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# MATTERS OF THE Heart

Georgia's Family Caregiving Magazine

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The Ultimate Resources For Family Caregivers

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# Welcome to **Matters Of The Heart Magazine** Winter 2024!

**Shirley A. Morman**  
Editor-In-Chief  
and Publisher

We value your Generosity to read Matters of The Heart!

When we think of the word generosity, we think of people, family,  
neighbors, friends, kindness, we think of many personal qualities and  
attributes as humility, benevolence, patience, compassion, sharing,  
caring, helping and attention, and together, All express support!

In keeping with your spirit of Generosity, Matters of The Heart  
Magazine Thanks You for reading us on our  
[nationalcaregiversnetwork.com](http://nationalcaregiversnetwork.com) website, Instagram and Facebook,  
as we strive to educate our readers through scholarly based  
articles addressing healthcare, health education, caregiving, senior  
advocacy, diet-nutrition, mental health, exercise-healthy living, self-  
care, relationship and spirituality.

We are excited about venturing into 2024, with you! Likewise,  
we take pride in acknowledging the invaluable role you play  
because you read and share the FREE ONLINE Matters of The Heart  
Magazine with generational family members, close friends and  
associates, family caregivers, caregivers, co-workers, professionals,  
organizations, and places of interest! Please know that we appreciate  
you and your generous benevolent efforts and Thank You So Much.  
Welcome to Matters of The Heart Magazine!

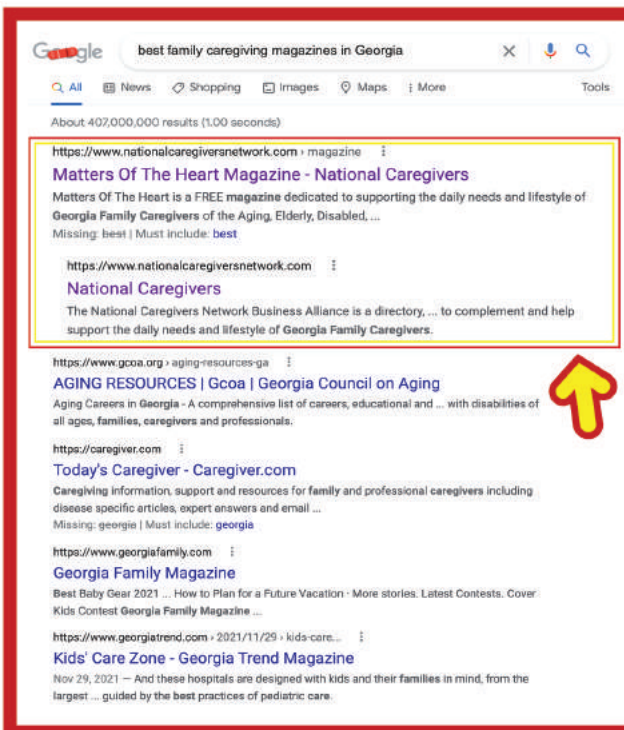
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## MATTERS OF THE HEART MAGAZINE

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**Matters Of The Heart** is a **FREE** magazine dedicated to supporting the daily needs and lifestyle of Georgia Family Caregivers of the Aging, Elderly, Disabled, Chronically Ill, Veteran, and End-of-Life Loved One. The magazine brings touching stories, helpful resources and information for caregivers and caregiving to help seniors/older adults and their families making informed decisions. We also advertise products and services to complement and help support the daily needs and lifestyle of Georgia Family Caregivers.

**Matters Of The Heart** is a magazine that is published quarterly within the 13 counties that comprise Middle Georgia and its surrounding areas.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NATIONAL CAREGIVERS NETWORK, VISIT US ONLINE: [WWW.NCNGEORGIA.COM](http://WWW.NCNGEORGIA.COM)**



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## The Spiritual Care of Caregivers

**Pastor Mark S. Pierson**



I am a professional caregiver. I answered the call to ministry over 36 years ago and have visited the sick and buried the dead at least a thousand times. When I entered seminary to prepare as a professional, my declared concentration was Pastoral Care and Counseling in the area of Marriage and Family. We were firmly taught and informed that counseling always implied a specified place, time, and people in a specified session.

