

A Week in Images and Quotes

February - 2026

SUNDAY

01

MONDAY

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TUESDAY

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WEDNESDAY

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THURSDAY

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FRIDAY

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SATURDAY

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Opportunities for New Learning

- Clou **D** Of Witnesses → Explore this image of caregivers witnessing to other caregivers
- G** Entleness → Validates my emphasis on asking the question: what is the gentlest way I can interact with a loved one?
- Deser**V**ing of Care
- Eld **E**rs Have Roles
- L**isten
- O**n Vanishing → Order book and put on reading queue.
- P**lay with the Question → Continue to value the writings and wisdom of Parker Palmer and his substack: *Living the Question*
- Fr **I**nge Dwellers
- Sun **N**y Side of Control
- G**race
- Unmo **O**red
- Abs **U**rdity of Care → Recognize the chaos and flux within which much of caregiving lives.
- Sac **R**ed Passing → Explore more about this practice.
- Wort **H**iness of Care
- E**mbodiment
- Gr**A**atitude
- Familia **R** Touch → View online link provided in Chat
- Oppor **T**unity to Work Backwards
- Compas **S**ionate Companions → Think about my own image of passing in a way that I have a voice in how this occurs.

Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go; they merely determine where you start.

Nido R Qubein

- *I still regard myself as an amateur today and I hope that's what I'll stay until the end of my life. Because I'm forever a beginner who discovers the world again and again.*
- *Have confidence in the inventions and transformations of chance.*

André Kertész

I was a participant in listening to this excellent panel of individuals who provided much insight and wisdom to my understanding of the caregiving experience. I developed an acrostic organizer to capture key words/phrases and what my next steps will be as I connected with eight of those ingredients.

Asked what he's trying to say in his songs, (Jesse) Welles replied, "I can't tell you what it means. Like, it's up to everybody. Nobody is going to paint anything and tell you, 'This is what I mean when I painted this.' You know, that's no fun. That takes away your experience."

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/jesse-welles-keeping-the-spirit-of-american-folk-music-alive/>

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I am a current reader of substack postings by Rebekah Taussig. I pulled out four musings (out of 40) she offers upon turning 40.

- *Even in the best of circumstances, extending and relying on care can be excruciatingly vulnerable, absurdly funny, beautiful, crushing, joyful, and humiliating. Sometimes, I think, all at once. I wish for us narratives that reflect the whole of it back to us.*
- *Grief isn't just an abstract feeling, but a biological process. Trying to avoid it is like trying to get away with never taking out the trash. It just (sic) has to go somewhere.*
- *The containers we use to make sense of our experiences in the world – language, identity, stories – are among the most powerful tools we have for understanding, building, connection, and meaning making.*
- *The fear of saying the wrong thing in the face of someone else's suffering has kept me away too many times. If I can drive across states or stay up late on the phone to be with someone in their grief, it's always the right choice. Even/especially when there is nothing to say, it's worth finding a way to be present (and that can look like so many things – sending a stupid meme, a little note, a gift card, a cupcake, what else?)*

Rebekah Taussig

-
- *Existence is no more than the precarious attainment of relevance in an intensely mobile flux of past, present, and future.*
 - *The taste for quotations (and for the juxtaposition of incongruous quotations) is a Surrealist taste. Susan Sontag*



In the spirit of many of Dylan's early songs against violence and civil unrest, Bruce Springsteen raises his voice in a powerfully moving song. I listened to this song for the first time on 1_31_26 and have heard it played on numerous occasions since then.

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Getting Older – Verse 4
Martyn Joseph

*The sky is thunder.
The day is long.
But it's such a blessing
To write this song.
Yeah, I'm getting older.
I know that now.
Haven't felt it so much before;
Now I do somehow.*

TUESDAY

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WEDNESDAY

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OPINION
THE OPINIONS

New York Times

Caregiving, the Life-Altering Job You Didn't Apply For

America's health care system isn't built to support an aging
population.

Michelle Cottle

Feb. 3, 2026, 5:04 a.m. ET

THURSDAY

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FRIDAY

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SATURDAY

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LET GO OF THE THING THAT YOU'RE
TRYING TO BE (THE NOUN), AND
FOCUS ON THE ACTUAL WORK YOU
NEED TO BE DOING (THE VERB).

Located on a podcast by Alex Kleon.
I will substitute “journalist” and
“journaling” as my choice of
“noun” and “verb”.

