

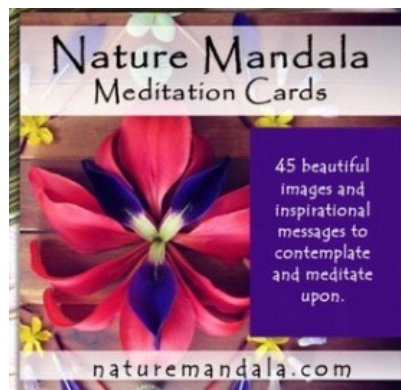
On the Path of the Perfecting Caregiver

Reflections When Reviewing Meditation Cards

Ernest L. Pancsofar

**Affiliated with
Communitas, Inc.**

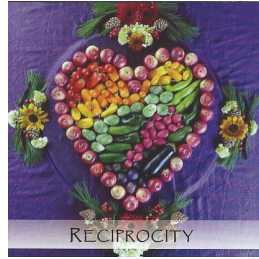
Pat Beeman gave me a set of 48 meditation cards as possible sources of reflection as I continue in my role as caregiver for Marsha. I shuffled the cards and, as I turned over each one, looked for connections to my current experiences by finding quotes, writing verse or commenting in diverse formats.



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Meditation Card

Reciprocity



From the dictionary according to ELP
... a mutually beneficial relationship in which both individuals are enriched by their shared presence and participation.

Love is that condition in which the happiness of another person is essential to your own.

Robert A. Heinlein

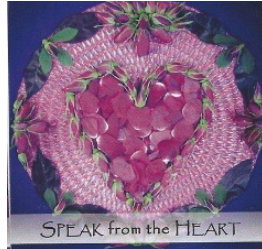
The concept of hospitality arose in ancient times when the reciprocity was easier to see: in nomadic cultures, the food and shelter one gave to a stranger yesterday is the food and shelter one hopes to receive from a stranger tomorrow.

Parker J. Palmer

**I feel contented when Marsha is content.
I feel loved when I give love.
I feel satisfied when Marsha is having a good day.**

Meditation Card

Speak from the Heart



When this meditation card surfaced, I was thinking of the quote from *The Little Prince* and, incidentally, this same passage appeared in the Louise Penny novel I am currently reading.

And now here is my secret, a very simple secret. It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.

Helen Keller echoes this theme.

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart.

Here is a final quote from another favorite author – Barbara Kingsolver.

Pain reaches the heart with electrical speed, but truth moves to the heart as slowly as a glacier.

Meditation Card Reconnect



I chose to reconnect with some writing I kept in a journal during my late teen years as this prompt surfaced in my meditation cards.

*I took the road less traveled by
And often since have wondered why.
I could have gone the other way
But then what would my conscience say? (5/3/1969)*

*I do not know. I do not care
How far it is to anywhere.
I only know that where I'm not
Is always the alluring spot. (5/3/1969)*

*I try my best to be just as I am
But everyone wants you to be just like them (Dylan)*

*Prayer is simply talking to God as a friend.
(9/8/1970)*

Meditation Card

Peace



PEACE
HOPE

HOPEACE

*Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner **PEACE** for anything whatsoever even if your whole world seems upset.*

Saint Francis de Sales

***HOPE** is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul – and sings the tunes without the words – and never stops at all. Emily Dickinson*

***HOPE** is important because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear. If we believe that tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today. Thich Nhat Hanh*

*All we are saying is give **PEACE** a chance.*

John Lennon

Meditation Card Connection



***Connections* involve a sequence of questions we have on a specific topic followed by a summary of resources that was developed following each question. I will provide a template for a visual display of these relationships in an upcoming journal entry.**

Quotes are like prompts. A way of searching, *connecting* the dots. Masha Tupitsyn

Spirituality is not a formula; it is not a test. It is a relationship. Spirituality is not about competency; it is about intimacy. Spirituality is not about perfection; it is about *connection*. The way of the spiritual life begins where we are now in the mess of our lives.

Mike Yaconelli

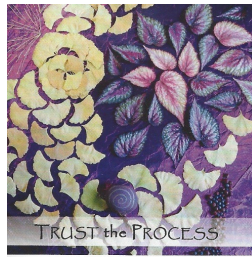
***Sitting on the couch
Listening to the music
We both do our part -***

***Holding hands
Making a *connection*
Me-to-You / Heart-to-Heart.***

ELP

Meditation Card

Trust the Process



P resence
R outines
O bserve
C ontent
E qual
S low Down
S ilence

Your **presence** each day
Enlightens the way.

We do our **routines**
together as a team.

I **observe** movements
To create improvements

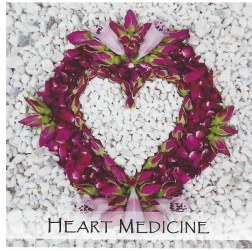
To be **content** & satisfied
With you at my side.

Equal in our status in life
Living as husband & wife.

Slow down our pace.
Life is not a race.

And in **silence** and peace
Our love will never cease.