In the area of Spiritual Care, as students, we were reminded that Spiritual and Pastoral Care could and would happen at any moment or place, among any person or group of people. I have always kept that in mind while preparing for any visit whether to a hospital, nursing home, funeral home or to one's personal address or a personal care home.

As professional Caregivers, we often know what boxes to check, what steps to take and who to call, when to call, all in assistance to the individual and their family to whom we provide care. Because of our humanity and perfunctory we often forget about our own personal needs and deficiencies that often go unaddressed and neglected. It is often within our own personal experiences, and emergencies, that we are forced to recognize and reconcile the needs and often deficiencies of ourselves and our caregiving.

When I speak of deficiencies, I speak of our imperfections because none of us are perfect, even though we all strive to be the perfect caregiver. We also will be reminded that all of those whom we care for, and we the caregivers, are terminal. Yes, all of our caregiving will end one day if not on the patients end, it will be on our end.

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In August of 2019, I purchased airline tickets for both of my aging and ailing parents to move from Los Angeles to Atlanta to live with me. As my mother progressed in the symptoms of Dementia, my father was diagnosed with cognitive impairment with the early onset of Alzheimer's. In October of 2021, I was faced with the responsibility of the complete care of two adults who cared for me as an infant but could not do anything for themselves as adults due to Dementia and Alzheimer symptoms.

Eventually my parents had to be moved to an Assisted Living facility and later into a personal care facility. For those of us who are professionals who love and care for people, we offer no less to our family members who are placed in care facilities. Though my parents were no longer living with me, I would visit with them at least six to ten times a month and carried out their financial responsibilities and all medical and doctor's appointments and admittances to the hospital.

For a little over two years, I really took no break nor breath from my parents side. My father who survived many health challenges began to grow weaker and frail and his death and transition became immanent. I spoke with my sister who felt that she would come and visit Dad and Mom the week of Thanksgiving 2023. When she came to visit our parents, she did not come alone. She brought her daughter and grandson, affording my parents to see one of their grandchildren and their only great grandchild for the first time. This visit brought so much joy and comfort to my parents that I could have never imagined. This visit also brought something to me that I could have never imagined personally as well.

At every holiday or special day, I would always try to spend some quality time with them. During my sister's visit, I took off from visiting my parents for roughly ten days. Within those ten days, I had a moment to refresh, renew and reflect upon my personal journey and spiritual care of the self. I am a firm believer that those ten days of reprieve prepared me for the inevitable and that was the death and transitioning of our father, Rev. Stephen Pierson, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023. My father was active in ministry for over Fifty-One Years. He served as a pastor and shepherd over various flocks.

As a professional caregiver, he visited many of the sick and buried many of the dead, giving spiritual care to many families.

It was within those ten days of reprieve that I received renewal and Spiritual Care. I received the Spiritual Care I needed based upon the following actions and events that I recommend to all Caregivers.

- 1) Realize and always remember that we may be professionals but none of us are perfect.

We have our own personal needs and deficiencies that we can not meet in and of ourselves nor by ourselves. We need help from God and help from others.

- 2) Take a deliberate break and breathe away from your loved one or patient(s) whom you care for. Solicit other family members. If others are not willing to assist you, then research other organizations that are willing to assist you with the care of your loved one. One organization that offers reprieve to caregivers from sitting with patients, to taking your loved one to medical appointments and doctor visits is ALTER <https://www.alterdementia.com>.
- 3) Specify some personal and spiritual time to relax, refresh, renew and to reflect and rest in prayer and scripture. Let God speak to you. As God speaks to you he will restore, renew and replenish you for the next frontier of your journey as a caregiver.

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# MATTERS OF THE HEART

## “The Answer my Friend, is Not Blowing, in the Wind; The Answer, my Friend, is Within”! mph 08

Myldred P. Hill, Ed.D.



We Welcome our New Year 2024 with a Theme- “2024: An Open Door.” A door wider, taller, and narrower, to accommodate the successful navigation through a maze of new beginnings in improving the human conditions which we pledge to impact.

