



"Reaching From The Heart"

ISSUE: MARCH 2022



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MATTERS OF THE Heart

Georgia's Family Caregiving Magazine

THIS ISSUE:

Misperceptions About Hospice CarePage 3

MENTAL HEALTH And What You Can Do To Improve Yours!Page 4

PRAYER I - Relationship: The State of Being ConnectedPage 6

PRAYER II - A Talk With God As One Receiving Care From AnotherPage 8

Food is Your FriendPage 10

How To Handle a Grievance When the Nursing Home or Assisted Living Facility Is Not Working OutPage 16

The Pandemic, Mental Health, Religion, & Spirituality Page 20-23



Tower Gardening: Hope, Health and Healing!

Learn More On Pages 12-15

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1114 GA Highway 96 • Suite C-1, #177 • Kathleen, GA 31047
www.nationalcaregiversnetwork.com/magazine
info@ncngeorgia.com

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AND PUBLISHER
Shirley A. Morman

SENIOR EDITOR
Doc Wilson, Ph.D.

EDITOR
Teresa Hamilton, MBA

ADVERTISING
Shirley A. Morman

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Christopher Dominic Jenkins

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS –EXECUTIVE ASSOCIATES

Donna D. Bellamy, Pharm.D. • Stevaughn Bush, Esq.
Gregory L. Clark, LUTCF • Dorothy Crumbly, M.S.
Teresa Hamilton M.B.A. • Myldred P. Hill, Ed.D.
Chelsea J. McLendon, D.P.T. • Dahl A. Moss, Elder, M.Div.
Sonja Shavers, Ed.D. • Cheryl Wilson, M.S.
Phillip Wizeman, (ABD) • Doc Wilson, Ph.D.

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Publisher's Welcome!

From time to time, in a world that seems upside down, we joyously, gracefully, and peacefully unite as a family to remember and celebrate family, friends, and other loved ones – both, those who are living, as well as those who have passed on. **Our hearts and souls celebrate birth, life, loving, caring, sharing, educating, learning, laughing, smiling, singing, thinking, healing, mentoring, and spiritualizing to improve lives everywhere! These attributes are critically important to the gargantuan job of making the planet a much better place!**



As a society, we need to focus strongly and unrelentingly on such areas as poverty, racial and ethnic inequities and prejudices, health disparities, and absent, inaccurate, and/or inadequate knowledge about what is absolutely required to greatly reduce the incidence of such costly and horrific medical conditions as type 2 diabetes and cancer, as well as cardiovascular diseases (heart attacks, strokes, peripheral artery disease, obesity/overweightness, etc.), mental health problems (including low self-esteem, and feelings of low self-worth), low energy, low creativity, and dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.

Has your doctor or other healthcare provider informed you that all of these are largely preventable when they are addressed before permanent damage has occurred, and often are also reversible?

NO????!!

Then, **YOU OBVIOUSLY NEED MATTERS of the HEART Magazine!** *Read our inspiring issues, we are a piece of fertile ground (for your beautiful mind), plus some hardy seeds of knowledge, wisdom, creativity and plain good sense!*

Shirley A. Morman

Shirley A. Morman, Publisher & Editor-In-Chief
Email: info@ncngeorgia.com



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Misperceptions About Hospice Care



Over the past several years, as a chaplain, I have provided pastoral care to many families and patients. This has been both, an honor and a privilege, because it has allowed me to become connected to numerous families, all of whom had similar needs. The length of time spent with each patient or family varied – from as short as two days to six months, or, occasionally, even longer.

The hospice caregiver's primary focus initially is to improve the quality of life for the patient without interfering with their natural transition to all of the "new" aspects of the facility. Among other things, a hospice designs an "introductory program" to help reduce the stress for the patient or family as they transition to their new home.

Too often, hospice seekers and their families wait longer than they ideally should to call around to prospective hospices. When they call a hospice, the family must accept the fact that their loved one's health is too poor to be cured, and that there are no interventions available that would likely improve the quality of life for their loved one. Thus, hospice care is often the best solution for the quality of life of the patient.

Frequently, families think that delaying initiation of hospice services will give them a longer time with their loved one. However, in reality, inviting hospice for comfort care can extend the time that families have with their loved one in their own home because **hospice services can be performed at the loved one's residence**. This major benefit is possible because of other in-home services that often can be available from a hospice, including bathing the patient, providing medical supplies, and offering chaplaincy services.

Utilizing a hospice should not be viewed as a last resort. In my opinion, **consulting a hospice should be one of the first steps to help a loved one and their family maximize their remaining days. Denying their loved one's health status, or refusing to acknowledge their health realities will not prolong anyone's life!** Ignoring the patient's reality can create the stage for false hope that suggests that death is not near

When should a hospice be called? The best way to make end-of-life decisions is to have conversations with your loved one about their prognosis and their personal wishes, and to include physicians in the conversations. In addition, it is important for the primary caregiver to know this decision. Seeking an understanding of what a given hospice can offer a patient begins with a consultation. As a part of your family's evaluation of a hospice, ask for your loved one's input, as well as their doctor's input.



The emotions associated with losing a loved one are valid, and should not be ignored. Hospices provide the resources required to assist both the patient and their family members during all of the end-of-life stages. Finally, it is important that **families recognize their own biases and misperceptions, and make decisions to welcome hospice care sooner, rather than later, for the good of the patient!**



Dahl A. Moss, Elder, M.Div.

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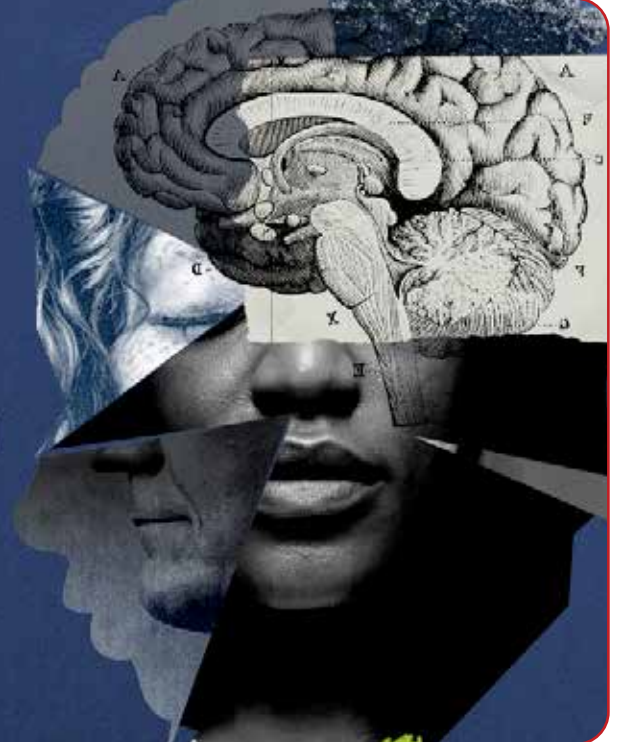
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MENTAL HEALTH

Take care of your mental well-being with evidence-backed resources.