Meditation Card Heart Medicine



- **½ hour holding hands and listening to music**
- **1 long hug with an “I love you”**
- **A sincere “I’m sorry. I’ll do better next time”**
- **A trip out in the car based on a spontaneous request**
- **5 positive comments about how well we do things together**

Meditation Card

Loving Acceptance



Radical Acceptance

Radical acceptance rests on letting go of the illusion of control, and a willingness to notice and accept things as they are right now, without judging.

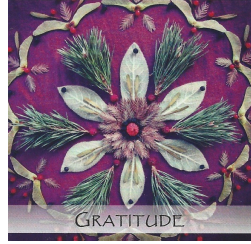
Marsha M. Linehan

Imperfection is not our personal problem - it is a natural part of existing.

What would it be like if I could accept life--accept this moment--exactly as it is?

Tara Brach

Meditation Card Gratitude



Gratitude is an Attitude

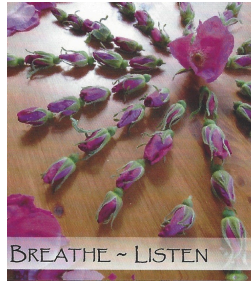
- ... knowing that enough means no more stuff!
- ... satisfied with what is; life is not a Jeopardy Quiz.
- ... thankful for my spouse and a safe, welcoming house.
- ... feeling blessed and in good health; that's the way to gain more wealth.
- ... reflecting on supportive friends who help me tie up many loose ends.

What I look at, success is about really being grateful. You wake up in the morning, and you're thankful that you could breathe because it's a beautiful planet we live on, and I know there is a lot of struggle and pain, but there is more joy.

Beth Hart

Meditation Card

Breathe - Listen



My inner voice says, “In” as I count to 8 and “Out” as I count to 8, as I hear:

... the sound of hot water making a crackling sound in the baseboard pipes.

... a car passing by on the road outside the bedroom window.

... a scratching sound as my hand relieves an itch on my face.

... my stomach gurgling.

Mindful Breathing

Below is one way I have been using mindful breathing as I think to myself:

Breath 1 in – I know I am breathing in

Breath 1 out – I know I am breathing out

Breath 2 in – I know I am breathing in

Breath 2 out – I am searching for next activity

Breath 3 in – I know I am breathing in

Breath 3 out – I am searching for next activity

Breath 4 in – I know I am breathing in

Breath 4 out – I know I am breathing out

Breath 5 in – I know I am breathing in

Breath 5 out – Can I visualize next activity?

.....

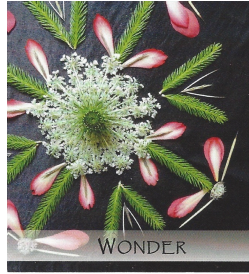
Breath 10 in – I know I am breathing in

Breath 10 out – What is next?

This morning as I opened my eyes following my 10th breath out, I immediately noticed my blood pressure machine on a nearby shelf. I have a wellness exam next month and need to be taking my BP on a daily basis to share with my doctor.

Meditation Card

Wonder

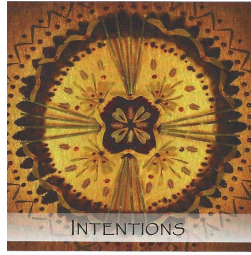


The best way to measure how much you've grown isn't by inches or the number of laps you can now run around the track, or even your grade point average-- though those things are important, to be sure. It's what you've done with your time, how you've chosen to spend your days, and whom you've touched this year. That, to me, is the greatest measure of success. **R.J. Palacio, *Wonder***

*Well, it ain't no use to sit
and wonder why, babe
If'n you don't know by now
And it ain't no use to sit
and wonder why, babe
It'll never do somehow ...* **Bob Dylan**

*Everybody is wondering what and where
They all came from.
Everybody is worrying about where they're going to go
When the whole thing's done.
But no one knows for certain and so it's all the same to me.
I think I'll just let the mystery be.* **Iris DeMent**

Meditation Card Intentions



*... to be a caring partner as we
advance into our senior years*

*... to learn the lessons that Marsha
will teach me*

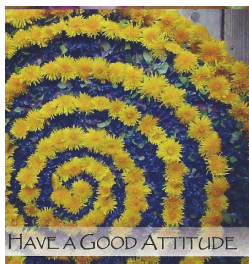
*... to be an active and creative
investigator of daily options to
challenges as they occur*

*... to be mindful of “presence” and a
commitment to minute-by-minute
living*

*... to follow current best practices in
being a caregiver to Marsha*

Meditation Card

Have a Good Attitude



Always **A**im to **A**chieve **A**ccomplishments.

Take **T**ime To **T**each **T**olerance.

Teaching **T**akes **T**act and **T**echnique.

Initial **I**nsights **I**nvolve an **I**nvestment of your time.

Triumph **T**oward **T**ackling **T**ough challenges.

Understand **U**niqueness and **U**ncomfortable **U**ncertainties.

Demand **D**iligence **D**uring **D**eliberations .

Encourage & **E**ngage **E**veryone **E**qually.

Meditation Card Honor the Memory



Entry in my Journal on 1/4/76

Now it's 1976.

I'm 24 and soon

must fix a course in life!

Tomorrow, I start a job as a special education teacher at the Carbondale Special Education Cooperative. It will be interesting to record my thoughts and see in which direction my actions will take me. I feel this will be a most important year for me and many answers to important questions will be coming.

