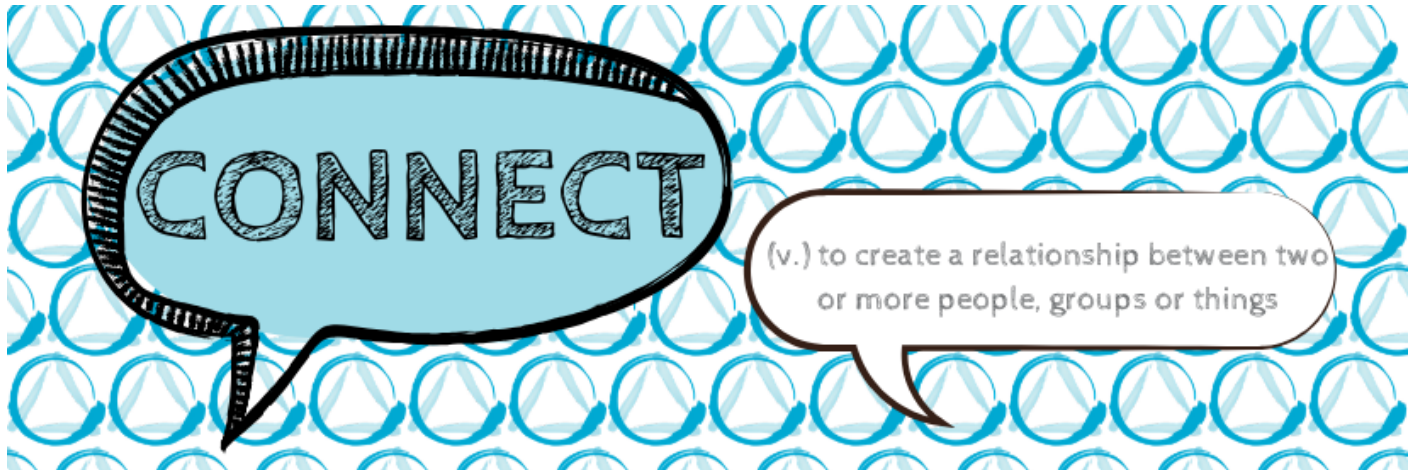

[TEST] CONNECT - Smith Center Community Newsletter

Smith Center Programs Team <smithcenterforhealinghearts@mailman.bloomerang-mail.com>

Tue, Sep 22, 2020 at 4:09 PM

Reply-To: programs@smithcenter.org

To: Carla Stillwagon <carla@smithcenter.org>



*Welcome to **CONNECT**, a community-minded newsletter brought to you by Smith Center for Healing and the Arts.*

This project is brought to you by the Smith Center Programs Team, in collaboration with our staff, board, facilitators, volunteers and community members - who all want to share with you!

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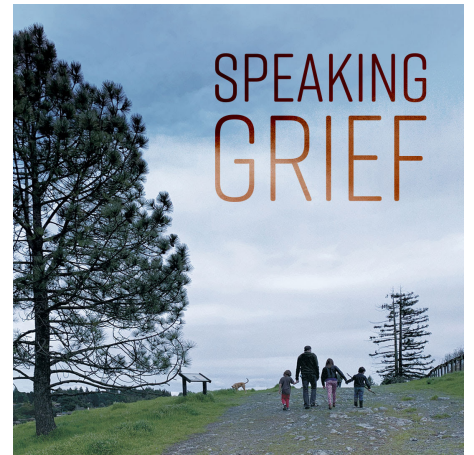
Make sure to click "[View Entire Message](#)" at the bottom of your email to see all our content!



"Grief work is about humanity. It's about the work that we do on being more human. Because everybody you meet is going through something." - Alesia K. Alexander, LCSW, CT

Highlighted in the stories shared throughout *Speaking Grief*, the "everybody's going through something"

component of 2020 has been weighing on me constantly. Dealing with this collective grief has inspired me to develop a stronger understanding of my role in supporting and being supported by those closest to me. I've shared my interest in improving my relationships in this way with a few close friends, and have begun to ask for specifics on how our connections might improve. Initially I wasn't too keen on working this kind of deep question into regular conversation, but each time I've been surprised at the sympathetic replies. This opening conversation in itself appears to have created space for more of the same as we continue to connect in limited, virtual ways for the foreseeable future.



"Moving away from the idea that grief is a problem that needs to be "fixed," [Speaking Grief](#) validates the experience of grieverers and guides those wishing to support them."

[Click here to watch *Speaking Grief*, the documentary.](#)

Carla Stillwagon



Some Assumptions about Grief

The experience of grief is unique for each individual. While we can make some general assumptions, there is no template that describes the experience for all people.

Grief is cumulative. That is, each time loss is grieved, the grief encompasses the lifetime of loss and the remnants of each experience.

Grief following a significant loss is most often a lifelong process, with each pivotal point in life bringing the grief back up to be processed from a new perspective.