MENTAL HEALTH

And What You Can Do To Improve Yours!

You do not have to be a rocket scientist to notice that violence and illogical interpretations of political events and of other society-wide events have been on the rise over recent years in the United States.

Some of these illogical interpretations have been rooted in plain ignorance, and others have been rooted in low levels of intelligence (that is, poor brain performance and poor brain health – due to “whatever”).

Scientific results published in peer-reviewed journals suggest that **such very negative mental deficiencies are almost always preventable**; that is, there are **proven steps that virtually anyone can take to dramatically improve the functioning of their brain!**

One such study was published in a review article in the prestigious journal ***Molecular Psychiatry*** (Volume 24, pages 965–986, entitled **“Healthy dietary indices and risk of depressive outcomes,”** 2018). This article concluded that **the happiest people are those with the best nutrition!** In addition, many corroborating studies have been published subsequently!

Furthermore, for the best mental health, many other studies have also shown the extreme importance not only of a great exercise program, but also the benefit of a sufficient amount of **deep sleep** each night, as well as stress reduction in general.

SLEEP

Most people will need from about 7.5 hours to about 9 hours of **deep sleep** virtually every night for optimum health; however, the amount of sleep that a given individual needs is determined by their genetics. The length of nightly sleep is governed by how many **sleep cycles** a person experiences – each sleep cycle being roughly 1.5 hours long. Some people are fine on just one sleep cycle each night, and some will need as many as 6 or 7 sleep cycles. For the time in bed, add around 15 minutes to get the total sleep time. Also, use heavy, dark drapes to help create a very dark environment. Finally, use one or more fans (ceiling fans and/or floor fans) to drown out low-level, extraneous noises that, otherwise, might awaken you.

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Note: Be certain to check with your doctor *before* making any changes (and/or additions) to your exercise program and/or your nutrition, because you could have a condition or medication that would require modification of your nutrition or exercise regimen!



EXERCISE

There are two general kinds of exercise: cardio exercise, and strength-building exercise.

- **Cardio exercise:** If you have been sedentary, do **Interval Training** by *gradually* increasing the number (and the degree of difficulty) of Interval Cycles to 6 to 8. An Interval Cycle consists of a sprint portion, followed by a recovery or partial-recovery period, before the next sprint. You should do 2 to 5 minutes of warmup prior to the Interval Cycle, as well as 2 to 5 minutes of cool-down after the last Interval Cycle. The particular kind of exercise can be anything that you like. However, if you have joint (foot, ankle, hip, etc.) or back issues, you should choose joint-friendly options, such as walking on dirt or grass (as opposed to concrete or blacktop), using an elliptical machine, or using a treadmill with the incline raised as high as possible.

NOTE: After you have gradually worked up to a modest level of physical conditioning, you should gradually – over several weeks to several months – push yourself to the point that you are **breathing hard by the end of each sprint!** This is the best way to increase the strength of your heart so that you will greatly reduce your risk of experiencing a **heart attack** or **stroke!!!**

- **A. Strength-building-exercises:** Choose 15 or more exercises that will use the major muscles of your **arms, shoulders, upper back, and chest.** Select weights or resistances such that you can only do 8 to 12 repetitions to the point of “muscle failure” (= can’t do any more!)
- **B. Strength-building-exercises:** Choose 5 or more exercises that will use the major muscles of your **thighs, abdominals, and lower back.** Select weights or resistances such that you can only do 12 to 20 repetitions to the point of “muscle failure” (= can’t do any more!)

You may need to employ the services of a well-trained Personal Trainer to get setup on the various machines. They should be knowledgeable about “safe ranges of motion” so that you do not incur any injuries!

NUTRITION

The rules of **Great Nutrition** (100% plants) are relatively straight-forward:

Fruits: At least **5 servings a day**, and with variety! Also, 1 or 2 of those servings should be a berry, such as blueberry, blackberry, strawberry, etc.

Veggies: At least **5 servings a day**, and with variety!

Nuts/Seeds: **1-2 servings** each meal. (serving 1 ounce = 18-20 shelled pistachios)

Plants: Eat **only** plants; no meat of any kind!

Avoid-A: or greatly limit: sugar-added foods and foods made with **flour** (including “whole-grained” flour): **pastries, cold cereals, breads, pretzels, etc.**

Avoid-B: Glutens: in food made with **rye, barley, or wheat (many kinds).**



Doc Wilson, Ph.D.

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PRAYER I



Relationship: The State of Being Connected

“The Answer, My Friend, is Within”

There are so many ways people, places, and things are connected. Some are by physical interactions and attractions, and others are by emotional ties, social relations, financial dealings, and even by way of legal systems and political systems. Fundamentally, people need other people, certain places tend to become inhabited, and various things become owned or exchanged for other goods or services. Out of such life-sustaining activities, relationships are created and then developed.

Relationships intersect strongly with the Concept of Prayer (Prayer being talk or conversation with God). Prayer is HOW we communicate with Him (via confession, repentance, asking for His forgiveness, and, Oh Yes, Praise for His shed Blood, which covers our every sin and makes us Whole). My entire mind, intellect, and Spirit are combined to connect the concepts of Relationships and Prayer.

Because I Love to Pray, because I believe in the Power of Prayer, and perhaps, mostly, because I am a Caregiver to my husband of 57+ years (he is looking forward to celebrating his 97th Birthday in August 2022), I approached the Founder of *“Matters of the Heart”* Magazine, Mrs. Shirley Morman, who gave me the green light to proceed with creating two prayers – one for Care Givers and one for Care Recipients. I considered this to be a very special, Divine Assignment!

PRAYER I: A Talk with God About Serving as a Caregiver

Almighty, Triune God, My Creator, Protector, Provider, Sustainer, Healer, Comforter, Teacher, and Friend – Truly, Truly my Friend! There is none like You. You are Broader, Wider, Higher, and Descend Lower than Any other. When I began to understand that I could talk with You about anything, and that You would answer, I began to gain the courage to start to develop a deeper relationship with You, believing that we could connect even more strongly. I know that I am not worthy to feel the security that I need to stand on Your Promises; but, You taught me that If I confess my weaknesses and have a desire to Love and to Please You, that You would heal all my diseases. Over time, I have built up enough courage to truly Believe. Therefore, I feel the need to tell You about a relationship which has evolved; I am not sure how to deal with it.

I know what it is like to receive care from a parent who loves unconditionally, and who has been there for ME from babyhood, childhood, teen years, young adult years, full adult years, and middle age years; and now, YOU, Lord!

