



Chatterbox

May 2020



My goodness, this has been a difficult couple of months for everyone! It is so easy to get depressed and anxious at this time. So much fear. So much time alone. For those of us who did not live through the Great Depression, it is hard to think that things could be much harder than they are now.

Here, at Bay Ridge Center, things are very different. The Senior Center resembles a warehouse with boxes and boxes of emergency food piled high. All the tables are spaced out to be sure that everyone who works has sufficient space to observe the rules of social distancing.

Most of our staff comes into work at least three days a week. We are still cooking and sending seven meals a week out to our Home Delivered Meals clients. Our Senior Center staff spends most of their time in their own homes on the phone checking in with our members. When not on the phone with members, they are answering calls from others in the community who need our help to get food delivered to them while they observe the Governor's "PAUSE" and "MATILDA'S LAW", by remaining home. We are adding about 10 people a day to the city's **GETFOODNYC** program.

And, we are now offering about 20 classes for seniors each week on our online portal. These include all of your favorite exercise classes, as well as meditation classes, technology classes and a host of fun discussion groups and game groups. Call us up to find out how you can participate in these programs with your computers, your tablets, your smart phones and your not so smart phones! All are welcome.

Unfortunately, we are still not sure when we will be able to resume all of our activities at the Senior Center. But, we are sure that one day we will. Until that time, please reach out to us and let us know you are okay. Or, reach out to us to let us know that you need our support.

We are here. We are ready to help. Call us.

Be safe. Stay well. And, know you are missed by all of us here at Bay Ridge Center.

Marianne Nicolosi
Executive Director

Poetry of Bay Ridge Center

Poetry by Annmarie Larsen

It did not come as a surprise
Mankind has acted quite unwise
Gain and profit on their mind
To their neighbors not too kind
Nature warnings disrespecting
What on earth were we expecting
Everything comes to a point
'Till it is finally out of joint
Now we have to find the missing link
It is a puzzle we must solve
And all of us must get involved!



Connection by Connect Through Creativity

Connection
On every pleasant thought your name is written
No, I do like you
Needing an association
Endless possibilities
Can come in many forms
Touching with our souls
In our hearts
Offering friendship
No limits when we have each other.

