

one source Empowering Caregivers

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2021



We Can't Even Say Goodbye

Elizabeth Rawson, MA

We are all currently susceptible to multiple losses daily—loss of financial security, loss of social/physical connections, and loss of autonomy to move freely in our world. Many individuals are also experiencing a loss of physical/mental health and general safety. Others are isolated in facilities where limited physical contact means families are not allowed to visit. Loss of a loved one is a natural, universally experienced life event, and at the same time, among life's most challenging experiences. We need to recognize the tsunami of COVID deaths; around 500 every day in California, alone.

Traditionally, anticipatory grief is the normal mourning that occurs for a family when death is expected. Right now, individuals may also feel they are being robbed of the opportunity of a final farewell, stripping the dead of dignity and worsening the grief of the living. The stress of dealing with multiple losses which many families are experiencing where there is no FINAL FAREWELL creates a higher level of anxiety and distress.



We never stop feeling sad that loved ones are gone and never stop missing them; grief is permanent. Now, grief in solitude has become widespread in a society that values social support from close friends and family members. It's as if the process of grieving has become suspended.

Often we can see the symptoms of grief as depression. They are not the same. Both grip our lives with sadness, and both cause disruption, but the similarity ends there. Depression is a mental disorder. Grief is not. Bereaved people are sad because they miss a person they love, a person who added light and color and warmth to their world. They feel like the light has been turned off and they aren't sure how to turn it on again. Depressed people are sad because they see themselves and/or the world as fundamentally flawed, inadequate, or worthless. They feel like the world has no light or color or warmth. There is no light to turn on.

We don't grieve well alone; grief complications can occur and need to be addressed. Accessing professional and community support is even more important within our current social distancing. To not speak about the anger, loss, and failure to say goodbye will linger forever.

Many of us are learning that navigating this new normal means using social networks, making video and audio calls, reducing the amount of loneliness and stress that affects us all. People who might not be comfortable talking about difficulties because it feels like they are letting others down can drop their guard and learn to say the things they need to express on a CHAT. Online bereavement and grief groups and communities can be new examples of everyone feeling they have a part in taking care of each

other. Help in this wide-ranging grief can be through communication with professionals, having advance care planning, and self-care practices. See our video "The Voices of Caregivers" at empoweringcaregivers.org or follow us on Facebook.

**Resources are available to you.
Call One Source-Empowering
Caregivers at (530) 205-9514**

Valentine Remembrances

Thank you to our volunteers who drove to caregiver homes and delivered personal cards and candies on Valentine's Day.



'There's got to be joy': Mother-daughter pair find strength in weightlifting, each other

By Rebecca O'Neil, *The Union Staff Writer* (Article and photo reprinted with permission)

On Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, you can find Maggie Cull pumping iron on a circuit in the South Yuba Club.

The 88-year-old retired nurse participates in F.I.T. Jam, a choreographed weight training class designed and taught by her daughter, Teresa Cull Lamat. Cull started taking her daughter's class in 2004 after moving to Nevada City full time, but a commitment to wellness has always strengthened the pair's relationship.

Cull began her fitness journey when women were generally not welcome in athletics. "When I was in high school in the '40s, I just started jogging around the track when I was waiting for the instructors," Cull said. "I got in trouble because girls were not allowed."

Cull said she ran because she enjoyed it, but received criticism from her peers and authority figures. "When I ran track in high school the guys actually seemed to like it, but I was called 'queer,'" Cull said, The label was used derisively by her female classmates, Cull added.

Turns out, Cull ran fast. A faculty member put her in touch with Dean Cromwell, a track coach for the University of Southern California and later, the Olympics.

Cull competed with many people to participate in a relay against Olympic athletes at an international track meet at the USC Coliseum in 1950. Thousands watched when her team took third in a race against the world record holders. "Our team broke the American record," Cull said.

By then, Cull was a student at University of California Los Angeles, driving in the passenger's seat of her mom's car to Elvin "Duckie" Drake's track practice. "They wanted me to throw a javelin, so the Helms Foundation gave me one," Cull said. "My mom would drive me to practice in our '41 Ford while I held the javelin out the window." Cull said her own mother gave her the support she needed to ignore naysayers of women's athletics.

Cull said she faced consequences for disturbing people's gender expectations even into her adult life. "I got asked to leave the social club I was in because I embarrassed them by running," Cull explained, "but that's where I met Sterling, Teresa's father."

Sterling Pryer was in the United States Navy when he and Cull had their first child, now a popular fitness instructor at the South Yuba Club.