I know what it is like to receive care and support from a spouse who has shared so many great adventures and good times; ups and downs, rolling with the punches, and suddenly, now, YOU, Lord!

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I know what it is like to attend kindergarten activities, elementary and middle school games, as well as other proud parent occasions on a weekly, and scheduled basis, and suddenly, now, YOU, Lord!

I know what it is like to respond to ordinary things that go along scheduled and expected occasions; but, now, YOU, Lord. Trouble and negative situations have now made a 180-degree turn away from me!.

There is nowhere to turn when things spring upon us, and it is I who needs to navigate my journey.



First, I want to Thank You for Being Who You Are, and Who Jesus, my Deliverer and Savior Is, and the Holy Spirit who Speaks to me and Guides me and comforts Me. Thank You for Your Word recorded in the Bible, both Old and New. Your Words instruct and delight my Soul. Each time that I am surprised with a new occurrence, through Prayer, I find that You have already gone ahead and solved the Problem!

Thank You for Being Here, There, and Everywhere for me. More importantly, Thank You for singling me out to fill this assignment as a Care Giver. Also, **Thank You for Trusting me to be the instrument to bring Love, Comfort, and Joy to my Loved One's Life at such as strategic time!** You could have chosen someone else, but You chose me!

As you have Blessed me, Please Bless others to Seek Your face and to serve with Kindness – knowing and believing that it is in Serving and bringing comfort to others that the same is being received in our favor. Thank you for allowing us to see for ourselves that, whether you Bless us to live a long life, or a shortened one, or having to receive care from another, we CAN See OURSELVES in our weakened state; yet, strengthened by our hands as Caregivers!

In the Precious and Matchless Name of Jesus, I Pray "Amen!"



Myldred P. Hill, Ed.D.

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PRAYER II

A Talk With God As One Receiving Care From Another

Heavenly Father, You have the Whole World In Your Hands! I know Your Word, and I Believe I can stand on Your Promises. Before I ask You to consider anything on my behalf, I know that I must come with a confessing Spirit, a repentant heart, and a humble posture in order to enter Your Sacred Throne, believing that, because I admit my flawed human state, You have washed me and now allow me to ask that Your Perfect Will be done in my Life.

I need You Lord because sickness in body and mind is new to me. You have Blessed me to have good health for most of my life, and now, I find myself in a weak and lowly state, having to now depend upon others for what I previously always handled myself. In fact, Lord, I never even thought about my situation changing.

Yes, there were others who were being called upon to suffer for reasons that neither I nor those others knew; but, until I was stricken, it did not mean what it has come to mean now.

I can remember so many occasions of strength, positions of favor, and opportunities to contribute in so many ways. Those things have changed now!

But, Thanks Be to You, God, who gives Victory. Victory is What You Promised, and I feel Blessed – Blessed beyond measure to have an opportunity to set a new path . . . and a Whole New Beginning!

Now I see strength, whereas, before, I could not have imagined Your Loving Kindness and unlimited Compassion. Now I accomplish things that I never dreamed of before. Therefore, I ask that You help me reflect upon the things that You have made possible for me – things that I once thought impossible, so that now I can give You the Honor and Praise that I was perhaps too busy for, or distracted from, before.



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Thank You for allowing me to rise above thoughts of my weakened state to become Stronger day by day!
Thank You for helping me display a Robust, Sweet Spirit, rather than one beneath my privilege and opportunity every chance I get.

Thank You for Your Mind within me that allows me to wake up each day, looking forward to the extreme pleasure of serving, rather than wanting to avoid the abundant life that you have given me!

Thank You for giving me a cheerful, upbeat attitude with which to inspire others to reach higher heights.

Most of All, Thank You for Jesus my Savior, who overcame death on the Cross to demonstrate to a dying World that there IS Victory and Overcoming Power when we remain IN YOU and WITH YOU!

It is in You that we find our strength day by day to lift You Higher.

In the Name of Jesus, We Pray, Amen



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Food is Your Friend



For some reason, it is hard to convince those who struggle with weight that we can eat and lose weight. I was in a hair salon a few months ago with three operators, and only one person stopped for lunch. She was the thinnest of the group, and the other two were having difficulty with their weight. The full sized women teased and joked with her that “skinny people can eat anything they want and not gain weight.” The full size women went on to talk about what they would eat in their one meal of the day later on during the evening. I could barely contain myself, but since one of the full size girls was doing my hair, I managed to keep looking at my magazine without reading. I wanted to say that the thin salon operator will probably stay thin due to the boost that she provides her metabolic rate by eating three times a day.

Metabolism is the way the body uses energy (measured in calories). The speed at which the body burns calories when at rest is called our resting metabolic rate (RMR). Scientists believe that our RMR may be influenced by genetics since some people do have a higher metabolic rate than others and therefore burn more calories. According to Environmental Nutrition, “Even if you are eating less, it may be harder to lose weight because your body is fighting to conserve the energy it has stored in the body fat.” In simpler terms, your body is saying, “Okay you starved me at breakfast and lunch, so I’m going to store most of the food you gave me for dinner in fat so that you will have energy for the next day.”

There is no responsible weight loss plan or healthy diet that will allow the consumer to skip breakfast. An old saying among nutrition specialists is “Eat like a king at breakfast, a queen at lunch and a poor person at dinner.” When I approach people about eating breakfast, I get two responses. (1) “I don’t have time for breakfast,” and (2) “When I eat breakfast, I get really hungry right before lunch.” My response to the latter is usually “You’re supposed to be hungry at lunch time.”

It is difficult to get people who see food as the enemy to eat the right food and less of it at several settings. Food is your friend when it is prepared correctly with a balance of carbohydrate and protein.

Researchers agree that to lose weight, the consumer can stimulate the metabolic rate with certain foods, more activity, and more sleep. Please consult with your nutrition expert for foods that will stimulate your metabolism. You can also boost your metabolism with more muscle mass by doing aerobic exercise such as brisk walking four to five times a week and strength-train three times a week with exercise bans. The same process that works for athletes will work for us; we can eat more when we exercise more. Ongoing research has begun to show that how long you sleep may affect hormones that regulate appetite and body weight. A Wisconsin Sleep Cohort Study Found that people who sleep less, weigh more.

Therefore, let’s stop starving ourselves and know that food is our friend and not our enemy. Eat smaller portions five to six times daily to lose weight. Eat breakfast, morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack, dinner, evening snack; smaller portions often help us digest our food. A snack may be a hand full of nuts or fruit. If eating five to six times a day does not fit your schedule, eat what you want but less of it. The more we eat larger portions, our stomach expands. The more our stomach expands, the more food it takes to fill it. The more it takes to fill our stomachs the hungrier we are so we eat more. Yes, it is a mad, mad circle. So, let’s stop the madness and eat smaller portions several times a day.