[This year may, in fact, have been one of the most important years of my life when I would meet and fall in love with Marsha Brantley.]

Meditation Card Together



When 'I' is replaced with 'We', even the illness becomes wellness. **Malcolm X**

And if we want to achieve our goal, then let us empower ourselves with the weapon of knowledge and let us shield ourselves with unity and togetherness. **Malala Yousafzai**

In mere moments of togetherness, families forge their most indelible memories. **Wes Fesler**

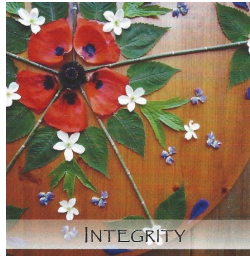
With us, the circle stands for togetherness of people . . . To us this is beautiful and fitting, symbol and reality at the same time, expressing the harmony of life and nature.

John Fire Lane Deer

First Nations Blessing

*Now you will feel no rain,
For each of you will be shelter to the other.
Now you will feel no cold,
For each of you will be warmth to the other.*

Meditation Card Integrity



Parker Palmer's values have heavily influenced my teaching career, especially from his book, *The Courage to Teach*, from which this quote originates:

Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identify and integrity of the teacher.

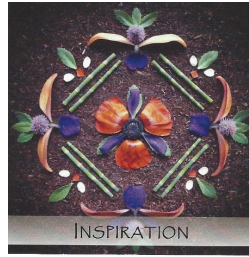
I could easily substitute the words “caregiver/caregiving” for “teacher/teaching.”

Palmer continues in another passage:

By choosing integrity, I become more whole, but wholeness dos not mean perfection. It means becoming more real in acknowledging the whole of who I am.

Meditation Card Inspiration

**I have derived much
inspiration from the
works of Bob Dylan.**



**The meaning of life is not found
Amid the lyrics or in the sound
Of Dylan's music or in his words
As I find myself drawn towards
[Synchronicity](#).**

**He has his muse and I have mine
And once in a while they intertwine
And meet together and share their mysteries
As they expand the boundaries
Of my [Creativity](#).**

**Bob has no answers but he holds up a mirror
So we can see our reflection and perhaps a glimmer
Of what really matters, if truth be told,
As we search within our very soul
For [Spirituality](#).**

**On the second day in June
We go to Desolation Row or to a tune
Like Highway 61.
It's a journey that is never done
And we return time and time again
Just to look around the bend
To view [Simplicity](#).**

**Why the fascination with this man's talent?
What draws me to this music sent
For all of us to listen in time
So we can each compose our rhyme –
To express our [individuality](#)?**

Meditation Card Friendship



*Piglet sidled up to Pooh from behind.
“Pooh!” he whispered.
“Yes, Piglet?”
“Nothing,” said Piglet taking Pooh’s
paw. “I just wanted to be sure of you.”*

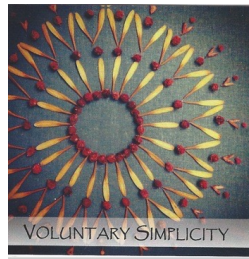
A.A. Milne

Poker Game Colleagues

*Here’s to the men
Who meet now and again
To raise up their glasses & toast.
It’s that time of year
To bring on good cheer
Just when we need it most.*

***As Piglet aptly states, I just wanted to be sure
of the friends I’m met over recent years***

Meditation Card Voluntary Simplicity

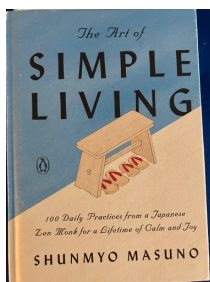


Voluntary simplicity means going fewer places in one day rather than more, seeing less so I can see more, doing less so I can do more, acquiring less so I can have more. (Jon Kabat-Zinn)

When I think of “Simplicity” I think of ...

... Thoreau: Our life is frittered away by detail. Simplify, simplify.

... Einstein: Possessions, outward success, publicity, luxury - to me these have always been contemptible. I believe that a simple and unassuming manner of life is best for everyone, best for both the body and the mind.



- ☐ Believe in yourself.
- ☐ Life is a long, yet brief practice.
- ☐ Don't be a show-off.
- ☐ Don't fixate on right and wrong.
- ☐ Find the keys to life in the stories of older people.
- ☐ Seek not what you lack.

On my trip to the basement, I noticed this book off to the side and brought it upstairs because of this meditation card.

Meditation Card Authentic



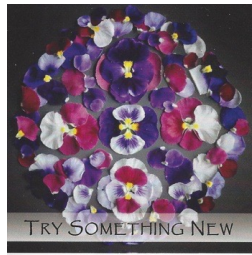
I came to believe that my true identity goes beyond the outer roles I play. It transcends the ego. I came to understand that there is an Authentic 'I' within - an 'I Am,' or divine spark within the soul.