Continuing our Caregiver’s writing assignment theme--- **Relationships**, we are led to share Mantras, (*sacred writings*) committed to sharing information dedicated to truly demonstrating a practice, focused as much as humanly possible, on Matters which transcend ideas, plans, and concepts. The following personal Words of Wisdom (WOWs) were initiated and practiced over a period of years- to date, 16. I had been practicing these WOW’s, however, not calling them anything or assigning value. They have made ALL the difference, and for me, become Matters of The Heart for the human, political, purse string issues which command our attention daily. I became personally drawn to Mantras during a period of change, stress, and challenges which required assurance that the work assigned to my hands would be carried out professionally, strategically, and worthy of continued employment. As a Woman of Faith, I found it necessary to begin using the benefits that were promised, and practice what I had been taught. It was necessary to find a reliable source and the tools to employ.

Having been credited with skillfully using words to convey then intended, resulted in these:

**“Know What You are dealing with, and deal accordingly!”** After so many instances of having to respond to pettiness, ignorance, stupidity, unkindness, maliciousness, etc., I Prayerfully was inspired to concede that in my own strength intellectually, emotionally, socially, mentally, physically, financially, and professionally, I was ill equipped to maintain a stable and healthy lifestyle. It became obvious that I could not control any of the above actions originating from others. I also was convinced that I could indeed find a way to live a peaceful, drama and trauma free life by not being tossed and driven to unhappiness and instability. I Prayerfully concluded that I could not control my environment and circumstances, so what was I to do?

I considered my challenges, and likewise, my options. I was Blessed with an Answer which was inspired by something Greater than I had thought about or employed up until that time. My Lessons learned in Sunday School and Church kicked in. I had professed knowledge of an all Wise, Loving, and Capable God who specialized in anything Bigger and Greater than what I could bear. I Prayed myself into a “Give it to God” response and answer to as much as I could; without humanity/ego stepping in and wanting to take credit for solving and resolving challenges.

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In choosing God, which later became “Triune God” as the challenges became more and more demanding, I was looking to God for the answers. The response was “What is already within you can be tapped, utilized, and lifted above the challenges. The question came through Divine Intervention- What IS the answer? WHO is that Greater? Over time, I learned what I was “Dealing With” IS a Triune God who has revealed Himself through The Word from Genesis to Revelation, and He would help me through trial and error to “**Know It!**”

To date, as needed, He has revealed himself and made crooked straight, darkness, light, from fear to Love; and the Power contained within. Lesson learned are documented by our actions and overcoming.

What is the objective of this message? In Caregiving, it has to be **Matters of The Heart!** Each day, I must believe that Triune God has already solved and resolved each challenge, misstep, lack of knowledge and action, and I must play that hand as skillfully as possible; because the Enemy of God has declared victory also. Standing on the Promises of our Creator, for me is more than necessary... it is mandatory!

We read daily about the struggles of Caregivers, especially family members and loved ones, addressing the mandatory services 365/24/7 of love ones who are no longer who they were because of Dementia and Alzheimer’s, and a host of other degenerative diseases. These conditions defined as *“the result of a continuous process based on degenerative cell changes, affecting tissues or organs, which will increasingly deteriorate over time.”* Although there are many, many other conditions which can fall in that large category of disabilities such as blindness, and mobility issues which require intense and constant supervision, Caregivers and Aides are the ones who are entrusted with the required skills and services.

Finally, we see the need for Support Groups, Books, and Magazines that are charged with informing the public about constant changes and rules of engagement. The Covid-19 Virus has taken the World in paths before uncharted. Medical Science, Technology, and other higher learning skills and services are necessary to move forward.

As we work with human beings who are unique and complex, it is again mandatory to find ways to empower at a broader degree and level-through, not only Media, but getting back to “heart to heart, and breast to breast! Culturally, People of Color or Minority Communities and Villages had to find a way to serve, nurture, and look after our own. It is a good thing that facilities are established and operating throughout our Country- caring for those who are unable to care for themselves or have family who are willing and able to care for them.

