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Chapters

turning the pages through grief

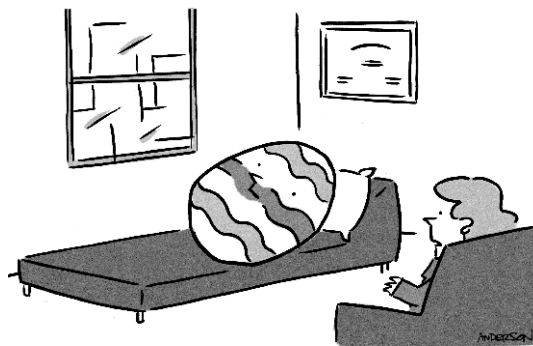


Even if absolutely nothing external to me changes, what's one thing I could do that would feel hopeful or make me smile this week? We often focus exclusively on changing or "fixing" things going on around us. We wish those around us would behave differently. Fight this by taking a breath and accepting the world as it is in this moment, no matter how terrible. Look for one thing you can do, even with everything and everyone else remaining exactly as it.

Should I eat a snack, drink a glass of water, take a walk, take a nap, or do all four? You might be rolling your eyes, but we're serious with this one. Our physical state can have a remarkable impact on our mental state. A gray world can look black when you're tired, hungry, thirsty, or fresh-air and movement deprived. Reminding yourself that you not only can, but should, do some things to tend to your physical state when

you're struggling mentally and emotionally is simple but helpful.

What is one thing that I'm doing that is helping me right now? What is one thing I am going that is harming me right now? Turning a critical eye toward our own behaviors isn't always easy. But figuring out what you're doing that is helping and harming is incredibly important. There are always things that you are doing that are having an impact on your well-being, for better or worse.



"I want to focus on decorating the egg within."

Once you've managed to identify those things, you're more likely to see ways to change the harmful things and enhance the helpful things.

If my best friend were in my shoes, feeling what I'm feeling right now, what would I tell them? Our ability to see our own circumstances clearly is often obscured by the tornado of emotions we're feeling. It's amazing what new insights your brain will turn up when you suddenly imagine someone you love in your shoes. This is a tried and true tip for many situations when you're feeling helpless or unsure what to do.

What is one positive encounter or moment of joy I've had this week? We've talked so many times about the power of gratitude. This is not sugarcoating or ignoring pain. It is saying that right alongside our pain there are often still things we're grateful for. Unfortunately, if we aren't

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**APRIL
2022**



"My life didn't please me, so I created my life."
~Coco Chanel

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hunting around for them they sometimes get lost in the dark shadow of grief. Forcing yourself to identify the moments of joy or gratitude, no matter how small, does two things. First, it reminds you they exist – even when it feels like they don’t. Second, it reminds you that you CAN find them. You just need to remember to look.

Does anyone know that I am struggling as much as I am? Many times, the answer is no. We tend to hide emotions, for a whole host of reasons. You don’t have control over other people and if they’ll support you. But you do have control over making sure they know that your struggling and telling them what you need.

Is it daytime and, if so, am I showered and dressed? Now, don’t get us wrong. We are the first to embrace staying in your pjs all day sometimes. But we’re also the first to remind you that when you feel lower than low and like the the universe is conspiring against you, being unshowered and in your pjs can sometimes make things feel worse. So give it a go. Worst thing that happens is it doesn’t help how you feel mentally, but at least now you’re clean.

Have I sent myself loving-kindness? Okay, for those who don’t like woo-woo, please stop rolling your eyes. Take it from someone who has been accused of being hyperrational more than once, this isn’t woo-woo nonsense. Loving-

kindness is a gentle and easy practice in which you simply repeat certain phrases of loving-kindness to yourself. Our thoughts can pull so hard to the negative sometimes, especially in grief. This isn’t an effort to deny or bypass those negative thoughts. It is just sending yourself the loving-kind thoughts that you wish for yourself . May I be calm . . . may I be peaceful . . . may I be happy. We cannot control what is happening around us. We can’t even control what thoughts pop into our heads sometimes. But we can make a conscious effort to send ourselves some positive thoughts for our brain to practice holding.

bookmarks

Sometimes, when grief seems like it’s getting the better of it, the last thing we want to do is read more about grief. The following could be perfect diversions, as well as an opportunity to laugh and learn.

I Ain’t Doin’ It: Unfiltered Thoughts From a Sarcastic Southern Sweetheart

Heather Land has something to say about almost everything in life—the unbelievable, inconceivable, and downright frustrating—and why she “ain’t doin’ it.” Now, Heather shines a light on the (occasional) ridiculousness of life through a series of hilarious essays, dishing on everything from Walmart and ex-husbands to Southern beauty pageants and more. She reminds us that when it comes to life’s messy moments, it’s all about perspective—and that we too can say, I ain’t doin’ it! Audio book available.

The No Recipe Cookbook

Dr. Samantha Pillay

Do you hate cooking or don’t have the interest at certain times in your life? Would you like to eat healthy, easy, cheap meals with minimal mess to clean up? Would less food shopping be helpful? Learning to cook without a recipe can take the stress out of meal planning and cooking. If you can’t cook, don’t enjoy it, are too busy to cook have never prepared a meal, would like to save money, would like to lose weight by eating out less often, or just want to be more efficient in the kitchen then this book is the answer to all your mealtime prayers.



• take a break •

Fun Facts About April

- * April is named for the Greek goddess of love, Aphrodite. The name for the month of April originally came for Aprilis which means to open.
- * Small animals that hibernate are usually coming out of their burrows in April. The birds fly back northward and settle down to have their families. The bees and butterflies begin to gather nectar from the first flowers of the season.
- * In some parts of the world, it is planting time, while in other parts, it is the harvest season.
- * The birthstone for April is the diamond.
- * The birth flowers for the month of April are the sweet pea and the daisy.
- * The Jewish festival of Pescah, or Passover, is celebrated early in April.
- * Easter is almost always in April, and, with it comes other Christian celebrations such as Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday.

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The 7 Best Online Grief Support Groups According to [verywellmind.com](https://www.verywellmind.com)

- Best Overall:** [Grieving.com](https://www.grieving.com)
- Best Live Chat:** [Grief in Common](#)
- Best for Young People:** [Hope Again](#)
- Best Social Media Group:** [Grief Anonymous](#)
- Best for Specific Grief:** [Online Grief Support](#)
- Best for Email Support:** [GriefNet](#)
- Best Monitored Discussion Group:** [Grief Healing](#)