Dorothy Crumbly, M.S.

Food is not the enemy.

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AMAZON NEW BOOK ALERT

CANCER: CAUSES, PREVENTIONS, CURES

By Doc Wilson



Doc Wilson, Ph.D.

When Doc Wilson's mother died from a kind of cancer that, at the time, was considered "incurable," he vowed to learn everything he could about causes, preventions, and cures for the common cancers. Subsequently, Doc was also diagnosed with cancer – even though he had led a close-to-exemplary lifestyle with respect to nutrition, exercise, sleep, and stress. Doc then decided to share his story and his illuminating findings about cancer through a book, as well as through seminars, and one-on-one and group health consultations.

Doc Wilson's ground-breaking book, **CANCER. CAUSES. PREVENTIONS. CURES, (subtitle: What the Food and Beverage Does NOT Want You to Know!)** addresses critically needed information that is not readily available from most members of the medical community.

As is implied in the book's subtitle, the food and beverage industry is **not** in the business of educating the public about cutting-edge research that has the potential not only to help some cancer patients cure their cancers, but also to at least reduce anxiety levels, and even cancer levels, in other patients when they follow Doc's prescriptions!

Of course, since we live in a capitalistic society, we should not expect Food and Beverage entities to spend time and money on undercutting their respective, money-generating businesses; hence the need for **an unbiased "outsider"** like Doc. Doc's extensive background in biomedical sciences, and experience as a Personal Trainer and as a medical school professor, have provided Doc with a varied, rich, relevant foundation for writing **The Handbook of Cancer**.

Brief Summary of Doc's Technical Training:

- B.A. (Biology, Chemistry), Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo, MI. Included Foreign Study: 6 months, University of Strasbourg, France.
- M.A. (Physiology), SUNY at Buffalo, "Passed with Distinction." NY.
- Ph.D. (Physiology, Biochemistry), University of Illinois at Urbana.
- Postdoctoral Fellowship (Biochemistry, Physical Chemistry), Duke University, Durham, NC.
- University of Maryland School of Medicine, Founder & Director, Renal Laboratory, Baltimore, MD.



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Tower Gardening: Hope, Health & Healing!

H Health, Covid, & Spring. After living through winter and the pandemic for the past two years, spring comes with so much hope and possibility for the future! Spring brings warmer weather, birds singing, flowers blooming, animals awakening, and the whole earth coming to life again! Although we are not completely out of harm's way with Covid 19, things are definitely looking up. Isolation, depression, and despair have had a major grip on our nation, and exponentially more in poor communities and communities of color. This spring ushers in an opportunity to turn the tide. In particular, **we need to sound the alarm for the critical need to improve the overall health of all of our citizens!** Two years ago, when Covid hit, we were caught in a horrible, unhealthy disposition – namely, poor nutrition, inadequate or nonexistent exercise, financial inadequacy, and **no sustainable plan for mental and physical wholeness!** Furthermore, **Covid magnified the consequences of these pre-existing conditions; the good news is that, now, we can change those lingering problems!**

We can move forward by engaging life with such simple actions as engaging in more outside activities, and eating well!

Gardening.

Springtime provides the perfect opportunity to return to an age-old method of health and healing: Gardening! Think about it: we used to watch our mothers (and, sometimes our fathers, too) enjoy their outdoor gardens that hugged the ground along the backs of their respective houses and backyard fences. They grew tomatoes, peppers, collards, turnips, and many other plants. In addition, many also enjoyed the fruit from plum trees. Later in my childhood, when we moved to Florida, we had orange and grapefruit trees, and my sister even had an avocado tree. Also, we were aware of “a certain energy” in our bodies when we were gardening. As a child, and even a teenager, I was not interested in the process of gardening, but the energy in our house was abundantly evident when our mom busied herself with gardening.

Provided By:

She loved to put her garden-grown peppers on her garden-grown greens, and talk about how hot and how delicious the peppers tasted.

Living Better – Mentally & Physically.

There is a critically important need to focus more strongly on living well. The state of physical health, as well as emotional / mental health, in communities of color has been dismal for many decades. From 2013 to 2019, black males aged 15 to 29 had an increase of 47% in suicides. If that is not appalling enough, females of the same age group, and within the same time frame, had an increase of 59% in suicides. Also, **depression and anxiety are at alarming rates for adults. For example, more than twenty million people in the United States suffer from depression** (MentalHealth.gov; 2017). Furthermore, **there is a well-established direct link between nutrition and mental health!**

Gardening & Health.

Gardening offers many rewards and benefits for all ages! For example, it offers children a way to calm down in this busy, over-extended world. All of us are aware of the increasing number of children who are labeled as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Gardening provides an opportunity, and a mechanism, by which to foster the unplugging and disengaging of children's headphones, televisions, cell phones, and computers; the majority of children spend the better part of their days plugged into one or more of these devices. In addition to calmness, gardening promotes creativity, and helps build confidence, as well as develop observation and critical thinking skills.



An article from *Web MD* in October 2021, medically reviewed by Dan Brennan, stated, **“Through the centuries, gardens have served not only as places to grow plants but as spaces for people to relax, to focus, and to connect with nature and each other. Today, gardening can provide many mental health benefits for your daily life.”**

Thus, **focusing your attention on the immediate tasks and details of gardening can make you feel more peaceful and content, and reduce negative and stressful thoughts and feelings!** Similar to children, the mental health benefits for adults include improvements in mood, self-esteem, attention span, and social bonding (connectedness), as well as provide a modicum of exercise (especially for work in outdoor gardens). Given that **your level of self-esteem reflects the degree to which you value and think positively about yourself, when you are gardening, your planting a seed and watching it grow into something beautiful, edible, and nutritious, makes you feel accomplished!**

Gardening can help you to focus better on tasks that are in front of you. If you struggle to stay focused on a task or conversation, gardening will help sharpen your ability to focus in general. In addition, research studies conclude that gardening improves symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Outdoor gardens often involve raking, weeding, digging, and extensive movement of soil, cinder blocks, etc. For those of you who would prefer not going to the gym, gardening can be an alternative form of exercise. For those of you who do not have the stamina required for building and tending to outdoor gardens, or who just do not enjoy digging in dirt, raking, weeding, etc., **indoor gardening** may be a more viable, more attractive option. Indoor gardening would still allow all of the mental health and nutritional benefits of outdoor gardening! (For more on indoor gardening, see below.)

Lastly, **community gardening** (a large garden that is divided into many smaller parcels – with the smaller parcels abutting one or more other parcels) is very powerful for increasing connectedness. Such a larger starting plot requires team-minded participants to achieve the shared goal of creating multiple smaller garden plots. Also, this type of community gardening can also work well for the members of a single family.



