

A Week in Images and Quotes

March - 2025

ANOTHERDAY

09

There is nothing like looking, if you want to find something. You certainly usually find something, if you look, but it is not always quite the something you were after.

J.R.R. Tolkien

I really think I ambled through a lot of my life, or ambled from one thing to the other.

James Earl Jones

I feel I should be trying to complete my life, whatever 'completing a life' means.

Oliver Sacks

BRIGHTDAY

10

Let us live for the beauty of our own reality.

Charles Lamb

We're all blessed and we're all blighted, Chief Inspector," said Finney.

"Everyday each of us does our sums. The question is, what do we count?

Life can be cruel, as you know, but it can also be kind, filled with wonders.

Louise Penny

Wonder is the precondition for all wisdom.

Christian Wiman

MINDFULDAY

11

What I keep being reminded of is how everyone who is alive has both disabilities and abilities.

Helen Kivnick as quoted by Anne Basting in Creative Care, p. 193

If we had no winter the spring would not be so pleasant.

Anne Bradstreet

CLARITY

Meditation Card

I remember when the first images were displayed from the Hubble telescope. There was a side-by-side comparison of a section of the universe before and after the use of the telescope. The clarity was amazing in the after photo. The entities were always there but it took a more powerful lens to bring clarity to what is. In a similar way we need a new lens with which to view individuals with Alzheimer's. The lens which we use brings clarity to who that person really is!

PRESENTDAY

12

HEART-CENTERED

Meditation Card

- Positive statements affirming my love to Marsha
- Mindful presence with a focus on my love for Marsha
- I was holding Marsha's hand and told her how much I loved her. She didn't reply but reached down and kissed my hand.
- M: Will you come sit beside me?
E: Yes I will.
- Unspoken, emotional connections

GOODDAY

13

NEWDAY

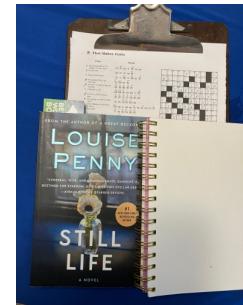
14

Yesterday, while watching TV, I heard the expression – *to be independent together* and it resonated with me. After a brief internet search, I uncovered the following quote related to this phrase.

Let's be independent together. Let's approach our relationship from a place of what we can bring rather than what we can take. Let's be near each other out of necessity not obligation.

Beau Taplin

Give me an acrostic puzzle, a Louise Penny mystery, Jeopardy and a blank journal and I am a content person!



A Week in Images and Quotes

March 22, 2025



1949 - 2025

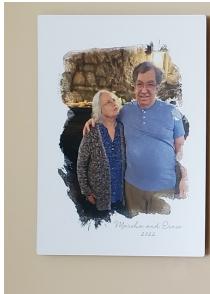
Marsha Lynn Pancsofar passed away peacefully at her home in Columbia, CT on March 22, 2025. Marsha was born in Murphysboro, Illinois as the oldest of five children (Kathie Grob, Edgar Brantley, Barbara Troutman, Thomas Brantley) of Helen and Clifford Brantley. She followed her love of learning to complete her Bachelor's degree at Southern Illinois University and, as a Special Education teacher, was active in the disability rights movement of the 1970's. She was a teacher in one of the first schools to be opened in Southern Illinois after educational rights were guaranteed by law to students with disabilities, and she went on to be active in the independent living movement for adults with disabilities. Marsha maintained her commitment to human rights, social justice, and peace activism throughout her life and she raised her daughters to be critical thinkers committed, as she was, to celebrating diversity and advocating for equity and inclusion.

Marsha was a talented crafter and loved giving gifts to friends and family. She was a creative problem-solver and never found a piece of furniture on the side of the road that she couldn't breathe new life into. She left her mark in countless creations big and small. Marsha was also a passionate researcher of family history and genealogy, and enjoyed creating art and keepsake books that honored her ancestors' lives. She celebrated the mystical and was always eager to explore ideas that went counter to traditional ways of thinking. She discovered yoga, meditation, upcycling, and thrifting in her early adulthood and maintained these practices throughout her life. She was the biggest champion for the ones she loved and celebrated and encouraged everything that was special and unique about a person. Marsha's family is proud to carry on her legacy of compassion, creativity, and love of learning. (continued on next page)

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March 22, 2025

Marsha is survived by Ernest Pancsofar, her husband of 48 years and loving and devoted care partner on her journey with Alzheimer's disease, daughters Nadya Pancsofar and Natyra Pancsofar, grandson Leo Schmidt, and son-in-law, Randy Schmidt. One of Marsha's greatest moments came when she was reunited with her birth son, Jay Snyder. She cherished having Jay and his children, Ariel and Joshua, in her life. She enjoyed a rich, 50+ year devoted friendship with Alria Warner. A celebration of life will be held in the summer. In lieu of flowers, please create something special and unique in her honor and share it with someone you love.



COMMUNICATION

M: Who are you? Why are you here?

E: I'm your best friend. I don't want to be alone, so I am living here with you. Is that OK?

M: Yes, that's OK. I don't want to be alone either.

M: By the time we get there, we'll already be there!

M: I like it when you're here because when you're here, everything's going to be all right.

Pla **C**es

Outside

Ti **M**e

Minutes

Yo **U** 're

Alo **N** e

Everyth **I** ng

Ni **C** e

Already

Thank You!