Grief, loss and suffering fundamentally changes and reshapes the individual.

Grief is not about forgetting or disconnecting. Rather, healthy grief is about remembering the parts of self that get lost amidst the experience and reorienting the individual in their relationship with self, the world and others.

Grief is a whole body experience: emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual. Each have a wide range of expression which can cue us that grief is present.

While grief and trauma are often intertwined there are significant differences between them. Trauma should be addressed with trauma specific interventions that often go beyond what is possible in circles.

Adapted from Khris Ford



What is your favorite yoga pose and why?

Tree pose has been my favorite yoga pose for a very long time - since the 80's. Even after all these years and doing what must be thousands of yoga poses, tree pose has maintained its place at the top of my favorite pose list.

I've always viewed yoga as a practice that positively contributes to my mental, physical, and emotional health and viewed the poses as shapes that we create to shift our perspective, go inward, express ourselves, and create more openings both mentally and physically.

Early on in my practice, tree pose became a tool that I continue to use in my personal life and in my teaching. I refer to it as a barometer. Each yoga pose brings different meaning to an individual, and for me, if I stand in tree pose with steadiness and ease, a feeling of being

content, centered, and balanced arises. If I am rocky and off balance, I quickly know that one of the following things may be occurring. I am unfocused, my breathing is not calm and steady, I'm anxious, not in the present moment, or just plain unbalanced. It only takes a minute to recognize this and I can make a shift in one or two areas like - what I am thinking about, my awareness of my breath, my perspective, my attention, or how connected I am to the earth starting with my feet. What follows the often small adjustment is a strong, still, and steady tree pose. For me, this shift is proof that my mind and body are connected. Tree pose allows me to recognize where change is needed and allows me to move towards peace and balance. I use this barometer on and off of the mat.



Years ago I taught yoga at a recreation center for underprivileged children and I had a student with autism in my class. I had never seen him still or focused, his energy was scattered and paying attention to what was happening in the class was nearly impossible. For some reason, one day, tree pose hit home for him and for the first time in his life he was still and the look on his face and his body language told us that he was content in a way nobody had ever seen. He stood in tree pose looking at himself in the mirror with a huge smile and I honestly believe with a new experience of being both in his body and in his own mind. Tree pose became a tool for him and his caregivers for years to come. On this day, I experienced yoga in a new way and I was elated to share my favorite yoga pose with this little boy.

We always love to hear from you. Please send us your favorite yoga pose and let us know what it is about the pose that puts it at the top of your list.

Kiersten Gallagher



October is National Arts & Humanities Month, and it's almost here! We will be participating in the [Americans for the Arts](#) #ShowYourArt2020 social media campaign.

Each #WellnessWednesday in October, visit our social media pages ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) & [Twitter](#)) to see the art we showcase featuring the themes of *mindful art*, *arts & healing*, *family & culture* and *on my camera roll*.

We hope you will share along with us and show your support for the arts in our community. Check out [Americans for the Arts page on National Arts & Humanities Month](#) for more on

#SHOWYOURART2020

FOR NATIONAL ARTS & HUMANITIES MONTH

Each day in October, post on your feed, story, or reels following these themes!

- | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Identity art | 11 Activism | 21 Family + culture |
| 2 Arts + learning | 12 People in art | 22 Creativity at work |
| 3 #ArtsVote | 13 Art in my home | 23 On my bookshelf |
| 4 Public art | 14 Arts + healing | 24 Typography |
| 5 Art in the time of COVID | 15 My favorite arts memory | 25 Architecture |
| 6 I made this! | 16 Poetry | 26 Why art matters |
| 7 Mindful art | 17 Creative cooking | 27 Crafting |
| 8 Film + TV | 18 Nature | 28 On my camera roll |
| 9 Dance off! | 19 #ArtsCreateHope | 29 Draw + doodle |
| 10 Things I collect | 20 Repurposed art | 30 Karaoke party! |
| | | 31 My big arts dream |



@Americans4Arts
AmericansForTheArts.org/NAHM



how to get involved in "the largest annual celebration for the arts and humanities in the nation."

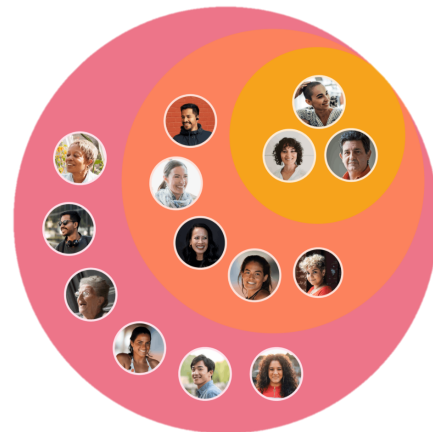
#ShowYourArt2020 #NAHM
#ArtsCreateHope



Welcome to Nurturing Resilience! Here, you'll find short somatic practices to help you return to an embodied sense of resilience, a mindset and physical state where you feel connected to your own essence, to loved ones, to nature -- and where hope, creativity, and transformative action with the world around you becomes possible, even during moments of transition and uncertainty. Facilitated by Yael Flusberg, a yoga therapist and coach, who teaches a weekly gentle yoga class for Smith Center.