Sue Monk Kidd

Authenticity is not something we have or don't have. It's a practice --- a conscious choice of how we want to live. Authenticity is a collection of choices that we have to make every day. It's about the choice to show up and be real. The choice to be honest. The choice to let our true selves be seen. **Brené Brown**

Meditation Card

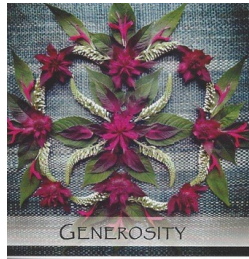
Try Something New



- Watch an interview with Louise Penny on YouTube.
- File taxes online
- Buy a new MAC laptop

Louise Penny mentioned that she had a quote on her wall by Seamus Heaney (his last words) : Noli Timere - Be Not Afraid. She mentioned that this phrase enabled her authentic self to be the writer rather than the critic within. This orientation to expressing one's thoughts and emotions is quite important. I am writing to clarify truths as I see them. I don't expect everyone else to value those same truths.

Meditation Card Generosity



Giving
 Volunte**E**ring
 Do **N**ating
 Attitud**E**
 Expe**R**tise
 Supp**O**rt
Spirit
Time
 Commi**T**ment
Yes I Can!

- Donate funds on a regular basis to an organization for which I have the highest regard.
- ... giving just a little bit more to just a few more people.

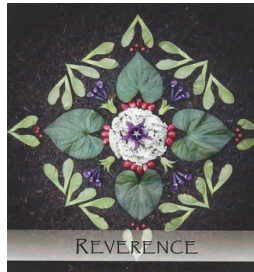
True generosity consists precisely in fighting to destroy the causes which nourish false charity. False charity constrains the fearful and subdued, the "rejects of life," to extend their trembling hands. True generosity lies in striving so that these hands--whether of individuals or entire peoples--need be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work and, working, transform the world.

Paulo Freire – Pedagogy of the Oppressed

We didn't win the PowerBall today and our TV is on the blink!

*The wars still go on, but out of view.
 The game show contestants win a fortune or two.
 The seconds will tick by
 With you by my side
 Wondering what will be in store
 When the clock approaches quarter to four.
 Minute by minute we live our days
 Seeking our riches in ordinary ways. (ELP)*

Meditation Card Reverence

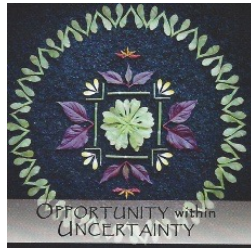


***Treat as sacred, have respect for and
much caring for:***

- ... my relationship with Marsha;***
- ... simplicity and “enough”;***
- ... moments by moments;***
- ... the way the lives of
Nadya/Randy/Leo and Natyra
are unfolding and evolving; and***
- ... the mystery of the questions to
which there are no answers.***

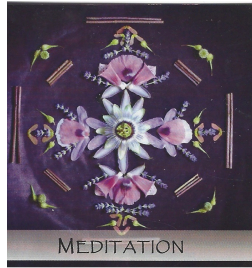
Meditation Card

Opportunity within Uncertainty



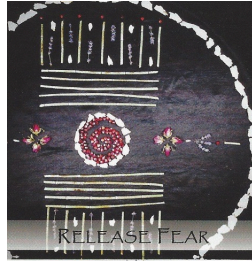
- ... more chances to get things right (for now)**
- ... focusing on what really matters**
- ... creativity uses uncertainty as fuel for development**
- ... being open to what new circumstances offer**
- ... looking at change as inevitable and learning moments**

Meditation Card Meditation



- ... the here and now;**
- ... building more “breathing” time into my day;**
- ... more classical music in the background;**
- ... listening to the birds;**
- ... maintain a more positive frame of mind when completing unpleasant tasks/ chores.**

Meditation Card Release Fear



- Fear: **I'm not doing enough!**
Release: It is not “enough” that is the standard. Rather, doing the best I can with the resources I have or know about is an achievement.
- Fear: **What if I die first?**
Release: Relax. My daughters are more than capable of providing the love and support that their mom will need.

Meditation Card Begin Again



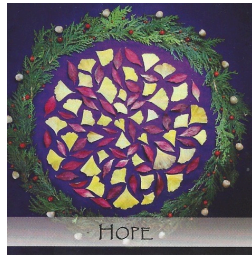
***I thought of the following quote
by Rachel Carson that I
uncovered today.***

***Those who contemplate the beauty of the
earth find reserves of strength that will
endure as long as life lasts. There is
something infinitely healing in the
repeated refrains of nature -- the
assurance that dawn comes after night,
and spring after winter.***

***There are two ways to wake up. You can
wake up thinking about what you know, or
you wake up thinking and saying, 'What
can I learn?' That's a very different
approach. Tori Amos***

Meditation Card

Hope



***While sitting on our deck this morning,
the following words surfaced when
thinking about HOPE***

H

Heart Honor
Happy Health

O

Open Offering
Outside Oddity

P

Profile Perspective
Positive Peaceful

E

Ease Elegant
Effort Entrance

***At the end of the day, all you can
hope for is to go on. The older I get,
the more I realize that just keeping
on keeping on is what life's all
about. Janis Ian***

Uncertainty is the refuge of hope.

Henri Frederic Amiel

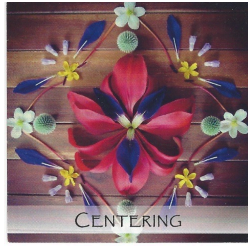
Meditation Card Pray



My initial reaction to this meditation prompt is Ora Pro Nobis (Pray for Us) from the Litany of the Saints.