Speaking from the heart, the tasks at hand require something “Greater” than what employment affords! It is a personal desire to see a concerted and dedicated effort to encourage a work ethic which places the emphases on “Heart Matters!”

The continued part of the Matter is that along with the Greater within, is the Great Force outside surrounding us! The enemy in the guise of greed, misinformation, lack of ethics, laws that favor the haves and impair the “have lesser,” must also be realized.... to KNOW that the battle has to be fought! That those who are vulnerable are worth fighting for!

Finally, that the GREATER Within is the “Heart” .... and that is where our source of strength is, in the “Heart!”

*“The Answer my Friend, is Not Blowing in the wind... the Answer, my Friend is Within!”*

Myldred P. Hill, Ed.D.

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## NOW THAT THE HOLIDAYS ARE OVER WHAT'S NEXT?

**Cheryl J. Wilson, M.S.**  
**Advocacy for Seniors**  
[advocacy4seniors.com](http://advocacy4seniors.com)



Many of us have just returned from visiting loved ones over the holiday. Some of you may be surprised by what you found. Whenever you spoke with them, they said they were doing well, but that is different from what you saw when you visited. What you noticed were things like.

- They had lost a lot of weight.
- Their hygiene was not good.
- The home was not clean as it had always been.
- You noticed that they were repeating the same stories and phrases.
- They seem to get more confused in the evening – Sundowners.

Why would they tell you that they were doing well when they were not? The most common reasons are.

- They do not want to be placed in a nursing home or assisted living community.
- They do not want to have to move in with their family.

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- They do not want strangers coming into their homes to care for them.

How can you tell your loved one that they may need additional help?

- Talk to or write their doctor a letter and see if they agree with you and, if so, would they be willing to speak to them. Often, seniors who are 70+ value their doctor's opinion and would be more willing to listen to them. Note: This is probably not going to work for the Baby Boomers!
- Be honest with them. Tell them you understand they feel they can remain independent, but you cannot provide the care or support they need now. Let them know that you need the peace of mind of knowing they are safe, and right now, you don't have that.
- Let them know that you are doing the best you can and that you love them. Tell them you need a break to care for yourself and your family. Let them know you will do what you can, but if they want to remain in their home, they will need some additional support.

The objective of the last two options is to make it about you, not them. Often, a parent or loved one is willing to do anything for a child or loved one that they would not do for themselves. As much as they don't want help, what they really don't want is to be a burden to their loved ones.

Remember that there is a big difference between someone having a cognitive decline and someone making poor decisions/judgments. We all make poor decisions/judgments from time to time. How many of us have been sick and gone to the doctor and were placed on medication with the instruction to take it until it was all gone, even if we were feeling better? Do we always do that, or do we stop taking the medication when we start feeling better?

If you are like most people I know, once you start feeling better, you stop taking the medication. That is a poor decision/judgment. Should someone take away your rights to make decisions for yourself? Of course not. Individuals with early cognitive decline can still make their own decisions. A poor decision does not mean someone cannot live alone or should be placed in a long-term care community. We all have the right to make decisions that others may not agree with.



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What if what is going on is not due to a poor decision or two? What if these decisions indicate that your loved one is no longer safe to live alone or is a danger to others? In cases like these, it is time to look into other options.

