



MOMENTS



MATTER



Grieving while caregiving

KELLEY TOLBERT-HOLBROOK, Teepa Snow Educator

Caring for a loved one during their decline is both challenging and emotionally exhausting.

This experience often brings anticipatory grief as caregivers face the slow loss of someone they cherish, coupled with the deep sadness that follows their death.

Key points:

Anticipatory grief

Caregivers start grieving before their actual loss, feeling the emotional burden of witnessing decline

Emotional exhaustion

The high demands of caregiving can lead to burnout and a sense of helplessness

Feelings of guilt

Caregivers may feel guilty about wanting their loved one's suffering to end, despite their sense of strong love and responsibility

Identity shift

Losing the caregiver role after the loved one's death can leave a profound emptiness in one's life

Coping strategies:

Seeking professional help, joining support groups, in person or online, practicing self-care, setting boundaries, and creating meaningful memories can help one cope when feeling overwhelmed with grief

By understanding these challenges and seeking support, caregivers can navigate their grief while honoring the memory of their loved one

Celebration of Black culture and heritage

VICTORIA MULLINS HUNT
MSN, FNP-BC, ACHPN

Black History Month, founded by Carter G. Woodson in 1926, is celebrated every year for the month of February. Originally, it was celebrated for a week and was later extended to a month-long recognition.

Each year, a theme is created to draw public focus to important developments within Black culture. This year's theme is "African Americans and Labor" to encourage reflection upon the transformational work of Black Americans throughout history and how these works intersect with the collective experiences of the culture.

From the traditional agricultural labor of enslaved Africans to Black educators, entrepreneurs, and social justice activists, the various works of Black Americans have been transformational throughout history. Their work has been the catalyst that continues to influence the lives, culture, and history of Black Americans. Understanding Black labor is integral to understanding Black people and their history, lives, and culture. Reflection upon these various works provides a widened perspective and insights into Black culture through time and space.

Over the years, Black Americans, in various professions and occupations, have organized to combat super-exploitation of Black labor, wage discrepancies, and employment discrimination. Next year is the 100th anniversary of the first Black union to receive a



charter in the American Federation of Labor; civil rights activist A. Phillip Randolph founded the Black Union, known as the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, in 1925.

Ways to participate during Black History Month

- Acknowledge the accomplishments and contributions of Black Americans
- Raise awareness of past and present inequitable treatment endured by Black Americans
- Celebrate Black culture and heritage

Honorary spotlight

The nation's first hospice program for African Americans was founded in 1977 by Dr. Robert Lee Brown. His innovative work continues to be commemorated globally as an essential model for dignified end-of-life support.

Always remember you have within you the **strength**, the **patience**, and the **passion** to reach for the stars to change the world."

HARRIET TUBMAN

Still I Rise

MAYA ANGELOU

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own backyard.

