

# A Week in Images and Quotes

## September - 2025

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	01	02	03	04	05	06
	<p><i>If I am hungry, that is a material problem; if someone else is hungry, that is a spiritual problem.</i> Paul Farmer</p> <hr/> <p>Several years ago, I presented a course on Enhancing Creativity among teachers. This visual, from a book I referenced, represents my own adherence to the practices of creativity as I composed my thoughts and feelings in the journaling of the past three years.</p> <p><b>Value your creative self</b></p> <p>01</p> <p>Revise</p> <p>05</p> <p>04</p> <p>Begin your project</p> <p>03</p> <p>Gather your materials</p> <p>02</p> <p>Enjoy quiet</p> <p>06</p> <p>Share your creations</p> <p>07</p> <p>Steadily persist in your creative work</p>		<p>Marsha liked to donate to Shriner's Hospital. I'll keep this going in her memory.</p> <hr/> <p><i>Breath, breath in the air Cherish this moment Cherish this breath Tomorrow is a new day for everyone</i></p> <p>Follow the Sun, lyrics by Xavier Rudd</p> <hr/> <p><i>Love isn't a perfect state of caring. It's an active noun, like 'struggle.'</i></p> <p>Fred Rogers (quote from a recent acrostic)</p>	<p>I heard about the poet Tomas Tranströmer while reading Fredrik Backman's book, <i>My Friends</i>. First is the quote contained in the ending chapters of the book followed by other quotes that I investigated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Don't be ashamed because you're human: be proud! Inside you, vaults behind vaults open endlessly. You will never be finished, and that's as it should be.</i></li> <li><i>I carry inside myself my earlier faces, as a tree contains its rings.</i></li> <li><i>No one decides where I go, least of all myself, though each step is where it must be.</i></li> <li><i>But every person has their own encyclopedia written, which grows out from each soul, composed from birth onward, hundreds of thousands of pages pressing into each other and yet there's air between them! A book of contradictions. What's in there is revised by the moment; the images touch themselves up, the words flicker. A wave washes through the entire text, followed by the next wave, and the next . . .</i></li> <li><i>I must be alone ten minutes in the morning and ten minutes in the evening – without a programme.</i></li> </ul> <hr/> <p><i>Plot as such is not a major ingredient in my novels ... it's often better to sail on the unconscious sea.</i></p> <p>Richard Adams</p>		

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
07	08	09	10	11	12	13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The most important thing offered by a caregiver is simply their complete presence.</i></li> <li><i>You do it because it is there to do. It was part of the deal – you know, the marriage vows, the way you lived your life together over the decades. You do it!</i></li> <li><i>Caregiving made me feel both stronger and better about myself in my relationships with others.</i></li> <li><i>But it wasn't a sense of obligation that drove me; it was my instinctive desire to see her happy and comfortable, or at least not unhappy and not uncomfortable.</i></li> </ul> <p>Arthur Kleinman</p> <hr/> <p><i>To see something spectacular and recognise it as a photographic possibility is not making a very big leap. But to see something ordinary, something you'd see every day, and recognize it as a photographic possibility – that is what I am interested in.</i> Stephen Shore</p>		<p>On April 28, 1999, Marsha writes:</p> <p><i>I have shelves, drawers, boxes, piles of photos, notes, letters, books, newspapers, magazine articles, snatches of conversations, dreams, ideas to pursue, books I want to read – some on fancy paper, most on scraps of paper, backs of envelopes. Even if I found the time the task would be impossible. Because each item, photo, paper connects in dozens of ways to dozens of others and those connections are all different depending on what I'm looking for or creating at the moment.</i></p> <p>This writing echoes my own chaotic pattern of saving quotes, journal entries, poems, visual organizers, etc. I never know at any given time what item might have the most relevance for what I am currently working. I am reminded of a poem I wrote many years ago that I will present in the next section.</p>		<p>Stuff</p> <p><i>There's a path through my stuff Of piles on the floor. There's stuff on the walls There's stuff on the door. I cleaned off a shelf And got rid of the dust Sorted through more stuff And wiped off the rust. There's stuff in the air. There's stuff on the ground. There's stuff on the shelves. There's stuff all around. Stuff comes in But it doesn't go out. Stuff just accumulates All about. I'm not happy. I'm not sad. All this stuff Don't make me mad. There's stuff on my mind There's stuff in the air. There's stuff in my past. There's stuff in my hair. (There are more verses, but that's enough for now.)</i></p>		<p>A Very Non-technical Definition of Dementia</p> <p><i>Dementia results in a change in what a loved one's brain is now capable of doing, without the loss of the essence of who that person is. Time spent between caregiver and loved one is a process of rediscovering the values and commitment they shared and can be a time of great insight and love represented in ways unique to each person.</i></p> <p>ELP</p>