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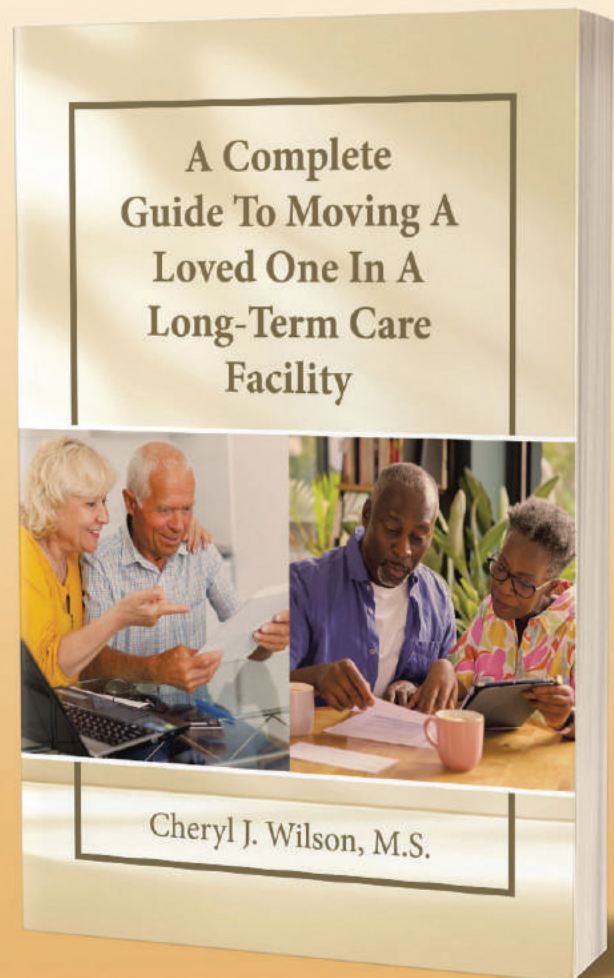
Options to consider. You should always strive to use the least restrictive option necessary.

- **Adult Day Programs** – these are the best-kept secret. A loved one could spend the day in the program; many are open from 6 A.M. to 7 P.M. They often provide transportation, socialization, and meals. Adult Day Programs are more affordable than other options. Many specialize in working with persons with dementia.
- **Home Health Agencies** – They provide one-on-one care in the individual's home. Home Health Agencies can also offer specialized care for persons with dementia. The downside is the expense. Since COVID-19, the cost of home health has gone up.
- **Assisted Living Communities** – Provide 24-hour protective oversight. Depending on the community, they may provide additional care for an additional cost.
- **Skilled Nursing Homes** – These provide more care for those who need care while recovering from a stroke or heart condition or who need long-term care that cannot be provided at home.

My second book, published in November 2023, is "A Complete Guide To Moving A Loved One In A Long-Term Care Facility." Long-term care communities are like any other business; they have areas they specialize in. When an individual is in a hospital, and the case manager walks in and says the doctor wants me to arrange for you to go to a nursing home for rehab or long-term care, pick one off this list, and I will make the arrangements for you. How do you know which one to choose, especially when you are being told any of them would be acceptable? Wrong! A *Complete Guide To Moving A Loved One In A Long-Term Care Facility* will walk you through selecting a long-term care facility that will best meet the needs of your loved one!

## A Complete Guide To Moving A Loved One In A Long-Term Care Facility

Cheryl J. Wilson, M.S.



Cheryl J. Wilson, M.S.  
 Advocacy 4 Seniors  
[advocacy4seniors.com](http://advocacy4seniors.com)

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## BIO POEM

**Frenchy Jolene Hodges**

I am . . .

The daughter of a farmer and a schoolteacher.  
 The granddaughter of a first generation landowner  
 farmer and cattleman.  
 The great-grand-daughter of slaves who survived that  
 feudal system to walk in the light of freedom.  
 You know me. I am a child of God.

I am . . .

The survivor of segregation, separation, integration and  
 bussing.  
 I am student, would-be-scholar, lover of words, figures of  
 speech, and literary treatment.  
 I am purveyor, examiner, and partaker of the literatures of  
 the world –multicultural and global.  
 You know me. I am a child of God.

I am . . .

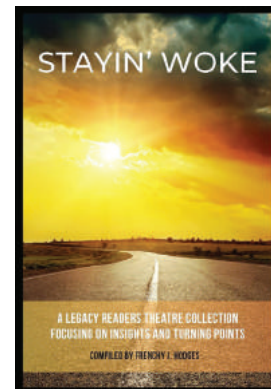
Mother, sister, niece, cousin, aunt, friend, and beloved in  
 the world of mankind, no make that humankind.  
 I am caretaker, nurturer, nurse, comforter as loved ones  
 have needed me to be.  
 I am cook, food preparer, menu planner, dish washer,  
 table setter and performer of domestic tasks  
 You know me. I am a child of God.

I am . . .