Sleep is a cornerstone of good health. Yet 70% of Americans don't get enough of it. Poor sleep does more than make us cranky: it makes us less able to move through challenging times. Chronic sleeplessness constrains memory and our capacity to learn and solve problems. It inhibits our response flexibility and makes decision making more impulsive and reactive. It even makes us feel more isolated, and less optimistic -- and decreases our pain threshold. Insomnia is both a predictor and outcome of PTSD which indicates that we need quality sleep in order to help us discharge stress. In this video, Yael talks about the importance of sleep and shares some techniques -- including moon breath and 2:1 breath, and gentle movements -- that you can use to create your own night time routine, relaxing body and mind and enhancing the quality of your sleep.

community stories



Life Care through Community

When my sister in law, Grace, was diagnosed with Stage IV Melanoma, her healthcare rightfully became our family's top priority. We were faced with confusing treatment decisions, depleting hospital stays, intermittent ER trips, and some really tough days. Naturally, the rest of life took a backseat. Routines, hobbies, and communities - the places we found purpose and joy - became secondary.

There's no guidebook for navigating such a serious illness, especially for someone who had just graduated college. We often found ourselves feeling disconnected, drained, and overwhelmed. But we weren't in it alone - we were surrounded by neighbors who were happy to help with our pup Zuri, friends who sent care packages that offered a much-needed laugh, a faith community ready with meals to deliver, and support groups (like the Smith Center!) who understood what we were all going through.

These outstretched hands transformed what would have been an isolating experience into a shared one. And by being there as we navigated medical care, our community brightened the days and turned the rest of life into a source of heartening strength.

We lost Grace this May. To honor an amazing woman and the incredible community she brought together, we've started a company called [Caregather](#). Our mission is to make the life surrounding health bolder and brighter by better connecting patients to their closest care circle and their broader network. Our goal is to make it easy to mobilize a community of support who can understand the best ways to help patients and their caregivers and take action to uplift them.

In our view, it's time we made care more collective and embrace the strength we get from those around us. The life beyond health shouldn't be ignored, and the best way to enrich it during tough times is to lean on each other to champion life's care, alongside our healthcare.

If you agree and want to [learn more](#), please check out our website www.caregather.com, and feel free to email me at tripp@caregather.com.

Tripp Brockway

tasty & healthy

Welcome to *Tasty & Healthy*, a new **CONNECT** segment featuring recipes & healthy lifestyle practices from our **Cooking & Nutrition** facilitators.

Today's recipe, *Spinach and Portobello Hummus-adilla*, comes from Brandi Redo.

[Click here to download the Spinach and Portobello Hummus-adilla recipe.](#)



Brandi Redo is a certified Holistic Health Coach, Cooking Instructor and Program Manager in Washington D.C.

In the last 15 years, Brandi has done over 500 cooking demos at noteworthy locations such as the Federal Communications Commission, the USDA, the Environmental Protection Agency, the FBI, Carefirst and several hospitals and Whole Foods Markets. Brandi has also developed wellness programs for Smith Center for Healing and the Arts, Business Health Services Online, Calvary Women's Center, Washington Hospital Center, Georgetown Hospital and for other notable organizations.

Brandi's specialty is holistic wellness and nutrition with a focus on leading cooking demos and hands-on cooking classes for adults and children.

Brandi also works with organizations, individuals and families to create customized, easy-to-follow wellness programs.

Brandi is knowledgeable about many dietary practices and believes that almost any dietary philosophy can be healthy and promote wellness, if it consistently promotes mindfulness and balance.

shared ideas

Join [Death Positive DC](#) for their upcoming [BIPOC Death Cafe](#) on Saturday, September 26th, from 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM EST.

"This virtual death café is created to welcome Black, Indigenous, and People of Color to gather in a safe and confidential online space to talk about death and dying. It is for people who identify as part of the BIPOC community. It will be hosted by Valoria Walker and Mina Devadas."



[Click here to register for BIPOC Death Cafe on 9/26, 11AM EST.](#)

Sarah Farr, Founder, [Death Positive DC](#)

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

JOB SEARCH STRATEGY DURING COVID-19:

WEBINAR PRESENTED BY

JULIE JANSEN

EXECUTIVE/CAREER COACH & AUTHOR

SEPTEMBER 22 1PM ET



UPCOMING

EVENTS



Join [Cancer + Careers](#) for a packed schedule of virtual programs this fall!

"We are excited to share the start of our fall event schedule with you, so you can reserve your spot now! All programs are free of charge and virtual with dial-in options available."

[Click here to register for today's webinar, Job Search Strategy During COVID-19.](#)

[Click here to learn more and register for Cancer + Careers virtual fall programs.](#)



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