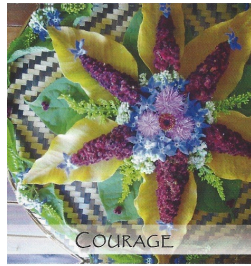
Whenever I approach Boston, I pray to Mother Cabrini, the unofficial but recognized patron saint of finding parking spaces. This comes in especially handy on Commonwealth Avenue when visiting one of our daughters. Of course, there is no telling how many of us parking hunting people are all trying to access Mother Cabrini at the same time. So far, she has been most kind and generous, in case she is reading this entry!

Meditation Card Centering



When thinking about this word, I am drawn to the contrast between self-centered and centered-self. Self-centered conjures up a mainly negative image. However, centered-self reminds me of breathing and mindfulness. It's a focus on my current experiences without judgement or criticism. Things are what they are. How am I going to react to the current "are?"

Meditation Card Courage



As I reviewed some quotes on the topic of courage, the following caught my attention:

The only courage that matters is the kind that gets you from one moment to the next.

Mignon McLaughlin

Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.

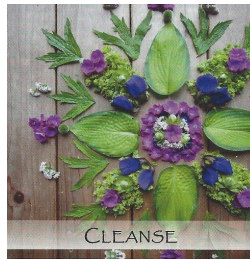
Lao Tzu

I don't know how to function without music. When I'm not making it, I'm listening to it. It gives me courage and takes care of my mind. **Billie Eilish**

Courage is fear you ignore.

Kristin Hannah

Meditation Card Cleanse

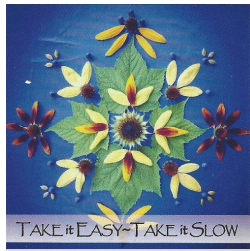


I chose to review this key word as emotional cleansing and the following five statements surfaced:

- 1. Accept current reality and support Marsha where she is at “right now.”***
- 2. Maintain light classical music in background each day and “cleanse” my mind of local/national news – at least until 7:00 PM.***
- 3. Remember that all important activities will be completed, just not on an expected schedule.***
- 4. Avoid any negative feedback when Marsha experiences agitations and negative talk directed at me.***
- 5. Continue to share my thoughts and observations via my weekly journal.***

Meditation Card

Take It Easy – Take It Slow



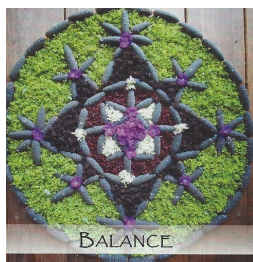
As we age into elderhood, this advice is greatly appreciated:

- 1. If it doesn't get done today, there is always tomorrow . . . and next week!***
- 2. Periodically, sit on the couch and listen to light classical music.***
- 3. A schedule of events is a reminder of options, not demands for the day.***
- 4. Incorporate some Tai Chi walking into my routine.***
- 5. Be mindful that the present is the NOW and will be gone shortly. Be aware!***

***Slow down, you're moving too fast,
You got to make these moments last.
No need to hurry, no need to run.
The important things will still get done.***

***Know when to hold back.
Know when not to talk again.
Know when to walk away.
Know when to count to ten.***

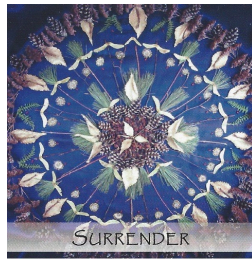
Meditation Card Balance



*Balance is not a passive resting place –
it takes work, balancing the giving and
the taking, the raking out and the
putting in.*

Robin Wall Kimmerer

Meditation Card Surrender



Instead of defining surrender as “giving up,” I am using this term as “letting go.”

***Let go of** a need for predictable routines
Embrace acts of improvisation*

***Let go of** a fear of the unknown for an unexpected disease
Embrace the essence of Marsha’s identify*

***Let go of** dreading making mistakes
Embrace the journey of making new discoveries*

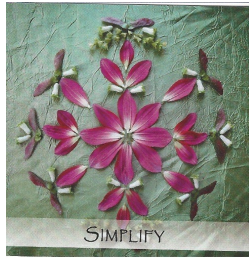
***Let go of** sadness
Embrace memories that brought us to this current moment*

***Let go of** a need to be perfect
Embrace the process of perfecting my supports*

***Let go of** self criticism
Embrace reflection*

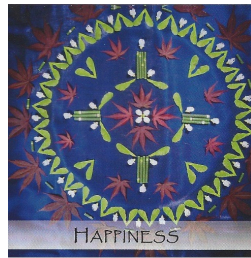
***Let go of** doing it alone
Embrace sharing with a support group*

Meditation Card Simplify



Simplify your life. Don't waste the years struggling for things that are unimportant. Don't burden yourself with possessions. Keep your needs and wants simple and enjoy what you have. Don't destroy your peace of mind by looking back, worrying about the past. Live in the present. Simplify! Henry David Thoreau

Meditation Card Happiness



There is only one happiness in this life, to love and be loved. George Sand

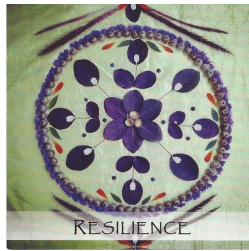
Happiness in this world, when it comes, comes incidentally. Make it the object of pursuit, and it leads us a wild-goose chase, and is never attained. Follow some other object, and very possibly we may find that we have caught happiness without dreaming of it. Nathaniel Hawthorne

Happiness Priscilla Leonard

Happiness is like a crystal,
Fair and exquisite and clear,
Broken in a million pieces,
Shattered, scattered far and near.
Now and then along life's pathway,
Lo! some shining fragments fall;
But there are so many pieces
No one ever finds them all.