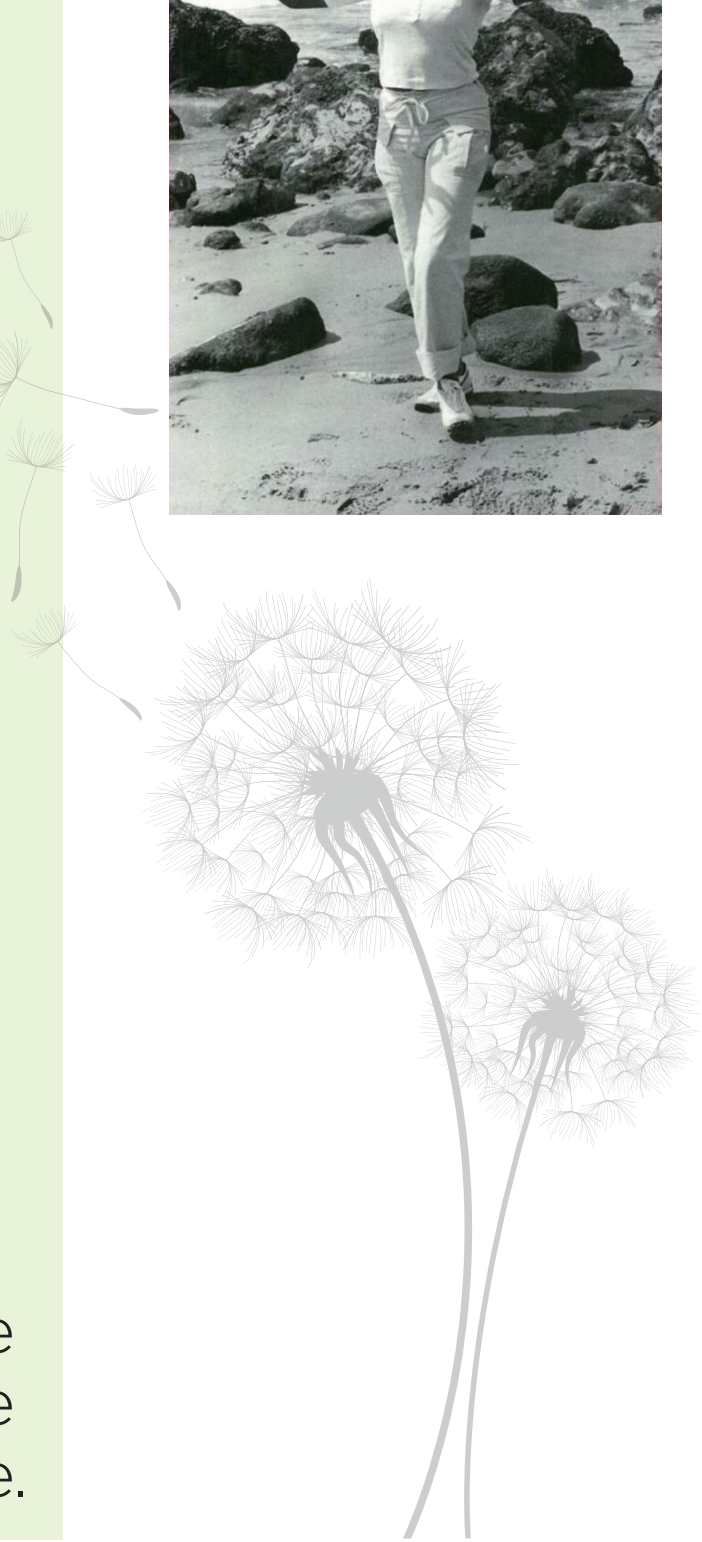
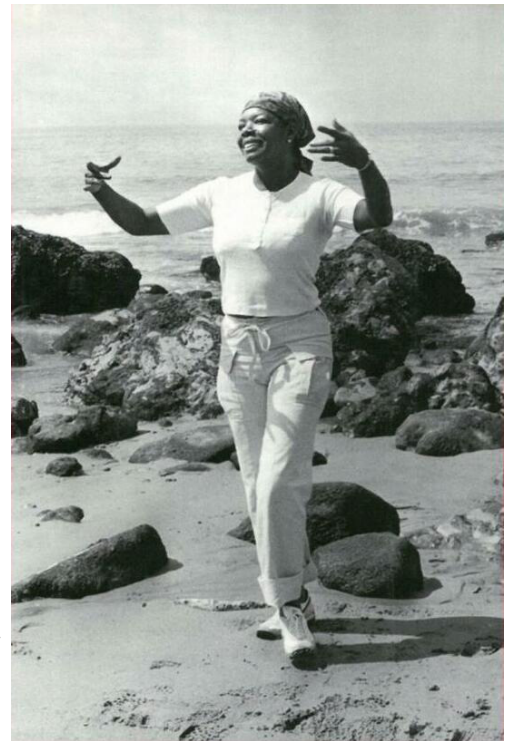
You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.

I rise
I rise
I rise.



A heart-healthy life

TRACEY ANDERSON, MA, MAR
Grief Support Coordinator

February is designated as Heart Health Month

The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends the following for a heart-healthy physical lifestyle:

- Eat a well-balanced diet which includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein such as legumes, nuts, fish and seafood; low-fat or dairy-free dairy; lean or unprocessed meat and poultry
- Minimize processed foods, sugar, and salt intake, and limit alcohol
- Get a proper amount of exercise
- Get a good night's sleep
- Do stretches to decrease stiffness and improve blood flow
- Drink filtered coffee
- Limit the amount of stress in your life

These recommendations can be challenging when you're grieving. Our sadness normally leads us to want comfort food, ice cream, and chocolate. It can be difficult to get a good night's sleep as we're thinking about our loved ones that we've lost and our minds become very active at night. Staying active can be challenging when at times it may be difficult to get out of bed. Start by setting a time for your grief and then try to practice some of these recommendations by the AHA:

- Taking a hot bath to help you relax and feel better and lower your blood pressure
- Taking a nice walk outside can help you relax, or have a cup of tea or coffee
- Find something healthy to eat, even a small meal

Indulge in that comfort food — but try to do it sparingly. It's important to take care of yourself physically while you're grieving.

The emotional part of our heart also suffers during grief. We're overwhelmed with sadness, hurt, loneliness, and many other emotions. A few ways to combat these feelings include trying to find gratitude each day. The AHA says that gratitude can put us in a better mood, help us to get better sleep, lower our blood pressure, and improve our immune function. Start by trying to find three things to be grateful for each day. It can be your family, friends, grandchildren, your health, or just that it's a beautiful day outside. Once you start naming three things, it will become easier to recognize other things to be grateful for each day.