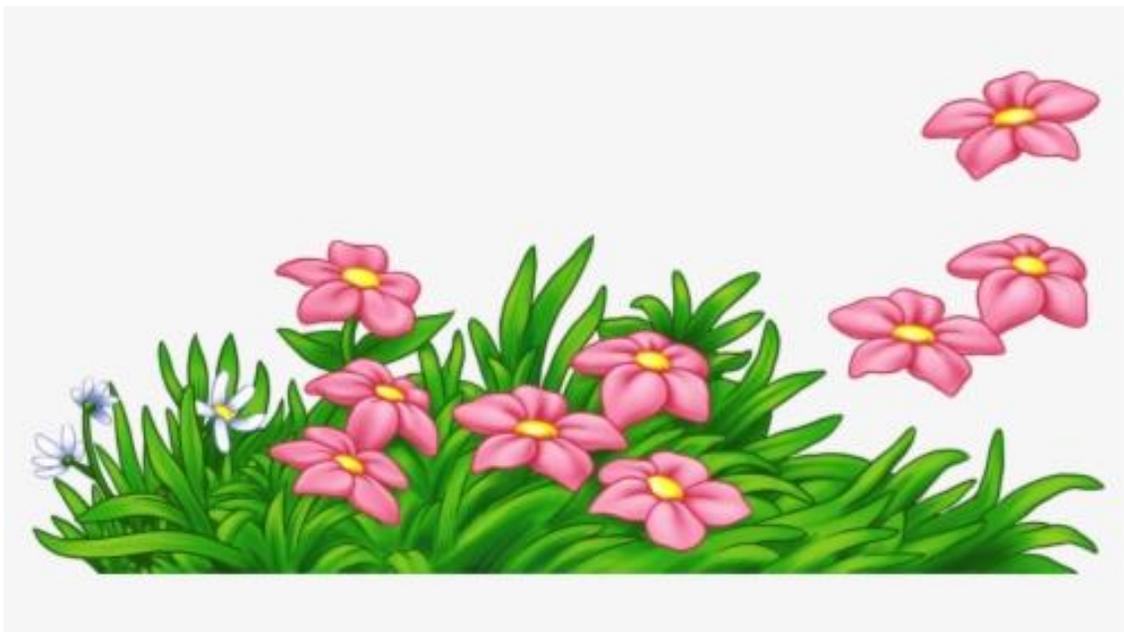


Mother's Day in Quarantine

Bay Ridge Center wants to wish all of the Mothers a Happy Mother's Day! This Mother's day is unique considering some may not have the opportunity to see their families but, none-the-less, the holiday still has meaning. Mother's Day is a way of honoring the sacrifices mothers made for their children. Mothers are the women who raised you up and supported you; they worked overtime to show us their love. Some women have turned into mothers during this pandemic and risked their lives at the hospital to birth their bundles of joy.

As we never forget our own mothers and our own sacrifices, let us appreciate how motherly one could be. You may have had kids of your own or you could be a pet mom, grandma, godmother, a stepmother, or even a motherly figure. Love is endless and mothers provide bountiful amounts of it.

Some mothers have strived to be perfect moms, but know that the work you have accomplished in supporting a life was tireless and stressful. So, at the end of the day you did your best and you are loved. This mother's day we will spend inside, so send a gift in that the mail to the mothers in your life. Send a mother's day card or a handwritten letter to you friends who are mothers to show how you understand and appreciate them.



Stress During Quarantine

Stress is high this spring; concerns about protecting oneself from coronavirus because of the high risk of serious illness and the risk of spreading.

What is going to happen with community services, better yet what will become of Bay Ridge Center? Will we open up again? How long must we wait?

For now, everything is unknown and feelings of social isolation are rising. Do not feel guilty if you need help; reach out to others to help with activities of daily living or if you just feel lonely.

Everybody must take care of their mental health during this time. Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities.

Many people are concerned about their own health and receiving regular medical care. If you have preexisting mental and physical health conditions, you should continue treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms. If you seek additional information about mental health services, reach out to Catherine King at the Bay Ridge Center 718-748-0650 x105.

Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress. Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger.

Cope with stress by taking breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting. Take care of your body with exercise, eating healthy, and avoiding substance abuse.

Make time to unwind, try to do some activities you enjoy, connect with others, and talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

Quarantine Meditation

As you are stuck in your four walls, find a way to mentally escape for a while.

When we meditate, we inject far-reaching and long-lasting benefits into our lives. We lower our stress levels, we get to know our pain, we connect better, we improve our focus, and we are kinder to ourselves.

Some people like guided meditation, and some people like to close their eyes and see their own mind places. Tell yourself reassuring thoughts. I know it may feel silly telling yourself that you are safe and loved but, after a while, you will start to believe in yourself.

Meditation should not be overthought; it could be closing your eyes and listening to soothing music.

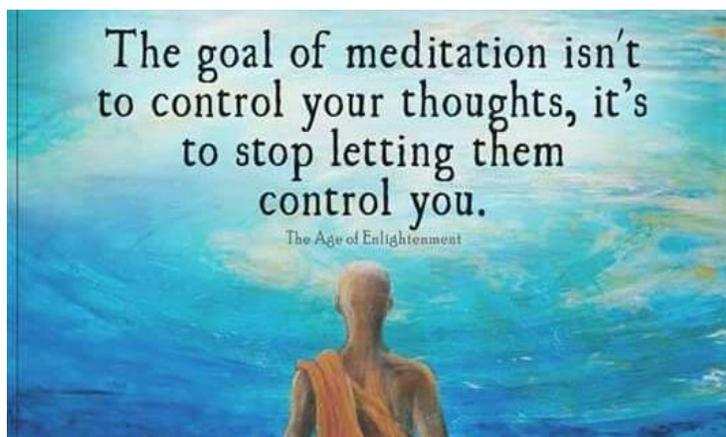
Meditation could be painting a picture and making a ton of happy accidents.