(1st stanza of three-stanza poem)

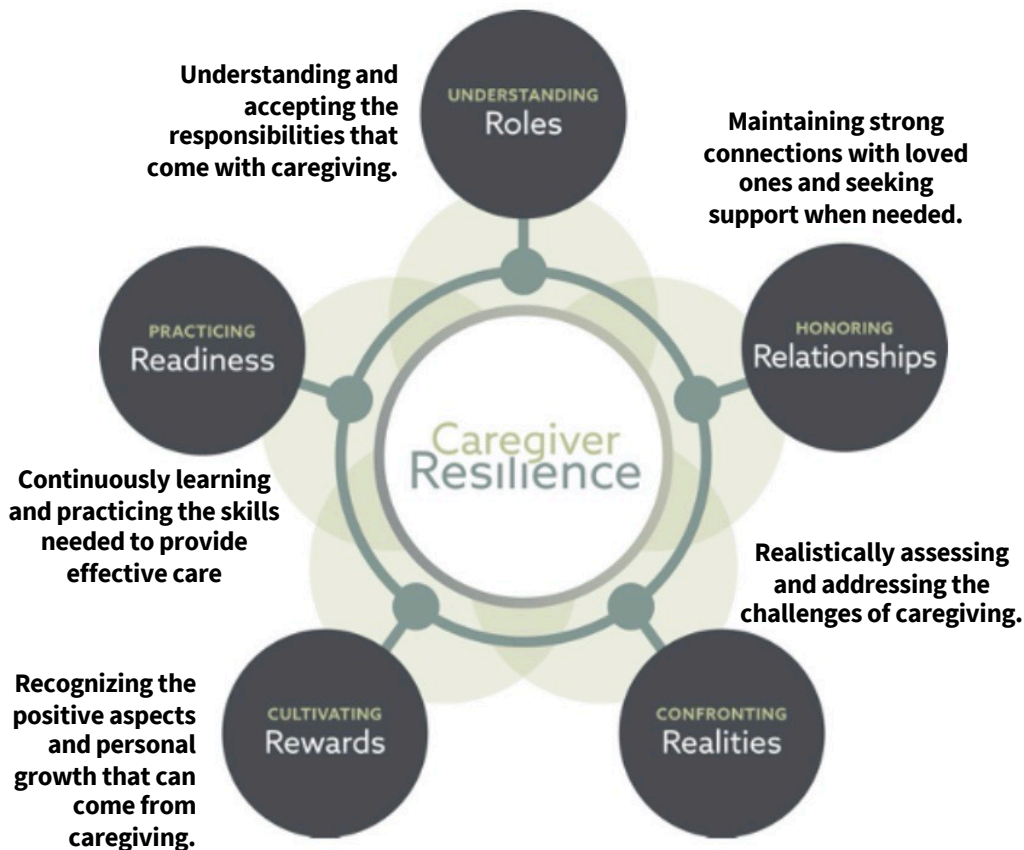
Meditation Card Resilience



Caregiver resilience is the ability to adapt and persevere through challenging circumstances in caregiving.

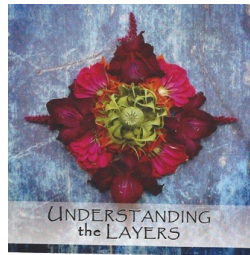
Meaningandhope.org

I found this diagram to be quite intriguing in helping to define resiliency for caregivers.

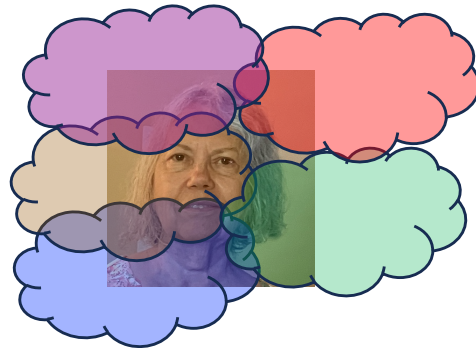


Meditation Card

Understanding the Layers

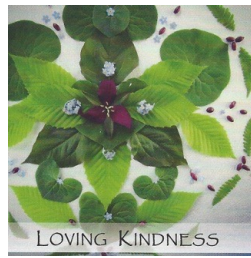


I am going to interpret this heading as layers of clouds that hide the essence of Marsha. Her essence is always there but is clouded over by such characteristics as confusion, fear, memory loss, frustration, discomfort. I like using the analogy of the sun, which is always there but can appear to lose its identity when thick layers of clouds obscure its view. Through my interactions with Marsha, I can lessen the thickness of the clouds by the way in which I provide supports. I will not eliminate those characteristics that affect her, but I can diminish their impact to bring out her essence.(ELP)