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Yet our value is defined by our humanity, not our productivity, and when we live in close community, vulnerability and suffering pull us together. It can trigger a feeling of love and care so powerful and painful that it changes us forever. It softens us. It humbles us. It awakens awareness of the needs of other people.</i></li> <li><i>The lesson is clear. Isolation brings death; community brings life. And we build community in part by recognizing that we are not in control and that each of us will one day desperately need someone else to love us, care for us and cherish us.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>What It Really Means To Choose Life</b>, David French, <i>NY Times Opinion</i>, August 24, 2025.</p> <p><b>My comment:</b></p> <p><i>I am reading your article after spending the last five years being a caregiver for my wife, in her final stages of Alzheimer's. Your poignant approach resonates with me. I felt honored and blessed to be able to comfort and support my wife as I entered my early years of retirement. She supported me so much during our 48 years of marriage and my life was enriched by being with her in the quiet moments when I could cherish my love for her in poetry, short essays, journaling and learning much about my own values and commitments. Thank you for writing such an inspiring piece.</i></p>			<p>Last month, the following words of wisdom appeared on the Touching Peace 2025 calendar containing quotes by Thích Nhất Hạnh.</p> <p><i>When you pay attention to your in-breath and out-breath, you bring yourself home to the present moment, to the here and the now, and you are in touch with life. Breathing in, I know that I'm breathing in. Breathing out, I know I'm breathing out.</i></p> <hr/> <p>I was impressed with a recent CBS Sunday Morning segment about glacial mapping featuring Mauri Pelto:</p> <p><i>I really feel like the loss of [glaciers] from the landscape does tap into people's emotions, and art does that better than science data, and so I've tried to bring artists out every summer.</i></p> <p>One of the artists is his daughter, Jill Pelto. I went to her Etsy website and chose a poster connected to the Gulf of Maine, which I purchased as a birthday gift to myself.</p>		<p><i>Solitude does not necessarily mean living apart from others; rather, it means never living apart from one's self. It is not about the absence of other people – it is about being fully present to ourselves, whether or not we're with others. Community does not necessarily mean living face-to-face with others; rather, it means never losing the awareness that we are connected to each other. It is not about the presence of other people – it is about being fully open to the reality of relationship, whether or not we are alone.</i> Parker J. Palmer</p> <hr/> <p><i>When I was younger, I could remember anything, whether it happened or not, but I am getting old, and soon I shall remember only the latter.</i> Mark Twain</p> <hr/> <p><a href="https://www.jillpelto.com/gulf-of-maine">https://www.jillpelto.com/gulf-of-maine</a></p> <p><i>Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.</i> George Bernard Shaw</p>	

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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
<p><i>The path of my journey is the path of my journey. The path of your journey is the path of your journey. The path of my journey is not the path of your journey. The path of your journey is not the path of my journey.</i></p> <p><i>But - - We can still learn to appreciate how we deal with similar challenges given the information and experiences we each bring to the challenge. Sharing our journey can shed light on approaches and suggestions that may result in positive outcomes. (written while reading from The Soul of Care by Arthur Kleinman)</i></p>			<p><i>Caring is what is morally and emotionally most at stake in human experience. It is what makes life worth living; it is a source of beauty and goodness. Caring is the embodiment of virtue, the symbolic and material bridge between wisdom and life. And in the face of a world that so easily induces ambiguity and ambivalence, care is one of those few precious things that require authentic commitment and direct action. Arthur Kleinman, excerpt from closing page of The Soul of Care.</i></p>		<p><i>During the past few months, I read John O'Donohue's book <u>Walking in Wonder</u>. Interestingly, I have recently been reading through Marsha's journal entries from 1999 when she read <u>Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom</u>, another of John O'Donohue's books. I did not know she had an interest in his work. I am reading through the quotes she highlighted from this book and will put it on my reading queue.</i></p>	
<p><i>I have seen up close that dementia is not just a decline unto death. It can also involve ascendant humor, compassion and connections beyond the strictly rational. It's important for us to talk about it, to tell stories about it, to write books and make movies about it. But we need new ways to do so. Lynn Casteel Harper, We May Soon Be Telling a Very Different Kind of Story About Dementia, Guest Essay, New York Times, June 14, 2025.</i></p>			<p><i>Being renegade means we're working to become less independent and alone in our grief, and more interdependent; restitching a social fabric where we're not afraid to ask, "What was their name?"; where we are comfortable sitting with someone's story, knowing that what they're experiencing can't be optimized or solved, knowing that avoiding the discussion because of its inherent discomfort is avoiding life itself. Carla Fernandez, Renegade Grief, p. 11</i></p>		<p><i>This path that I'm on – one marked by grief and goodbye – is not actually what I would have chosen if I had my pick, but it is the road I am on. And now that I'm here, he [Carla's dad] reminds me to approach it with an open mind, curiosity, and focused energy for this version of a challenging time. Carla Fernandez, Renegade Grief, p. 12</i></p> <p><i>It took me years to understand that words are often as important as experience, because words make experience last. William Morris</i></p>	
					<p><i>This quote may also have a connection to the pace of my walks at Lebanon Green.</i></p> <p><i>If you attend to yourself and seek to come into your presence, you will find exactly the right rhythm for your own life.</i></p> <p><i>Anam Cara, p. 69</i></p>	