Stay **I** ng

Open

Now

E: Some stores/places are closed and some are open today. Where would you like to go?

M: Some place that's open.

E: Do you know when the best time of day is?

M: No.

E: Right now!

E: It's a little cold to go outside in your nightgown.

M: I could say a few things about you.

M: When will you be back?

E: I'm not going anywhere. I'm staying here with you.

M: (with tears in her eyes and a big hug) I'm glad you're staying here.

M: You told me you'd come to bed now. (5:00 pm!)

E: I'll be right in. After laying down for about 10 minutes.

M: I'd like to get up now.

E: OK.

M: I've got everything I need because of you.

E: What a nice thing to say. Thank you!

Now is March 22nd. The time is 4:22 pm. Marsha's spirit has transitioned outside her body. How nice it was to have known both her spiritual essence and physical presence. Thank you for everything!

I will never be alone because I already have permanent places in my heart and soul where you're always invited to return.

Staying with you opened my eyes to all that is good. All the minutes of my future life will be influenced by the time we shared together.

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SUNDAY

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I didn't write much yesterday as events unfolded but will find ways to debrief this once in a lifetime event for Marsha. I felt both sadness and relief. Alzheimer's disease is a hideous condition. However, Marsha maintained a calmness about her that was both peaceful and serene for the past 2-3 months. This experience as a caregiver was mind opening and taught me the value of providing care for a loved one and finding ways to provide love, comfort and dignity in Marsha's final days.

MONDAY

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*Soon, I will be concluding my daily journaling on my role as caregiver for my wife, Marsha. My life with her has influenced me to embark on my next theme: **The Pursuit of Wisdom**. The elements of this future endeavor are devoted to Marsha.*

TUESDAY

25

In the dark times, will there also be singing? Yes, there will be singing ... about the dark times.

Bertolt Brecht

Mahlon and Cathy brought the following quote by T.S. Eliot to my attention:

*All shall be well, and
All manner of thing shall be well...
The end is where we start from...
When the last of earth left to discover
Is that which was the beginning....*

All around you, people will be tiptoeing through life, just to arrive at death safely. But dear children, do not tiptoe. Run, hop, skip, or dance, just don't tiptoe. Shane Claiborne

You're on a path and you have to be consistent and you have to be persistent. John Lewis, cited in *Becoming Wise* by Krista Tippett, p. 112

WEDNESDAY

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Discovering the truth about ourselves is a lifetime's work, but it's worth the effort.

Fred Rogers

THURSDAY

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I developed this acrostic visual to honor this wise, visionary person.

Universal Truths From JOHN ROBERT LEWIS

The reward for playing **J**azz is playing jazz.

Get in good trouble, necessary **O**uble,

You must be **H**eadlights and not taillights.

Be hopeful. Be optimistic. **N**ever lose that sense of hope.

You have to be **R**sistent.

I believe in nonvi**O**lence as a way of life, as a way of being.

We may not have chosen the time, **B**ut the time has chosen us.

... the cause of justic**E**... is the struggle of a lifetime.

We come to Selma to be **R**enewed. We come to be inspired.

Sometimes you have to get in **T**he way. You have to make some noise.

The vote is the most powerfu**L** nonviolent tool we have.

The means by which we struggl**E** must be consistent with the ends we seek.

Now is the time to get in the **W**ay. We will be silent no more.

No human being **I**s illegal.

You have to go with your gut **S**ometimes, and how you feel.

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SUNDAY

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MONDAY

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Processing the Loss of a Loved One

First, it's a life-time experience
Of memories, the order of which, jumbles in my mind.
There is no "getting over it"
When missing a one-of-a-kind.

The solitude can be both welcoming and bring sadness
When I don't see you on the other side of the room.
The silence allows for fewer distractions
And can even lessen some of the gloom.

You had a rough journey
Held in dementia's grip.
Yet, you were always graceful
On this unexpected trip.

I learned a great deal
By being by your side.
When my time comes a callin'
Please come back to be my guide.

Time passes by
In oh so many ways.
I'm glad I was here to witness
The closing of your days.

Recently, I viewed a segment on CBS Sunday Morning when Elton John and Brandi Carlile talked about their new collaboration on an album: *Do You Believe in Angels*. Here is the chorus to one of the songs: *When This Old World Is Done With Me*

*When this old world is done with me
Just know I came this far
To be broken up in pieces
Scatter me among the stars.

When this old world is done with me
When I close my eyes
Release me like an ocean wave
Return me to the tide.*

Forget about trying to compete with someone else. Create your own pathway. Create your own new vision. Herbie Hancock

When you do your best, trying to be your best in understanding and accepting, you don't have to worry about the outcome.

Thích Nhất Hạnh

It's hard to generalize my experiences with Marsha to another caregiver's interactions with their loved one. The strategies that worked for me were embedded in the environmental factors surrounding Marsha and I as we advanced on our path with her Alzheimer's disease. There was an overall set of values that contributed significantly to a peaceful, more content end to this journey. I hope to share my experiences with other caregivers not as advice for them, but as an example of how/why I interacted with Marsha as I did and what I learned from this experience. ELP

- *Every moment is a fresh beginning.*
- *Everyone gets the experience. Some get the lesson.*

T.S. Eliot