Meditation Card

Loving Kindness

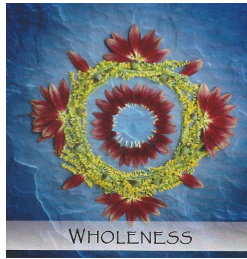


***A Gentler Approach to Caregiving
certainly qualifies as “loving kindness.”***

A Gentler Approach to Caregiving

As Marsha neared the end of eating her oatmeal for breakfast, she would not let go of the bowl for me to then give her a small container of applesauce in which I had placed her morning medicines. I was not going to tug the bowl from her but wondered what a gentler approach would be. First, I put the small container of applesauce on a small table next to the couch and told her that this was for her when she finished her breakfast. After about 5 minutes I sat down beside her and held the small container of applesauce in my hand and inched it closer to her line of vision. As I was doing this, I was completing my slow breathing practice for 15 breaths during which I thought of my next approach. Since Marsha was already engaged in scraping her now empty bowl of oatmeal, I transferred the applesauce from its small container into the bowl that had contained the oatmeal. She readily accepted this and then began spooning the applesauce into her mouth and I had SUCCESS.

Meditation Card Wholeness



The discipline of creation, be it to paint, compose, write, is an effort towards wholeness.

Madeleine L'Engle

Wholeness does not mean perfection: it means embracing brokenness as an integral part of life.

Parker J. Palmer

I think many people need, even require, a narrative version of their life. I seem to be one of them. Writing memoir is, in some ways, a work of wholeness.

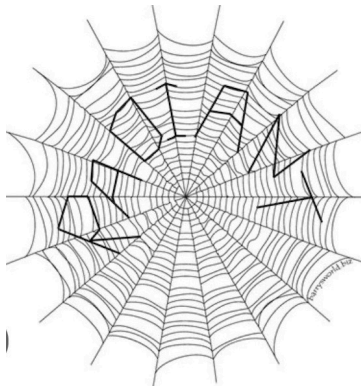
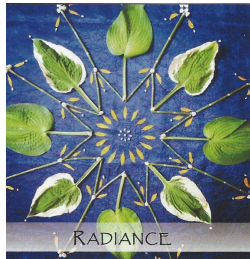
Sue Monk Kidd

Meditation Card Heart-Centered



- **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**

Meditation Card Radiance



I am reminded of the great writer,
Charlotte, who helped a friend in need.
*It is not often that someone comes along
who is a true friend and a good writer.*

E.B. White – Charlotte's Web

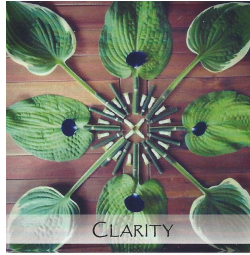
***We should not forget Charlotte's other
profound words:***

TERRIFIC

HUMBLE

SOME PIG

Meditation Card Clarity



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!

Meditation Card Passion



I searched for three diverse quotes on this topic followed by my own perspective in an acrostic format.

The only passion that guides me is for the truth . . . I look at everything from this point of view. Che Guevara

My idea of a delicious time is to read a book that is wonderful. But the ruling passion of my life is being a seeker after truth and the divine. bell hooks

I'm great at a deathbed. I've never given tranquilizers or psychiatric medicine. I've given love and fun and creativity and passion and hope, and these things ease suffering. Patch Adams

Pursuing
Activities with the
Sense of
Sacred
Inspiration and
Ongoing
Introspection

Meditation Card Dance



I thought this would be a difficult word to connect to my current circumstances until I read a passage from the book I am currently reading.

You can also echo gestures or movements for people who do not communicate verbally. Think of this as dancing, but you are letting the person with communication challenges lead.

Anne Basting – Creative Care ... (p. 100)

Dance me to your beauty with a burning violin

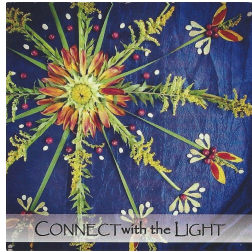
Dance me through the panic, 'till I'm gathered safely in.

Lift me like an olive branch and be my homeward dove

Dance me to the end of love.

**Leonard Cohen – Dance Me
To the End of Love**

Meditation Card Connect With the Light



*Turn to the Light Within . . . to
focus on the values and ethics that
drive current thoughts and
actions.*

*I See the Light . . . regarding truths
as they present themselves.*

*The Light of My Life
. . . most important person,
Marsha, and ways that I connect
with her throughout the day.*

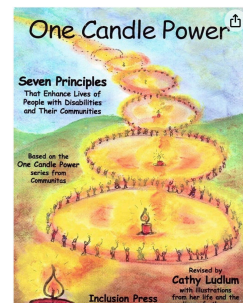
*Heartlight . . .
Turn on your heartlight
Let it shine wherever you go
Let it make a happy glow
For all the world to see.*

(Neil Diamond)

*If light is in your heart, you will
find your way home. (Rumi)*

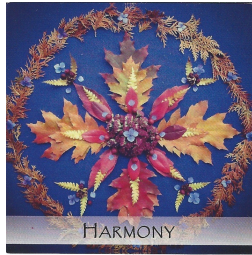
*To Hold in the Light . . . Quaker
related practice to see the divine
in the smile of another.*

One Candle Power . . .