Sonja Shavers, Ed.D.

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Tower Gardening: Hope, Health & Healing!

Tower Gardening.

During the summer of 2013, Dr. Suman Chandra, a world authority on plant physiology at the University of Mississippi studied tower gardens – comparing their yields with the yields of traditional gardens. The results, published in the research journal **Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine** showed the following:

1. Tower gardens can increase yields by an average of more than 30%.

The University of Mississippi compared product yields of crops grown in aeroponic growing systems versus in “regular” soil gardens. Aeroponic and soil methods produce plants with comparable nutritional values.

2. Plants grow up to 3x more quickly.

According to NASA, plants grow up to 3x faster in aeroponic growing systems versus in “regular” soil gardens. Plus, yields are more consistent, and, with grow lights, year-round growing is possible.

3. Tower gardens use as much as 98% less water. Traditional agriculture uses approximately 80% of our water. This is a serious problem, especially for western states, where water is in short supply. The good news? NASA found that aeroponic technology uses up to 98% less water. Also, a vertical design requires **90% less space.**

4. Another known issue with traditional growing methods is that of space. You need a lot of it. And we have less and less of it—in fact, we lose about 3,000 acres of farmland to development daily. But growing vertically requires only 10% of the space traditional farming uses. Restaurants in certain locations have small tower farms on the roof tops to supply meals served to consumers.



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5. Pollution and pests are less of a problem. City soil is often contaminated with heavy metals, asbestos, petrochemicals and other pollutants—a number of which you cannot test for. Who wants to think that these toxins may be seeping into foods that you are consuming? Fortunately, a tower garden is a soilless growing system. Thus, there is no cause for concern about contaminated dirt. Also, there is also less concern about pesticides. Furthermore, thanks to a close-loop system that recycles water and nutrients, tower garden plants experience **less stress**. In addition, they are healthy enough to naturally resist most pests, and weeds are not an issue because they need soil to grow.



I personally own three tower gardens, and also recently purchased a fourth one for my 85-year-old mother who was experiencing mild depression after significant personal loss. Therefore, I can attest to the five research-backed benefits of aeroponic gardening listed above. One tower can adequately feed a family. The 3 that I have produce an overabundance of fruit and vegetables for myself and my husband. We harvest most days for meal preparation for the day, freeze some, and give others away. For me, there is no greater joy than walking to my tower inside or out to harvest food for an immediate meal.

From tower to table, it just does not get fresher than that! Hearing my mother's excitement about watching her plants grow indoors with an LED lighting system is also personally rewarding. She does not have to go down her front or back steps into cold or hot weather to check on the plants, or to harvest them for a meal; she simply walks over to the tower and takes whatever she needs. She can also give away as much as she likes, which is gratifying for her.

The benefits of tower gardening (as well as "regular" gardening) include improving your mood, self-esteem, attention span, and potentially enhancing social bonding, and potentially exercise for outdoor dirt gardening. If you choose indoor tower gardening, your path to gardening will be greatly simplified. There is no need to find space because the vertical structure needs minimal space, and can easily fit into an apartment or balcony. There is no need to prepare the soil because this technology does not use soil. Also, there is no need to fret over an increase in the water bill because the tower **uses 97% less water than required by traditional dirt gardens**. By the way, once the twenty-gallon tank is filled, the tower waters itself in regular intervals throughout the day. The University of Mississippi study proved the ease and simplicity of tower gardening over dirt gardening. There is even decreased concern over pollution and pests. Since the tower garden uses no dirt, contamination from the dirt is never an issue.

We will never know when the next pandemic or world crisis will come, and we will continue to work toward ending the current pandemic. Taking control over your food supply will constitute a great step toward a sustainable plan no matter what crises may come. When you grow your own food, you will ensure that, not only will you be able to eat and feed your family, but that you will also supply quality food. The best part is that a tower garden will yield enough food to produce large savings; therefore, you will only rarely need to purchase vegetables. Let's get busy gardening, engaging, moving, and breathing the fresh air and the rebirth of spring!

For more information regarding your health and wellness journey, contact Dr. Shavers via the following:

- Email: wholefoodrich@hotmail.com
 - Text to 912-657-9225
 - www.sonjashavers.juiceplus.com
 - www.sonjashavers.towergarden.com
- Follow on Facebook.**



Sonja Shavers, Ed.D.

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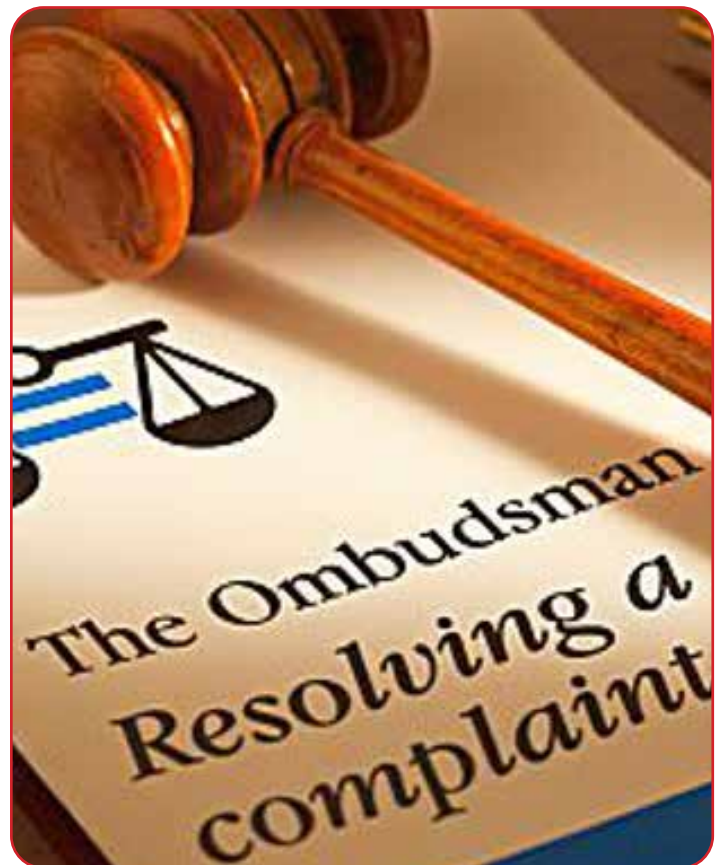
How To Handle a Grievance When the Nursing Home or Assisted Living Facility Is Not Working Out

Documentation is what will make or break your case!

A popular statement in the medical field is, **“If it isn’t documented, it didn’t happen.”** Long-term care communities are not always good at documenting issues. Therefore, good documentation will help you immensely, so give as much detail as possible: what happened, date, time, staff members involved, with whom you have spoken, what they told you, steps, if any, that were taken to address your concerns, and what the results were.