Another way to help with your emotional health is to surround yourself with supportive friends and family. This can provide someone to talk to, someone to listen to, and someone who can be there for you during difficult times. Surround yourself with positive people who will not bring you down. Try to do something you enjoy as often as possible. Try going out to eat with friends or loved ones. It's not good to lock yourself inside and dwell in your sadness. This is ok for a little bit but try to get out as well. This can help with your healing.

Find joy in the smallest things. It can be surrounding yourself with children and grandchildren, enjoying church service, listening to your favorite music or watching a funny movie or show. All of these can help cheer you up and help you feel better.

Taking care of the spiritual part of your heart is also important. Whether it's prayer and Bible study, meditation, mantras — whatever your faith — lean into your faith during your time of grieving. This

can help heal your heart as well. Faith has helped many who are hurting spiritually and emotionally. Faith teaches us that we're not alone. We have someone who is with us, guiding us, and helping us through the darkest moments. Bible study or other important readings give us encouragement and teachings that we can hold on to and promises that we can claim to help us improve our hearts. Turn to your faith and beliefs to help you during times of grief.

Living a heart-healthy life means trying to take care of your heart physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Use those resources that are available to you and know that you're not alone. All of us at one time or another have heartbreak, suffer loss, and need to take care of all aspects of our heart. Know that you are loved, you are important, and you are not alone.



WORD SEARCH

Enjoy our heart health themed puzzle. Good luck!

Have a Happy Valentines Day!

Take time to do something special for yourself during this difficult time and try to have a heart-healthy life!

- Fruits
- Heart
- Comfort
- Relax
- Exercise
- Vegetables
- Whole grains
- Manage
- Positivity
- Happiness
- Meditation
- Friends
- Lifestyle
- Health
- Diet

V	L	Q	S	G	O	X	R	Y	D	W	Y	V	C	O	M	F	O	R	T
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M	E	D	I	T	A	T	I	O	N	D	T	S	J	I	Q	U	N	C	J



Grief support groups

NORTH CAROLINA

STOKES COUNTY

February 3rd @ 6pm

Slate Funeral Home
132 E Dalton Rd, King, NC 27021
Melissa McCollum: (336) 679-2466

SURRY COUNTY

February 13th @ 11:30am

Central Cafe
304 N Main St, Dobson, NC 27017
Jessica Simandle: (336) 583-8589

February 13th @ 11am

Mountain Valley Elkin office
968 N Bridge St, Elkin, NC 28621
Tracey Anderson: (336) 526-2650

February 27th @ 6pm

Mountain Valley Elkin office
968 N Bridge St, Elkin, NC 28621
Tracey Anderson: (336) 526-2650

YADKIN COUNTY

February 6th @ 11am

SECU Hospice Care Center
243 N Lee Ave, Yadkinville, NC 27055
Melissa McCollum: (336) 679-2466

February 11th @ 5pm

Oak Grove Baptist Church
8087 Windsor Rd, Hamptonville, NC 27020
Melissa McCollum: (336) 679-2466

February 20th @ 5pm

SECU Hospice Care Center
243 N Lee Ave, Yadkinville, NC 27055
Melissa McCollum: (336) 679-2466

WILKES COUNTY

February 17th @ 6pm

Reins-Sturdivant Funeral Home
270 Armory Rd, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659
Tracey Anderson: (336) 526-2650
Melissa McCollum: (336) 679-2466

VIRGINIA

HENRY COUNTY

February 5th @ 2pm

King's Grant Retirement
350 Kings Way Rd, Martinsville, VA 24112
Shannon Roberson: (888) 789-2922

February 11th @ 10am

The Community Fellowship
2674 Virginia Ave, Collinsville, VA 24078
Shannon Roberson: (888) 789-2922

PATRICK COUNTY

February 20th @ 2pm

Stuart Church of Living Water
101 E Blue Ridge St, Stuart, VA 24171
Shannon Roberson: (888) 789-2922

GRAYSON COUNTY

February 17th @ 2pm

Mt Olivet Community Church
6926 Carrollton Pike, Galax, VA 24333
Jessica Simandle: (888) 789-2922

No RSVP needed

Please attend the group nearest you.
Meeting dates and times are subject to change

For more information, please call
the group's grief support coordinator

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solutions

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WELCOME

to Moments Matter, our bereavement newsletter

INSIDE:

Caregiver grief
Celebration of Black culture and heritage
A heart-healthy life

+ February 2025 grief support group schedule

SCAN
for the Moments Matter
newsletter survey!



Helpful books on grief and loss

There are more than 150 titles at the Alleghany, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin locations of the Northwestern Regional Library • mtnvalleyhospice.org/grief-library



Activity page solutions

