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Chapters

turning the pages through grief



Preparing for grief

By
Eileen
Madsen

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Eileen Madsen
is an award winning
columnist, editor,
and publisher of
Chapters Newsletter

When I got the news that one of my very best friends since high school had cancer I was understandably very upset and sad. As was my husband, when he found out a beloved aunt was ill. But with today's medical advances we were, and are, hopeful that neither diagnosis is a death sentence. Both are still living with their varying degrees of illness, and each has their own unique situations and treatment plans.

Regardless of either's prognosis, it's a wake-up call I would just as soon sleep through. Our friends and family are indeed mortal—what the heck? As the youngest of five children I have already experienced the deaths of my elderly parents, which is to be expected. But it struck me, at age 64, that odds are I may live to see several friends, relatives, and older

siblings pass in the next few decades, more or less. I think I'll go back to bed.

I'm not sure there is a way to prepare for the future grief that inevitably awaits us all. I mean, it isn't like we can fold it up like so many pairs of socks and underwear in a special box to take out when needed, all ready to put on and grieve in.

But I do think that when faced with challenging and changing life or health events of people we care about, little by little, our thoughts, actions, fear and resignation quietly prepare us for when death may come calling—or texting, or emailing.

It's common for one's initial response when hearing about a death, or concerning diagnosis from someone we care about, to go into cliché mode about our own lives declaring that we must

continued...



"Frankly, we're stumped. So, we'd like to try turning you off and then on again."

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2024

**"The bad news is nothing lasts forever,
The good news is nothing lasts forever."**

—J. Cole

Don't underestimate normal.

now dance like no one is watching (they likely aren't), vow that you shall wear purple (according to that old poem), run barefoot all summer (update your tetanus shot), travel the world, and become a walking gift shop plaque to live, love and laugh. But then you get real, go back to your daily job and routines, and mostly stay home to play with your kids and pets. That's OK. Don't underestimate normal. Sure, it's good to consider new activities, make a few changes, and reflect upon what's really important. But my guess is that anyone staring down surgery, or chemo with all the stress that follows (Wig or cap? Can my spouse cope without me?) would gladly fork over some serious cash to get their "normal" back.

So, what can we do for ourselves to prepare when we hear grim news about loved ones? I think our hearts will lead the way, and our minds will follow (wood burn that on a plaque, ok?). The future will continue to live, love, laugh...as well as grieve. Now put that purple shirt away.

What Grief Has Taught Me...

That the things that used to matter don't matter anymore and that is okay.

I've learned that losing my son feels like I've lost my past, my present—and my future.

The hardest thing for me to learn was that I could be happy again and that I can believe in something after all.

whatsyourgrief.com

Sometimes the best advice is a break from advice. Enjoy your favorite beverage and these tidbits of this & that.



• The Romans often associated different months with different gods. September is associated with **Vulcan, the Roman god of fire.**

• **National Wildlife Day**- September 4th

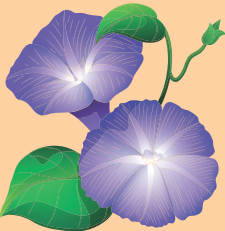
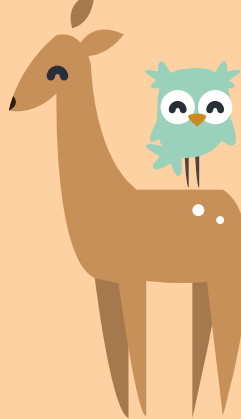
• **National Cheese Pizza Day** - September 5th



• **National Family Day** - September 26th

• **Coffee Day** - September 29th

• September is graced with having two different birth flowers. The two flowers are the vibrant aster and the beautiful yet **resilient morning glory**. The significance of both flowers is actually very similar, with the aster being said to represent love, while the morning glory represents affection.



• September's birthstone is the **majestically vivid sapphire**. With its deep blue tones, this precious stone is said to represent the wisdom of the gods, purity, and trust. Sapphires were once worn to protect the wearer from both poisoning and other evils.

It can be difficult to think about cooking, or even eating sometimes, when we are grieving. Good nutrition is especially important now, and these quick and easy ideas may help.

FAST FOOD



PROTEIN DRINKS

Protein drinks such as Ensure or Boost are high in protein, vitamins and minerals. They provide calories and energy during times of stress when you need it most. They come in several flavors. Doll them up with fresh fruits, turn them into a super nutritious smoothie, and even mix them with eggs and pancake batter!

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