Meditation is not watching the news, so turn that off and just focus on your breathing.

If you have some essential oils, like lavender, put a little on your wrists and just smell them for aromatherapy. If you have some crystals like amethyst or quartz, reach for them and open up your heart to the positive energy.

Everything is going to be okay and it is up to you to remind yourself of that.

Keep the peace.



Grief cannot be fixed, but it can be acknowledged

Consider how much has already been lost, and how much more we are likely to lose: the lives already taken by the coronavirus, along with the lives currently in jeopardy, and exponentially more people falling ill every day. The lost livelihoods, the changes in plans, losing money and employment, routines uprooted, postponed weddings and funerals and, most importantly, the isolation. Whole cities are changing fast; vanishing jobs, local businesses, restaurants, and bookstores, that make a city our home are now jeopardized.

Does any of this sound familiar to you and, if so, do you know what to do? As a culture, we don't talk about grief, we do not make space for sadness, we don't know how to name it, let alone voice it. Everybody has pain they are carrying around, but they never get to say it. It does not go away if you try and ignore it.

This is, of course, part of the especial cruelty of this pandemic: how it isolates us at a time when grieving and afraid, we might crave fellowship. This is when we most need to connect with other people, but how do we find a true, deep connection when we cannot so much as touch anyone we are not already living with? With our own grief, we need to take time to check in with ourselves, to slow down to notice our pain. Not to fix it, since it likely cannot be fixed, but to notice it.

Coronavirus grief is already vast and its reached and breadth expanding daily. It is also a collective grief, a worldwide loss that, physically isolated though many of us have to be, a lot of other people are, in one way or another, also mourning.

I hope, in this extraordinarily difficult time, to be better than I have been at letting myself mourn.

I will start at the beginning. This is hard. I hurt. If you are hurting, too, you're not alone.

Bay Ridge Center's Village to Village

If you are feeling lonely during this quarantine, check out our Village to Village site. Go to BayRidgeCenter.com and check out our Zoom Programs held by Bay Ridge Center staff and other professionals. Programs are also made available through the telephone by dialing 646-558-8656 with the meeting ID: 3471234321. Try the Breakfast Club on Thursday mornings at 10:00 am.

The Bay Ridge Village (www.BayRidgeVillage.org) is a new online virtual community made possible by the Bay Ridge Center. In the era of social distancing, this is a mechanism to bring older adults (60+) together in a safe and informative place. The Village provides links to a wide variety of online classes, connections to friends and the ability to invite other friends to join the Village, as well as a treasure trove of articles about vital aging in Bay Ridge. For example, an article from this week is a guided meditation facilitated by our intern Braden Marks. Take a moment and become a member of the Bay Ridge Village.

We'd like to see you there.



Bay Ridge Center sends our deepest sympathies to any people and families who have been affected by COVID-19.

SENIOR TECH

INNOVATIONS FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

Coming to you online on ZOOM!

JUNE 7-13

A full week of programming
Daytime & Evening Sessions

Watch our website details:

bayridgecenter.org/SeniorTech

Free for adults 60+



computer basics • digital access for beginners • APPS • connect to a world of resources • online banking • virtual reality • social media for seniors • smart home technology • help with everyday tasks • and more!

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THE
DATES!**

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR MEMBERS

Barbara Abrmowitz
Nora Andersen
Donald Basmajy
Kathleen Bellona
Sheila Biel
Anne Borriello
Hesdy Brybag
Anita Cabrera
Beatrice Carman
Margaret Clifford
Mildred Cinque
Joan Coppola
Gerard Coughlin
Cosmo Damelio
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