Teacher, motivator, friend to some of the most creative  
 young minds in the world.  
 I am teacher, drama coach, stage director, program  
 planner, speech writer, oratorical trainer, proofreader  
 whenever the occasion needed me to be.  
 You know me. I am an ever-loving child of God.

I am . . .

Christian trying to walk in the Christ-like way  
 Like Dr. King, I, too, tried to love somebody  
 I tried to love all whose lives touched mine  
 And all whose lives were touched by mine,  
 Striving ever to treat others as I wished to be treated.  
 You know me. I am a child of God.



A brief informal bio:

A native of Dublin, Georgia, Laurens County, I left these parts  
 as a college student in 1958 attending and achieving degrees  
 from both Fort Valley State University (B.S. in English and  
 Lierature,1964) and Clark Atlanta University (M.A. in Afro-  
 American Studies,1974). A retired  
 educator (Atlanta Public Schools, 1978-2002), In 2003, I  
 returned to the place of my beginning (Dublin, GA) to the  
 community known as Buckeye and I have enjoyed reaching  
 many milestones since being here. I will mention just three:

- In 2008, I co-founded the Legacy Readers Theatre with  
 another returning native, Yvonne Lamb Castillo. To  
 date, we have presented annually, in celebration of  
 Black History Month, sixteen (16) staged and themed  
 Readers Theatre offerings.
- 2014 saw the publication of my complete body of  
 poetry, Piece De Way Home, a milestone which gives  
 me a special sense of accomplishment. This publication  
 was followed by several other books including If I Ever  
 Go to Jasper, 2020, (a collection of memorials) and  
 Shug , 2021, documentary poetry revisiting of the  
 wrongful death of a 17 year old cousin.
- Finally, beginning 09/11/2006 – April 30, 2016, we (my  
 son, Jon and my daughter, Omi and their spouses)  
 have welcomed into our family five second generation  
 descendants who are natives of my person,—two  
 boys—Harold and Jackson, and three girls—Joelle,  
 Harmoni and Harper.

Belonging to several civic organizations (Alpha Kappa Alpha  
 Sorority, Fort Valley State University Alumni Association), I  
 value most highly my membership and activity in the church  
 of my childhood, New Bethel A.M.E Church in East Dublin, GA.

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## The Unrecognized, Brewing Mental Health Crisis

Doc Wilson, Ph.D.



20 or 30 years ago, or so, a pregnant woman in Italy was being scanned – perhaps to assess health of the fetus growing in her womb. Several times during the scanning procedure, the woman’s husband screamed at her in an angry, belligerent tone. Every time that her husband yelled, the fetus in her womb squirmed.

Given today’s knowledge of the effects of early life trauma (be it physical, psychological, and/or sexual) the above incident was an example of mental abuse of the fetus (as well as psychological abuse of the mother).

Many recent research reports (including those listed below in REFERENCES), have not only identified potential/probable mechanisms by which early life events affect children’s DNA, but also the long-term effects on their mental health – including anxiety, deep depression, low self-worth, lack of self-confidence, etc. So far, one such mechanism has been discovered that involves DNA in the child’s genome. The basic linear position and structure of the child’s DNA remain normal; however, covalent bonding of methyl groups (-CH<sub>3</sub>) to certain portions of their DNA is responsible for major, later-in-life poor mental health.

One effect of the above is that conventional treatments to promote “cures” and/or improvements” appear likely to be largely or entirely ineffective.

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**CANCER:**  
**CAUSES, PREVENTIONS, CURE**  
By Doc Wilson

Doc Wilson's ground-breaking book, **CANCER. CAUSES. PREVENTIONS. CURES,**



Doc Wilson, Ph.D.

**(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.

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## The South Dying for Sweet Tea

Dorothy Myers Crumbly



I want to share some exciting news! In 2023, I wrote a book titled, *The South Dying for Sweet Tea* and it is scheduled to be published in Spring 2024.

*The South Dying for Sweet Tea* describes how people in the South have ignored their health for years, making the region the unhealthiest part of the United States in spite of the overwhelming numbers of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity.