*as exemplified by the
groundbreaking
work of Communitas.*

Meditation Card Harmony



*Happiness is when what you think,
what you say, and what you do are
in harmony.* **Mahatma Gandhi**

*I trust if your life is right, the right
things will happen at the right time.
If the chords are in harmony inside,
I think other things will happen in
the same way. That sounded
highfalutin' to me once, but I
believe it now.* **Gene Wilder**

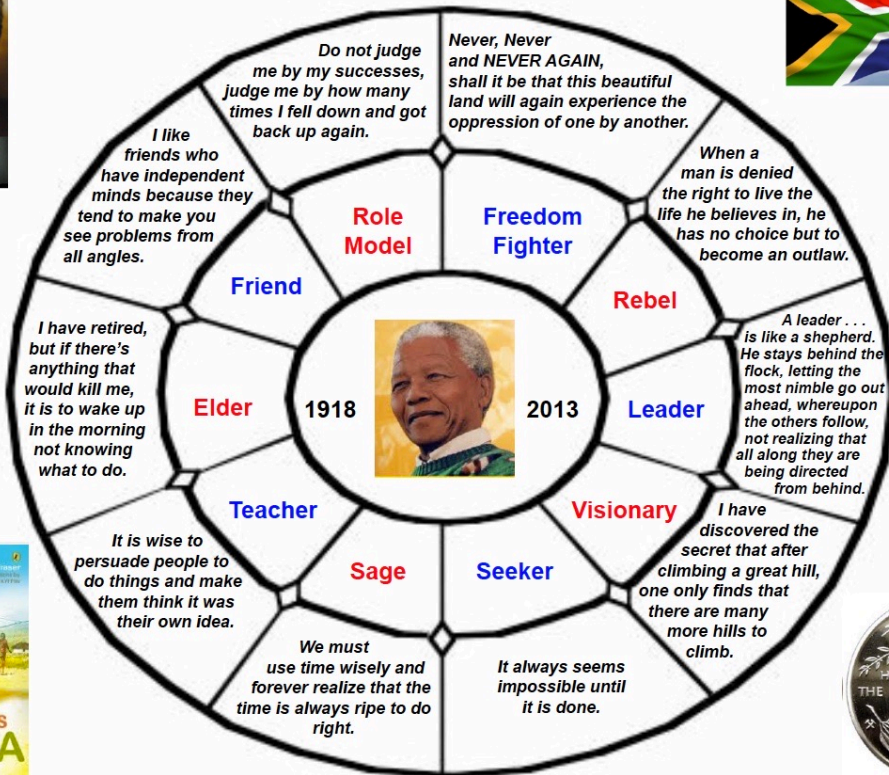
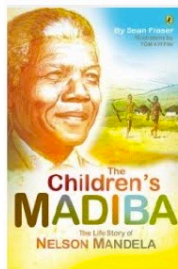
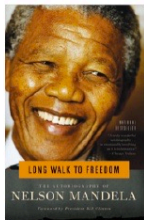
*Maybe I just never learned my
harmony part, because what
everybody says sounds odd to them
sounds perfectly natural to me.*

Elvis Costello

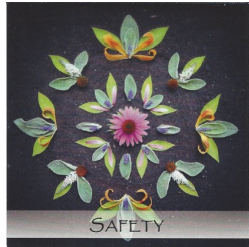
Meditation Card Leadership



The Many Qualities and Inspiring Words of Nelson Mandela



Meditation Card Safety



This was a **crucible moment** on my road to an awareness that Marsha was entering a new, unwelcome stage of her life.

8/30/20

I just had one of the scariest times when Marsha was driving. First, the sun was glaring in our eyes and she did not have her sunglasses and did not want to return home to get them. Then, at the stop light she had her left blinker on and I told her that she didn't want to go left here. She said, "Where should I go?" I said, "Straight ahead." She immediately went straight ahead but the light was still red! Later she put her blinker on to move over to the left lane and a car honked right beside her. On the way home she missed a stop sign and said nobody was coming. She was about to miss another stop sign and I shouted, "stop sign!" She quickly put on the brake.

Meditation Card Remember



Below are 7 statements (truths as I understand them to be) connected to the theme of this meditation card. Marsha experiences a brain changing disease that affects her short-term memory and significant parts of her long-term memory, as well.

There is no right versus wrong in our memories. Past events are only perceptions of what we believe to be true that are not worth arguing about.

Our story/journey is our story/journey. It is worth remembering but it is not the story/journey of anyone else.

Sometimes, a small, momentary incident can trigger a whole lot of unpleasant memories in your loved one.

When a significant memory is forgotten it doesn't mean it didn't happen. Don't argue about it.

We both have different memories of our past and we are both right to respect each other's memories.

Avoid using phrases like "Try to remember." or "Don't forget to _____."

During times of peaceful contentment, think back on the rocky road to get there and give yourself a pat on the back for staying true to your values when interacting with a loved one.