As Pryer studied and taught geology, Cull pivoted from being a fitness instructor at a Santa Monica gymnasium to



Personal trainer Teresa Cull Lamat, left, and her mother Maggie Cull enjoy working out together at the South Yuba Club in Grass Valley. Cull, 88, participates in F.I.T. Jam, a weight training class designed and taught by her daughter.

Photo: Elias Funez

being a nurse at UCLA. Teresa Cull Lamat grew up amid the growing body building scene in Santa Monica.

Lamat recalled her mother going to the gym on the weekend while she waited for the family's clothes at the local laundromat. Lamat said Cull brought along her four children and combated odd looks for her weekly strength training.

Cull and Lamat's muscles will not necessarily pop dress-shirt buttons, but are well-defined in similar black tank tops under the South Yuba Club's fluorescent lights.

Pronounced biceps are a familiar sight to Lamat, whose childhood memories include lifting weights with her siblings and parents in their garage's makeshift gym. That garage was blocks away from Santa Monica's "Muscle Beach," a hub for body builders just gaining notoriety in the 1960s, Lamat said. Lamat said growing up in a context that celebrated strength helped her develop not only appreciation for the relationship between soul and body, but provided a stable sense of community.

After studying at California State University of Northridge, Lamat moved away from the beach to the mountains of Mammoth. There, Lamat started her own gym, designed fitness classes and explored the lower Eastern Sierra.

Lamat joined her father, who taught geology, physics, astronomy and earth sciences at Sierra College, in Nevada County in 1979. Cull followed her in 2004.

Lamat said a lifelong focus on wellness helped inspire the inclusive choreography she uses in her F.I.T. Jam class, which is attended by seniors, pregnant women and ultra-marathoners. "I wanted an aerobic exercise that implemented more functional movement," Lamat said. "I try to get every movement, angle and position that our daily lives call on." Lamat said she uses modifications in her aerobics course to ensure that participants exercise sustainably and prioritize form.

Lamat said she specifically focuses on dorsal flexion movement because of observable tensions in people's gait as they age. "When they start getting into their 40s, 50s and 60s, people lose their agility, their balance and sense of coordination," Lamat said.

Cull said a lifetime dedicated to fitness likely helped fortify her health when she was infected with COVID-19 in late November. Cull said she takes the virus seriously, so when she started exhibiting real symptoms in early December — a heavy chest, loss of taste and smell — she was in disbelief. So were her doctors. When Cull went to her cardiologist for a regular appointment, an EKG revealed clear lungs and healthy O2 sacs. "Maybe you don't have COVID," Cull said the specialist posited. "Someone your age would experience more symptoms." Cull said she didn't get tested until Dec. 18, more than a week after experiencing acute symptoms.

Cull said the pandemic only reinforces her holistic understand of the body as it relates to the soul. "There's got to be joy," Cull said, "otherwise, it's impossible."

Maggie Cull has been with One Source since it's beginnings and has been named Outstanding Volunteer of the Year as an Administrative Assistant for 2020. She has been an in home assessment nurse, a respite care specialist volunteer, a telephone caller, and a volunteer administrative assistant in the office.



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ESSENTIAL TOOLS FOR CAREGIVERS OF THOSE WITH DEMENTIA FREE ZOOM CLASSES

Mondays 10:00 a.m. to noon

- February 15: Caring for the Caregiver
- February 22: Community Resources
- March 8: Eldercare Options
- March 15: Legal and Financial Planning

To register for one or more classes
call (530) 648-0592 or register online at
[www.supportsierranevada.org/
caregiverempowerment](http://www.supportsierranevada.org/caregiverempowerment)

Respite funds are available to care for
your loved one during classes.

Technical assistance with Zoom is available.

The Alzheimer's Outreach Program (AOP) is a joint program of
Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital and
Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital Foundation

With Endless Gratitude and Blessings...

Dear ones,

This past year has been full of so much loss and grief for so many people in so many ways. All of us have been touched by this whether it was our own experience or someone else's. Loss, grief, and bereavement is a part of all of our lives.

As I reflect on my own personal experiences with death, I've been able to find some solace in these words of wisdom and comfort from *Safe Passages*,
"The path through grief is littered with anger and guilt, emptiness and despair. But there among these roadside heartaches, hiding beneath the dull, dead weeds that have so entangled our spirits, are tiny possibilities for laughter. Each day they grow stronger, and soon they will burst forth and flourish, until the remnants of our pain are covered with their colors."

Hurrah for ALL of YOU at OSEC (which I spelled out like this):
"O" pen "S" ensative "E" mpathetic "C" aring

You are helping to transform the loss and grief for all of those you serve on their journey toward bereavement and healing.

Rev. Christine Morgan

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