If it is a nursing issue, start with the facility staff by talking with the charge nurse. If you do not get the results that you feel you need and deserve, then speak with the Director of Nurses (DoN). The DoN is responsible for the nursing care that the residents receive, as well as the training and supervision of the nursing staff. Never try and resolve an issue by talking with the direct caregiver’s nurse’s aides. This is because they do not have the authority to institute change; the charge nurse or DoN will do any consistent change.

Depending on how the severity of your concerns, in other words, if they do not put your loved one’s life in immediate jeopardy, then bring in an advocate to work with you. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is the Federal Advocates for residents and their families in long-term care communities.



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The Ombudsman Program is a free service and has Professional Ombudsman and Volunteers who are well versed in the State and Federal Laws that govern long-term care communities. They can go and speak with you and your loved one, apply any regulations and then work with the administration of the community to resolve concerns. Every state has a long-term care Ombudsman Program.

If your concerns have the potential of causing immediate danger to your loved one, your best option is to hotline the community. Have all your documentation available to share with the hotline when you do this. Whenever you file a grievance, whether it is to the staff of a community, the Ombudsman, or the hotline, make sure you show the negative effect(s) on your loved one.

Example: If you are reporting a community for short staffing, don't call and tell them there was only one staff member for 30 residents on the hall last night. Instead, tell them that due to only having one staff member on the previous night, your mom got up on her own and fell after waiting 45 minutes for a staff member to come and help her to the bathroom. Or, due to not having enough staff, your dad was not taken down to dinner, and as a result, his blood sugar dropped so low that he had to be sent to the hospital for treatment. This type of detail, along with your documentation, will get you the response you need.

Things to consider when pursuing a grievance on behalf of a loved one.

- Does your loved one want you to pursue the grievance? As an advocate, I had to learn early on that what I think should happen is not always what the resident wanted. Remember, at the end of the day, the staff goes home, the family goes home, and even the advocate goes home, but this is the home for the resident. So, we need to put their wishes first and seek the resolution that best meets their needs. However, you have to ensure that the resident's resolution is workable for the staff.
- Residents are sometimes hesitant to file a grievance because, at the end of the day, everyone goes home, and when they hit their call light at 3 am, the person coming in to help them in their time of need may be the very person you filed the grievance against. This is hard to address because I am not there at 3 am when this staff member walks in. In my 25 years as a professional advocate, I can tell you this is usually not a valid concern, but I can never promise a resident that it will not happen to them! I have heard this concern from residents many times.

- Pick your battles. Don't file a grievance on everything that happens. If it can be resolved by working with the Charge Nurse, DoN, or Social Worker, try that first if you can't get a resolution for something affecting your loved one's quality of life, file a formal grievance.

Remember, Not all complaints are because the staff members are not doing their job! I got a call from a Director of Nursing (DoN) who told me that they were having a problem with a resident and her family accusing them of not helping the resident put on her makeup each morning. I asked the DoN why the staff would not assist this resident in putting on her makeup. The DoN told me that this resident makeup routine was three hours long each morning, and the family was insisting that the CNA's spend three hours with her each morning to help her. Once I heard this, I reached out to the family and explained that a long-term care community does not cover one-on-one care and that the staff could not devote three hours each morning to help their mom with her makeup routine. I suggested that we all meet and see how they could help or how the routine could be adjusted to meet the needs of their mom but be something that the staff could do without neglecting the needs of the other residents in their care.



Suppose you still have concerns that you are unsure how to deal with. In that case, you can go to my website and purchase my book "I Am The Resident – Becoming An Advocate For Your Loved One's Needs," go to my Facebook Page (please like my page) to ask questions and keep up to date with the current issue in the senior community.

I will offer a **10% discount** for anyone wanting to purchase my book for the month of March and April. The link to buy the book is <https://store.bookbaby.com/book/i-am-the-Resident>, use the promo code: **PEDU**

Cheryl J. Wilson, M.S.
Advocacy 4 Seniors



Cheryl J. Wilson, M.S.

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Avoiding Charity Fraud

Don't let your donations fall victim to scam artists. Here's how to protect yourself from charity fraud by learning to recognize, prevent and report the signs of fraudulent activity.

The thought of someone pocketing a charitable donation unthinkable. However, there are some for-profit organizations or individuals that seek to do just this. Charity fraud does exist, and it's not always easy to recognize. Many scammers posing as charities use tactics or names that are like real charities, but use donations in an entirely different way. To protect yourself and your checkbook from charity fraud, always do some research before giving to a charity or fundraiser, and stay on the lookout for charitable red flags as well.

Warning signs

If you notice any of the following warning signs when dealing with a charity, consider taking a closer look at its activities.

Pressure tactics.

Legitimate charities should not pressure you to donate without allowing you time to think about it and do some research on the organization or cause. Having a charitable budget and strategy can help you avoid giving into on-the-spot pressure, since you will be less likely to give without consulting your budget first.

Claims of past giving without evidence.

Many scam artists will thank you for past donations or claim that you've already donated to trick you into thinking you are already familiar with the charity and make you more willing to donate again. If you don't remember donating and can't find any record of it, chances are this is a fraud tactic. Keeping good records of your charitable donations will make recognizing this kind of fraud much easier.

Contributions in exchange for sweepstakes entries.

If a charity guarantees that you will be entered in or even win a sweepstakes contest in exchange for donating, it is likely fraudulent. By law, you never have to donate to be eligible to win a sweepstakes.

Names that are very similar to famous charities.

Names that sound like famous charities but have a word or two different often rely on name recognition to entice well-meaning donors into giving them money.

Solicitations soon after crises or disasters.

The time directly after a natural disaster or national crisis is a time when many choose to give, and charity scam artists know this. After Hurricane Katrina, the FBI reported over 4,000 fraudulent websites that were trying to collect people's money and personal information. If you do want to give to a charity that provides disaster relief, make sure it's an experienced one. There is a large amount of logistics involved in getting aid to victims, so you'll want to choose a charity that has proven success and a legitimate background.

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Requesting you send funds to a foreign bank.

This should raise immediate suspicion for two reasons: first, you should always be able to send funds to the charity itself, and second, donations made to foreign organizations are usually not tax deductible. Refusing to provide information.

Any legitimate charity should be able to tell you, in detail, about its identity, mission, costs and how the donation will be used. If they can't readily answer these kinds of questions, it should be cause for suspicion.

Insisting that you donate with cash or asking you to wire money.

This should make you wonder why a legitimate charity won't process a credit card, and why they are so eager to get cash from you immediately.

Asking for your Social Security number.