I wrote *The South Dying for Sweet Tea*, because my heart bleeds when I see people suffering from preventable illnesses and all of the slow death

consequences that come from not associating food with health. My hope is that in reading this book, you will discover that it is not just the "Sweet Tea" ~~It is the entire Southern Cuisine. I often wonder when I am out and about: Do people read the same thing that I read about food?" I am not a nutritionist or health professional, but I have always paid attention to what people eat since my father declared "corn flakes" were not good food and my mother didn't make five or six cakes and assorted pies during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

I take great pride in presenting my book in The Matters of The Heart Magazine! As a founding writer (2020), each of my articles have focused on healthy cooking-eating.

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By sharing my passion for the content of my book, I hope to instill in you the same sort of passion and excitement that I have for eating clean and better. Ultimately, I want you to see *The South Dying for Sweet Tea* as a tool to help you change the way you eat and pass it on to your adult children and grandchildren who will get sick sooner than later if no change in eating habits is made. My desire is that you take the topics discussed beyond the family and that this book gives you the support you need to start a discussion in your civic, faith, and education communities. These are the essays that will help you start the conversation:

- "The History and Culture of the Southern Cuisine"-Helps you to understand why the South has the highest prevalence of obesity in the United States at 36%.
- "Sugar is the "Devil"-Reveals why sugar should be treated as a toxin.
- "Grilling Could Be Killing"-Reveals why eating too much grilled and charred food could lead to negative health issues.
- "Some Faith Communities Ignore Health"-Helps to initiate the conversation about healthy food in the faith communities.

Throughout the past decades, I have advocated that "Food is medicine and medicine is food." Now it is time to do something about it. Please visit my website for healthy eating tips and recipe:

<https://www.healthbuzzbydot.net>

### About the Author

Dorothy Myers Crumbly, a native of Mississippi, is a retired English teacher and university administrator who is well known in the Middle Georgia area as a community activist, a wellness enthusiastic, a writer for the Trinity Baptist Church, the Fort Valley Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and the Peach County Retired Educators. She is called on often to speak to youth as well as older adults. Some people know of her writing through the Middle Georgia Informer while others know her through the United Baptist Missionary Educational Association, where she is the Health Coordinator.

She has always been interested in eating right. At three years old she cried for "easy candy," which turned out to be a banana. She was inspired by God to write *The South Dying for Sweet Tea* based on her daily interactions with families, and especially mothers of children, who couldn't seem to make the connection between health and good food choices.

Outside of this book, she loves all genres of music and would prefer to listen to music alone and loudly through a JBL Speaker. She likes non-fiction books and likes to read magazines and an occasional good novel while on vacation.

*The South Dying for Sweet Tea* will be out in Spring 2024.

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## Self-Care for the Caregiver

**Dr. Gloria J. Barrett, Master Divinity, Bachelor of Science Nursing,  
 Master of Science Nursing, Registered Nurse (Emerita)**

*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 New International Version



Caregivers are compassionate and loving individuals who fully give of themselves to ensure the health and well-being of loved ones are consistently met on a daily basis. A caregivers' day is long and filled with various activities such as preparing meals, providing hygiene care, administering medication, doctor appointments, grocery shopping, beauty and barber shop visits, paying bills, assisting with physical activity, providing emotion and spiritual support.

There is little time to think about self-care. As we embrace 2024, plan to make self-care a priority for the day. You may have heard this quote: "You cannot pour from an empty cup". The continuous pouring into others leaves one physically and mentally fatigued. There are some actions to incorporate into life that will brighten the day, lift the mood, and create a safe space to continue your loving care.

Begin the daily routine with gratitude. Gratitude is the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness. Robert A. Emmons, professor of psychology at the University of California, is a leading scientific expert on the science of gratitude. The keeping of a gratitude journal can improve mood.