*I'm at the age where almost all of my friends are dealing with something similar. Sometimes, we'll just get on the phone and just go through the recital of the crazy of what's happening. It's **an emotional release of sorts**. It's a safety valve – and I think everybody needs that. When I've talked to caregiving experts and professionals, they agree that this is the thing that most people underestimate the need for. **You should not try to grind this out alone**. Cottle*

*... I was gratified that some of the people had latched on to the dark humor that I talked about in my own experience **finding humor in the little things**. Or just huddling up with other family members to either reminisce or just talk through things that were going on that are kind of head smacking. Cottle*

*When my dad thought his dead brothers were there with him, **you don't correct them**. There's a lot of little things like that that you don't know – because why would you until you're dealing with it? If you talk to people who deal with this on a regular basis, they can save you and your loved ones a lot of angst and suffering. So, don't grind this out by yourself. That's my No. 1 piece of advice. Cottle*

*... there are a lot of things that I learned from friends in the medical field who deal with older patients, but also from the doctors themselves, about **what not to do with Alzheimer's patients, like trying to correct them or make them remember hard facts**. Cottle*

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- *Another reason I love improvisation is because it immediately levels the playing field. It's about what we can create together and allows us to move from "problem" to opportunity and reconnect with, strengthen and revalue the multitude of ways (creative, emotions, physical, poetic, silly) we can and already do relate in life.*

- *Dementia is not easy on anyone. But, as friends and colleagues living with dementia have told me, it is the environments they're surrounded by – which run the gamut from ignorant and patronizing to abusive and life threatening – that do as much, if not more, damage than the condition itself.*

- *So imagine my delight in learning how wrong I was! In Dementia Reconsidered, Dr. Kitwood writes, "Whatever happens to dementia can no longer remain a minor parochial matter, confined within the boundaries of geriatrics. There will, of necessity, be profound repercussions in society at large. ... Above all else, the reconsideration of dementia invites us to a fresh understanding of what it is to be a person. The prevailing emphasis on individuality and autonomy is radically called into question, and our true interdependence comes to light. ... Reason is taken off the pedestal that it has occupied so unjustifiably, and for so long; we reclaim our nature as sentient and social beings."*

MONDAY

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TUESDAY

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Three
additional
quotes by
Mary
Fridley

WEDNESDAY

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It Wasn't Supposed to Be Like This
Mary Fridley

It wasn't supposed to be like this

Said simply

No lament of pity

Though many tears

An indictment of life? A grasp for honesty by a now blurry mind?

A tribute to dreams once dreamed or futures never imagined?

It wasn't supposed to be like this

Perhaps a realization created as much by an ever-shifting present than
a past regretted

Necessary to say aloud

Preparing for what's ahead

To live as we can.

<https://www.reimaginingdementia.com/contact>

THURSDAY

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FRIDAY

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*Do not dwell in
the past, do not
dream of the
future,
concentrate the
mind on the
present moment.*

the Buddha

SATURDAY

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- *Life has its dimensions in the mysterious.*

- *We must all learn a good lesson – how to live together. That is the new challenge of the new world ... learning to co-exist and not co-annihilate.*

Jesse Jackson
(died on 2/17/26)

Everybody's born with one or two songs to sing. That's it. And we keep repeating them and repeating them until we get them sort of right.

Guillermo del Toro

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February Delights

Expectations for Trip to North Carolina – February 10 thru March 3

- To be with Mom & Dad
- Edits to Steps in Perfecting Teacher Document
- Begin Initial Draft: Family Memories Booklet
- Reading from Three Books
- Dylan Document Edits
- Walking Regularly Outside
- Writing Daily Blog Entries
- Caregiver Supports Meetings (Zoom)
- Edits/Posting of Speaker's Bureau Speech
- Begin a File of "Visual of the Day."

Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.

Vaclav Havel

On the occasion of his 87th birthday: *In the short term, as long as I can reason, reflect and write, I intend to keep on journeying inward and reaching out. There's always something new to learn about myself and/or the world – something worth knowing or nurturing or cherishing and protecting. Life is an astonishing gift and I don't want to waste it.* Parker J. Palmer

1. Watching multiple episodes of Silent Witness on Britbox
2. Dental Cleaning – not the actual process but afterwards – healthy teeth and gums
3. UConn Men's Basketball game
4. Wedding Anniversary: acknowledging another milestone
5. Reading and responding to essay written by Mary Fridley
6. Pausing to remember Marsha's birthday today
7. Delivery and listening to stories during Speaker's Bureau Zoom
8. Pádraig Ó Tuama posting / I supplied a poem on grief in the comment section
9. All systems go for preparations for 3-week visit to North Carolina
10. Safely arriving in Greensboro to spend time with Mom & Dad and Mary & Gene's family
11. Spending first full day in North Carolina
12. Reading several sections of *On Vanishing*
13. Contributing to additional drafts of Family Memories project
14. Visiting Mary & Gene's Lake House
15. Corresponding with two people from previous college experiences
16. Broke up daily walk into two different times / added Silver Sneakers stretching to routine
17. Sent email with adapted DEMENTIA acrostic to Lynn Casteel Harper and received a nice reply
18. EPN meeting on Zoom
19. Contact from a GUIDE project member who inquired about using some of my writing for a newsletter to caregivers. I was honored by the request.
20. Appreciation for the wisdom by Lynn Casteel Harper in her book *On Vanishing*
21. Sweet 'n Sour Tofu prepared by my sister, Mary
22. Finished reading *On Vanishing*
23. Composing final draft of *On Vanishing: Reflections and Connections*
24. Uploaded *On Vanishing* document to Blog and sent to select colleagues
25. UConn Men's Basketball game
26. Nice slow walk – 2 loops – Greensboro
27. Parker Palmer's posting on Substack
28. Posting Dylan document in Blog