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SUNDAY

28

MONDAY

29

TUESDAY

30

Then: 5/20/21

*I had a trigger moment with Marsha when she took out a chicken breast from the freezer and told me she forgot how to cook it. I mentioned that it was frozen and we should thaw it out in the refrigerator and then cook it in the toaster oven. She wanted to put it on the sideboard instead to thaw out and I told her that was not a safe way to thaw out meat at room temperature and it is healthier to do so in the refrigerator. She became quite angry and told me she had been cooking all her life, especially when she was younger and her mom would just sleep when she and her sister got home from school and they would have to cook dinner. I told her I was looking out for her health and didn't want her to eat meat that had been spoiled. I don't know how I should have interacted with her differently. This is the type of support I need, not to get into an argument with Marsha and to let her know that for some things like preparing food for cooking, I need to express my opinion.*

### Looking Back

*I could have thanked Marsha for taking the frozen chicken breast from the freezer. I could have then mentioned that our microwave had a quick defrost setting and we could get it ready for the toaster oven much more quickly than setting it out on the kitchen sideboard. It's interesting how ideas can surface later that would not result in anger or negative feedback.*

### Selected Delights for September

- 01: Text from John F. about how much he and Kathy enjoyed reviewing the Memorial Tribute
- 02: Still able to get my walk in at Lebanon Green after having a flat tire in the morning / getting it fixed via GEICO / getting valve stem replaced at Landon Tire
- 03: Received an email from a former student who had read my blog and commented on the creative approach to my way of commenting on what I have learned as a caregiver and the reflections I am currently undertaking.
- 04: Seeing progress in how packing is going for various items in the two suitcases and backpack / tried on the backpack with the iPad and laptop and it didn't feel too heavy.
- 05: Lovely e-mail from Sharon about the Memorial Tribute booklet - shared with Nadya and Natyra
- 06: Participation in first meeting of the Speaker's Bureau at LiveWell: critiquing content of sample 10-minute speeches



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### Selected Delights for September (continued)

- 07: Talking with Nadya and Natyra on the phone
- 08: Jeopardy is Back!
- 09: One of the delights of retirement is getting up at 7:30 AM, completing various activities and taking a 45-minute rest from 10:15 – 11:00 AM, then getting up again for the day.
- 10: Interview by Stephen Colbert of Nick Cave including his Red Hand Files as well as Nick Cave's new book about grief. It's on my "Want to Read" list. I listened to "Joy" on Spotify from the album Wild God.
- 11: Finalizing packing for NC trip
- 12: Finished reading biography of Mark Twain by Ron Chernow
- 13: Arrived in Greensboro for a visit with my mom & dad and Mary's family
- 14: Nadya's birthday, of course!
- 15: Sitting around the kitchen table at Mary and Gene's with my siblings (Carol, Margie & Carol) with my Dad
- 16: Talking with Dad
- 17: Mom comes home from hospital

- 18: Being with Mom & Dad
- 19: Talking with Mary and Gene
- 20: Six days in a row walking 2 laps at Country Park in Greensboro NC
- 21: Safely back home
- 22: Not gaining any extra weight during my trip to North Carolina
- 23: Restful, peaceful day!
- 24: Gift from Natyra: 500-piece jig-saw puzzle of Three Pines
- 25: Eye Exam and ordered new set of glasses – bifocals / computer
- 26: Finally got a Final Jeopardy clue right!
- 27: New supply of Kona Whole Bean coffee arrived
- 28: Maple Walnut ice cream – does there need to be a reason?
- 29: Composed an acrostic organizer: IMPRESSIONS IN NC
- 30: Breakfast with George and Pat at Gina Marie's in Hebron, CT

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*Everything that anyone would ever look for is usually where they find it.*

Margaret Wise Brown

- *Be not afraid of discomfort. If you can't put yourself in a situation where you are uncomfortable, then you will never grow. You will never change. You'll never learn.*
- *People always say time heals. Time doesn't necessarily heal anything. It allows you to manage things. There are occasions where you feel the pain as if it just happened, but you know that it's a fleeting moment.*
- *I try to be an active griever. I feel like we lean on time because of the trope 'Time heals all wounds.' And there is truth to that, but I don't think that it's absolute. I think that to grieve and to deal and cope, you have to be actively processing the information. Have your moments, be broken, and allow yourself to fully express pain.*

Jason Reynolds

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*Grief is a byproduct of love and a learning process, not an endpoint, involving continuing bonds with the deceased and requiring both emotional and physical adaptations to a changed "we" into a "me" reality. Mary-Frances O'Connor*