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Emmons (2013) offers ten tips for successful journaling:

1. Take five to ten minutes to write at least every other day. Make that commitment and honor it. Choose morning or evening.
2. If you do not have a pen and paper, use the speech-recognition feature on your smartphone to record your gratitude in the memo pad or equivalent app on your phone.
3. Seek gratitude density. Be specific. Go for depth over breadth. Give details for each entry. The journal is more than just a list of stuff.
4. Try to include some surprises. What unexpected blessings did you benefit from today? What were you dreading that did not happen?
5. Use the language of gifts. Think of the benefits you received today as gifts. Relish and savor the gifts you have been given.
6. Think about the people to whom you are grateful and why. Who deserves your thanks? What have you received or are receiving from them?
7. Think about and then write down those aspects of your life that you are prone to take for granted. Instead, take them as granted.
8. Let your gratitude last a long time. It is okay to repeat a blessing day after day. But do elaborate on each blessing. Give details.
9. Don't only journal about people who helped you but also about those who have helped people whom you love. We may overlook these sources of gratitude.
10. Be grateful for the negative outcomes that you avoided, escaped, prevented, or redeemed into something positive.

Gratitude journaling promotes a shift in consciousness from what we are lacking to the abundance that surrounds us. Gratitude leads us to affirm and acknowledge the good things in our lives (*Gratitude Works!*, p. 26)

As busy caregivers, putting things in their proper place may not be possible at the time. Clutter can accumulate quickly which may lead to stress, injury or lack of peaceful mind. Decluttering is the process of putting the miscellaneous physical things around you away where they belong (Colino, 2023). Research shows that being in a cluttered, disorganized environment can compromise your attention, concentration and focus. According to Joseph Ferrari, Ph.D., clutter reflects an overabundance of possessions that collectively create chaotic and disorderly living spaces.

Stoler (2023) shares that clutter creates chaos which impacts the ability to focus. It also limits the brain's capacity to process information. Clutter is a form of visual distraction which increases cognitive overload and can reduce working memory. Research has shown that people are less irritable, less distracted, more productive, and better able to process information with an uncluttered and organized work area.

Here are some tips to help declutter:



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**Start small.** You do not need to declutter and clean everything at once. Make a list of all the areas that need to be decluttered and clean one area a week.

**Ask a friend or family member to help.** If you find it difficult to start on your own, you can invite others to help or just keep you company.

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**Always begin cleaning with a positive mind.**

There is no right way to declutter. Shift your focus from perfectionism to simply fulfilling the action (Beckwith and Parkhurst, 2022).

Begin this year by showing the same compassion to yourself that is shown to others. Let the self-care practices of gratitude journaling and decluttering be an expression of love each day.

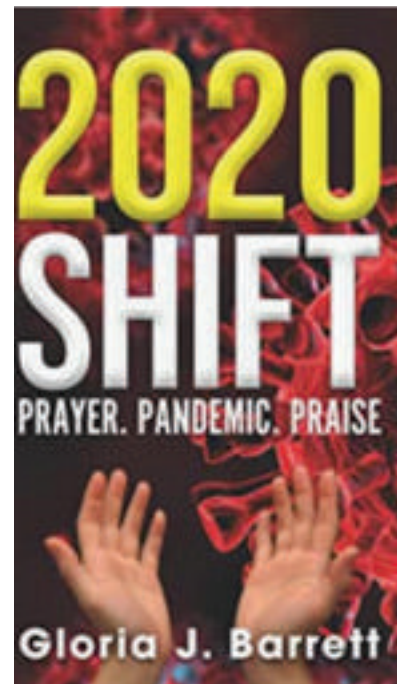
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# CARING PERSPECTIVES



*Adverb Project (AP)*

A creation to inspire, reflective thought, vision and to influence a more contemporary perspective about forward thinking and living the journey of life more fully and completely.

## Civic Engagement, Careers, Higher Education

- Who do you know that needs caregiving services?
- What kind of services would be most helpful to the individual?
- How might you augment the need or what role would you play in the provision of special need?
- How would you use a calendar to best plan for the delegation of duties surrounding a family loved one or friend in need?



**GOT QUESTIONS? CONTACT US**

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## Siblings

- How would you imagine your role in the transition of life for a loved one?
- What challenges do you anticipate?
- What strengths do you bring?
- What is most important to you as an outcome or expectation as a home going for a loved one?



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