The IRS advises not to give out personal information, including Social Security numbers, credit card or bank account information to anyone who solicits a contribution from you. Scam artists can use this information to steal money and to potentially steal your identity.

Preventing fraud

Now that you know how to spot potential charity fraud, learn how to defend yourself against it.

- Always make checks out to the organization, and never to an individual solicitor, even if they ask you to. Remember that donations to individuals are not tax deductible (and in the case of fraud, aren't ethical).
- When entering any personal information, make sure you're using a secure website. You can see that a site is secure because the URL will have https:// before it rather than just http://.
- If you receive a solicitation call that seems odd, hang up, find the charity's number yourself and call to see if the solicitation was authorized by the charity.
- Avoid clicking on links within email messages—many link to fake websites or contain viruses. If you receive an email from a charity you may be interested in, search for it outside of the email first. Keep in mind that most valid charitable websites will end in .org, not .com.
- If you receive a solicitation that interests you, request that the charity send you written information before you donate.
- Ask if the person calling is a professional fundraiser and, if he or she is, what percentage of your donation will go to paying them rather than to the charity.



Chain donation letters.

A legitimate charity should not ask you to forward its email to all of your friends and relatives, as it will have other avenues of reaching these people.

Offering to send a courier or overnight delivery service to collect your money.

This is often a sign of illegitimate charities, as they're eager to collect your cash as soon as possible.

Reporting fraud

If you have concerns about the legitimacy, integrity or practices of a potential charity, you can contact one of the following:

- **Your state's charity office.**
This is typically a part of the Office of the Attorney General or the Office of the Secretary of State.
- **The IRS.**
You can use their "Exempt Organizations Select Check" to see if a potential charity is a legitimate tax-exempt organization, or you can call them for more information.
- **The Federal Trade Commission, local Better Business Bureau or Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance.** All provide online complaint forms to notify them of a potentially fraudulent charity.
- **Local law enforcement.**
If you believe you've been a victim of fraud, contact your local law enforcement agency.

Prudential Advisors

Gregory L. Clark, LUTCF
205-948-2580
gregory.clark@prudnetial.com
<https://www.prudential.com/advisor/gregory-clark>



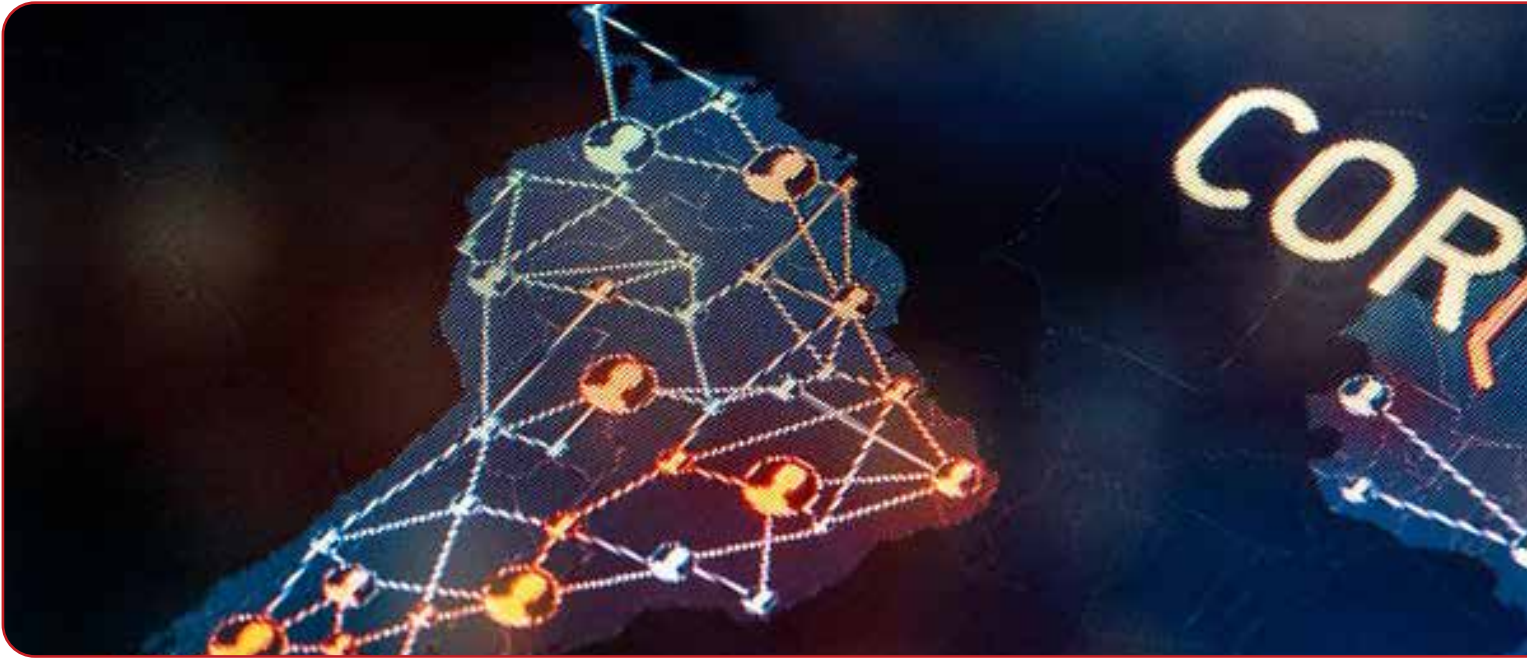
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The Pandemic, Mental Health, Religion, & Spirituality

Why are we not asking ourselves more serious, more insightful, more incisive questions, such as: why are we, as humans, NOT more upset by these things???

Almost 2000 years ago, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews penned these words; “and not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as (is) the manner of some...” And, yet, in a pandemic-panicked world, many people, who formerly sat in church pews, are now comfortably seated in their recliner in front of their computers live streaming Pastor Bigwig and those who brave the dreaded newest version of the COVID-19 virus. And while my “numbers” right now are anecdotal, I promise to verify the above statement by the time my next installment of this article appears empirically.

In the late 1960s, social psychologist Paul Eckman did a great deal of research on **the seven basic expressions that are readable on the human face: anger, fear, surprise, joy, sadness, contempt, and disgust**. We learn to read these emotions as our brains develop, and move from concrete thinking to conceptual thinking. (Eckman, 1970). When this development is arrested, for whatever reason, the brain then has difficulty distinguishing amongst these

different facial expressions. (Gori, Schiatti, & Amadeo, 2021). A critical question is, when does this switch from concrete thinking to conceptual/representative thinking occur? Most psychologists agree that this is not a one-time event, but, rather, is a slow process that begins somewhere around the age of two or three (depending on the child), and continues throughout elementary school. (Gori, Schiatti, and Amadeo, 2021).

