sniffles had died down, that person would have witnessed an orderly classroom.

But we knew the truth. Ours was no orderly classroom. It was a classroom made up of 20 children who were sad as sad could be and whose teacher stole their sadness from them because she needed order.

Perhaps she also pushed away our chaos because it made her so uncomfortable that she didn’t know how to respond. And maybe even because she was so uncomfortable living in her own chaos that she couldn’t possibly hold ours.

I think that sometimes we bury our own chaos for many of the same reasons.

What would happen if we let others marinate a little more in their pain and loss and brokenness, and what would happen if we allowed ourselves the same luxury? Maybe we’d all grow into our more authentic, compassionate selves sooner. ♦

BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS / From Page 20

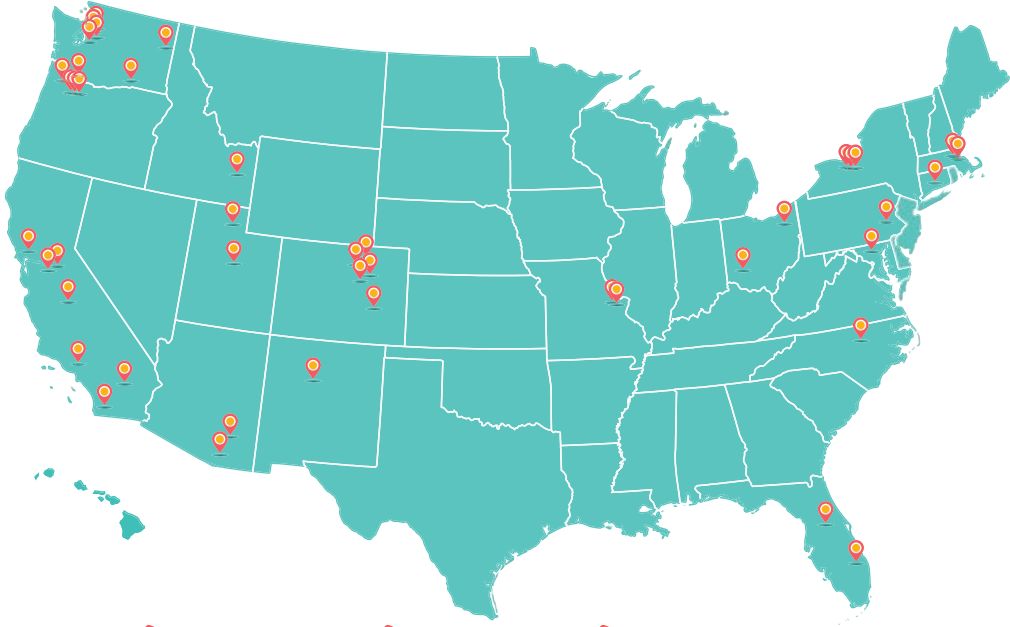
Answers to Crossword Puzzle

SEC	CLAD	WHEN	
USA	LONE	AUGUR	
MENTIONS	DEGREE		
TEMPEST	SPA		
AROSE	EARLIEST		
BENT	HARPOON		
ONE	GELT	TOSSED	
RESPIRE	MATTHEW		
TWEEZE	MATS	IRE	
EMBRACE	EVIL		
DEPLOYED	TWEET		
ERA	FIGURER		
WISEST	SABERING		
CHAOS	OVEN	NIB	
AUTO	NERD	GAS	

Answers to Sudoku

1	5	8	6	3	9	7	4	2
2	4	9	5	1	7	3	8	6
3	7	6	4	2	8	1	5	9
6	2	4	8	7	3	9	1	5
8	1	3	2	9	5	6	7	4
5	9	7	1	6	4	8	2	3
7	8	2	9	5	6	4	3	1
4	6	1	3	8	2	5	9	7
9	3	5	7	4	1	2	6	8

Leisure Care Retirement Communities



Live Big. Live Bold.

ARIZONA

Broadway Proper
Fairwinds – Desert Point

CALIFORNIA

Bella Villaggio
Fairwinds – Ivy Ranch
Fairwinds – West Hills
Fairwinds – Woodward Park
Heritage Estates
Springfield Place
The Woodlakes

COLORADO

Mackenzie Place – Colorado Springs
Mackenzie Place – Fort Collins
San Marino
The Carillon at Bellevue Station
The Carillon at Boulder Creek

CONNECTICUT

The Landing of North Haven
The Linden at Woodbridge

FLORIDA

The Landing of Lake Worth
The Willows

IDAHO

Fairwinds – Sand Creek

MASSACHUSETTS

The Cottages at Dartmouth Village
The Linden at Danvers
The Linden at Dedham

MARYLAND

The Landing of Silver Spring

MISSOURI

Fairwinds – River's Edge
The Landing of O'Fallon

NORTH CAROLINA

Treeo of Raleigh

NEW MEXICO

Fairwinds – Rio Rancho

NEW YORK

The Village at Mill Landing
The Village at Unity
The Village Townhomes

OHIO

The Landing of Long Cover
The Landing of Stow

OKLAHOMA

The Linden at Stonehaven Square

OREGON

Canfield Place
Markham House
Russellville Park
The Ackerly at Sherwood
The Ackerly at Timberland

PENNSYLVANIA

The Landing of Collegeville
The Landing of Southampton
The Landing of Towamencin

UTAH

Treeo – Orem
Treeo – South Ogden

WASHINGTON

Fairwinds – Brighton Court
Fairwinds – Brittany Park
Fairwinds – Redmond
Fairwinds – Spokane
Hawthorne Court
Murano
Van Mall
Washington Oaks
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