This is perhaps why some children are ready for pre-algebra (where letters are then used as substitutions for numbers) in the fourth grade, and others still struggle with this same concept in the eighth grade.

In one of my earliest papers (that I wrote while working on my doctoral degree), was an essay on the law of unintended consequences. In it, I mentioned that when we attempt to deal with a somatic illness or disease by applying a physical intervention, there can be **unintended psychology consequences**. (Wizeman, 1998). The relevance of this concept has been evident in the recent international reactions to the COVID-19 coronavirus - compared to the international responses to the similar SARS CoV-2 coronavirus outbreak more than a decade and a half earlier.

In both cases, seriously contagious corona viruses pandemically escaped into the human population.

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In one case (SARS), the quarantining was limited to patients who were diagnosed with the disease and laid up in hospitals. In the other case (COVID-19), mask mandates were issued world-wide, and social distancing became an enforced requirement on virtually all humans on the planet - with very few exceptions. As a result, there were significant consequences. (Meads, 2022).

In theory, mask mandates and social distancing rules were established to reduce the risk of spreading a "deadly" disease by employing **physical barriers** to a somatic illness; such protocols were what I recommended in 1998.

According to Meads, our consequences have included increases in crime rates in almost every major population center on Earth, as well as increases in mental health problems, such as suicides and suicidal ideations (across a broad spectrum of ages, races, and socio-economic backgrounds), depression, and substance abuse. As was posited in my paper almost a quarter of a century ago, these "unforeseen" consequences actually may have been quite predictable.

Recently (1/30/2022), we were devastated to hear the news of former 30-year-old Miss USA Cheslie Kryst's death by suicide in New York City. Such a story of a successful young person's tragic death is indeed harrowing, and, as a parent who has lost a child to death, my heart goes out to the Simpkin family. But, my heart also goes out not only to the not-so-famous young people who have committed suicide during this pandemic, but also to their families. Indeed, the troubling critical question that inflames my throat is:

Wade Bradshaw, a PCA pastor in Charlottesville, Virginia notes that his congregation (like so many others around the country) has lost significant numbers (down by about 35% since March 2020 when his church first "went virtual").

Continue Reading On Page 22



Phillip A. Wizeman, (ABD)

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The Pandemic, Mental Health, Religion, & Spirituality

In addition, he says that many in his church are just “mask weary.” But, is the problem deeper than that? **Is there something below the surface on a spiritual level?**

In the Fall of 1987, I was interpreting (signing for deaf viewers) in a church service in Laurel, Maryland. Interpreting services from English (and Spanish) into ASL is something that I have been doing since 1978, and that I continue to do. So, that, in and of itself, was not unique. But the real question is: **“Why** does that particular church service stand out in my mind?” There is no clear, logical reason for this, but, **stand out, it does!**

A very good friend, Delores Warwick, sang a solo that morning. Delores and her husband, Chris, were both members of the United States Air Force (USAF), and were stationed at Fort George G. Meade in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. Our two families had (and still have) many things in common. Delores also had one of the most beautiful alto voices that I have ever heard. So, there she was standing in front of the church when the music began for “Via Dolorosa.” It was not the first time that I had heard the song performed live, nor would it be the last; but, it **was the most emotionally stirring rendition ever!!!** The piano soloist played as Delores was supposed to come in, and then... nothing! Well, **nothing but tears!** Delores fell to her knees in front of the church’s large wooden cross and just wept!

She tried to sing two or three more times, but **her gratitude for what Christ had done for her personally was immensely palpable and an obvious reason for her silence!**

There was not one dry eye in that congregation that morning; and that is what one cannot get from a live-streamed church service. As human beings, **we have a primal, powerful need to be in contact with other human beings!** No “masked singer” will ever evoke that level of emotion. **We are integrated wholes, comprised of bodies, minds, souls, and spirits; thus, whatever affects one part also affects the whole.**

In support of the above concepts, a May 2020 study of 485 survey participants across Brazil came to the conclusion that **social isolation** (created by COVID-19 government mandates) was having deleterious effects on people’s **mental health** as measured by **four specific metrics: hopelessness, fear, worrying, and sadness.** (Lucchetti, et al., 2020). In addition, The World Health Organization (WHO) previously reported that such disordering and isolating crises, due to quarantines, put people at risk for **numerous mental health problems** such as **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, generalized anxiety, panic attacks, phobias, and substance abuse.** (Mason, et al., 2010).

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Lucchetti's team concluded that **the people with the strongest sense of what they referred to as "religiosity and spirituality" held up better under the pressures of isolation, and that the people who held up the best were those who maintained their religious communities, despite the isolation.** (Lucchetti, et al., 2020 & Frei-Landau, 2020).

In the upcoming months, I will further explore **the connection between religious connectedness and mental health** – but on a more in-depth basis, including addressing the issue of **how important it is to not only have a sense of religiosity, but also to have membership in a body of like-minded people of faith!**

I hope you join me in the next issue for this **"spiritual adventure and commentary."**

My "rules of engagement" with the rest of humanity are simple:

- **Be gentle** with other people, even those with whom you disagree (whether that be me or someone who has commented on you).
- **Be fair.** While we can never deny a person's life story (anecdotal evidence), such stories do not trump empirical evidence (what "the average" person experiences, or what the statistical evidence bears out).

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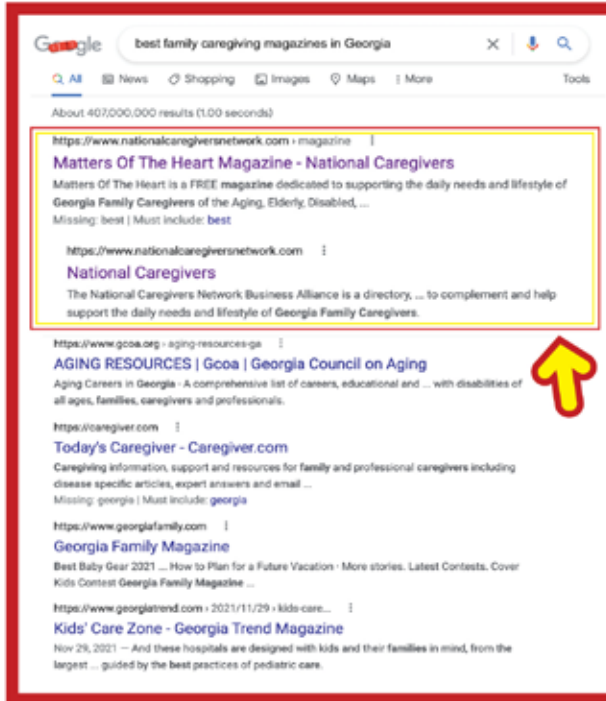
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