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**TRAVEL**

# ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Some local seniors returned to traveling this summer ... and loved every second of it.



COURTESY OF JILL KOHLES

Members of Jill Kohles' family enjoyed a sunset cruise during their recent camping trip.

**By Susan Shelly**  
For MediaNews Group

After a long period of sticking close to home, people of all ages are anxious to get moving.

The travel platform Tripadvisor reported in April that two-thirds of Americans of all ages were planning vacations for between June 1 and Aug. 31. Hotel searches had risen 65 percent since January, and searches for experiences such as visiting an attraction or scheduling a tour had increased by 78 percent. Of those polled, 24 percent said their travel plans included visiting family.

Although the vast majority of those surveyed said they intended to stay in the United States instead of traveling internationally and many reported they would be driving instead of flying, it's clear that travel is making a comeback.

The increase in travel plans is largely attributed to the COVID-19 vaccine, which has increased confidence among travelers that it is safe to go. In Pennsylvania, more than 90 percent of residents between the ages of 65 and 80 have had a least one dose of the vaccine, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Residents of Brittany Pointe Estates in Landsdale were among those hitting the road this summer, and several of them agreed to share their stories.

**TRAVELLING » PAGE 2**



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COURTESY OF MARTHA WEED

Martha Weed relaxes at her campsite in Lancaster County.

## Travelling

FROM PAGE 1

### Hank and Martha Weed

Their 17-foot travel trailer was a blessing to them last summer before they were vaccinated and feeling comfortable being around other people, but this summer the hybrid camper has taken Hank and Martha Reed on some relaxing, interesting trips during which they were able to spend time with family and friends.

The couple spent part of the summer camping in Delaware and sites near Harrisburg, Lancaster and Allentown. They were able to spend quality time with their kids and grandkids, meet some locals, check out some interesting local sites and just kick back in scenic settings.

“We’ve been able to spend some nice, relaxing time with our kids and grandkids while camping right along a creek in the Allentown area,” Hank explained. “It’s been really

nice to be able to get away and be together with our family and close friends.”

Hank and Martha choose locations for their camper trips that are fairly close to home — within about three or four hours. They pack everything they’ll need for a long weekend of camping but seek out campgrounds where they are able to hook up to electricity and water.

“We don’t do boondocking, which is when you live off your battery and bring your water in with you,” Martha said. “There are a lot of nice campgrounds and places to stay that aren’t too far to get to, and it’s just nice to get away and be in a different setting for a few days.”

For longer trips — like a visit earlier this summer to visit longtime friends on Cape Cod — they leave the camper at home and stay in hotels, as necessary.

An advantage of the travel trailer is that they can unhitch it and go exploring in their car, Hank related. Both are interested in history, and they enjoy visiting historical sites and local attractions. They particu-

larly enjoyed a visit to Antietam National Battlefield in northwestern Maryland, where Martha’s great-great uncle — a 13-year-old drummer boy — was killed during the Civil War. They’ve also enjoyed a visit and tour of the Yuengling Brewery in Pottsville and a recent trip to the National Watch and Clock Museum in Columbia, Lancaster County.

“We’re not always looking for big things, just short trips where we’ll see something interesting and do something different,” Martha said. “It’s always good to learn something new.”

### Jeanne Myers

Jeanne Myers’ summer was made complete by a trip to the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York, where she and two of her grandchildren joined some friends and others for a week at CAMP-of-the-WOODS, a Christian resort and conference center. The trip, she said, exceeded expectations on many levels.

“I felt like I was renewed spiritually,” Jeanne said. “And I also got a lot of physical exercise, had the social



COURTESY OF JEANNE MYERS

Jeanne Myers hikes during her summer vacation at Camp of the Woods in the Adirondacks..

experience of being with friends and made some new friends, too. It was great.”

Jeanne explained she hadn’t had a vacation since her husband, John, passed away in 2019. When friends invited her to join them at the camp they visit every other summer, she felt it was time to get away.

“I thought it was time to try my wings,” she said.

She and her grandchildren, Owen, 12, and Aubrey, 15, who live in Delaware, were unsure what to expect when they arrived

at the camp with Jeanne’s friends and others — including a set of 2-year-old triplets. But everyone got along just fine, helping one another and sharing experiences such as mini-golf, concerts, a hymn sing, daily chapel time, hiking and visits to the beach.

“There were a lot of different activities you could do, or you could sit on the beach all day if you wanted,” Jeanne said. “My friends took me on a hike off-campus one day, and that was a lot of fun. I’m not much of

a hiker, but my friends were very supportive and helped me out. We all helped each other when we could.”

The camp offers cabins where you can do your own cooking, but Jeanne and her fellow travelers stayed in a hotel-like building and had their meals in a dining hall. The camp was beautiful, with many activities available.

“It was the perfect place for me to be this summer,” Jeanne said. “I’m grateful to my friends who invited us.”

TRAVELLING » PAGE 3

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COURTESY OF BARBARA GREEN

Barbara and Ken Green during a family vacation to the Poconos.



COURTESY OF JILL KOHLES

Jill Kohles walks a dog during her trip to the Under Canvas location near Acadia National Park.

## Travelling

FROM PAGE 2

### Barbara and Ken Green

After more than a year of postponed travel plans, Barbara and Ken Green were more than ready this summer to make up for lost time.

“We tried to plan something for each month, so we’d always have something to look forward to,” Barbara said. “This summer was all about spending quality time with our family and friends.”

In May the couple drove to North Carolina to visit their grandson, who is in his mid-20s, and then continued on to see Barbara’s

brother and his wife, who live near their grandson.

“The four of us drove to Williamsburg,” Barbara said. “We hadn’t seen them since the pandemic, so it was great to be together. It was catching-up time.”

Their June trip was with their other two grandsons to Orange Lake Resort in Kissimmee, Fla., where Ken and Barbara have a time-share property.

In July they joined up with some Brittany Pointe friends to visit another couple, who also resides at Brittany Pointe, at their vacation house in Sea Isle City on the Jersey shore. Also in July they went with Ken’s brother and sister-in-law to Vermont, where they enjoyed a lunch cruise on Lake Champlain, visited the Simon Pearce glass-

blowing location, toured the King Arthur Baking Co. and shopped at the Vermont Country Store.

“We drove up together and spent four days in Vermont,” Barbara said. “It was quite interesting and very fun.”

The highlight of August was a family birthday celebration for Ken, held at a lake in the Pocono Mountains.

“Every night we had a bonfire and made s’mores,” Barbara said. “We did things I hadn’t done for years.”

The couple hopes to head down to Myrtle Beach, S.C., near the end of September and have plans to meet friends in Las Vegas later this year.

“We’ll have to see how things go as far as COVID and the variant and all,”

Barbara said. “But it’s been a great summer for us. The trips we took weren’t big trips, but they were all important because we got to catch up with a lot of friends and family. To us, that’s what counts.”

### Jill Kohles

Having missed celebrating Christmas with her six children and their families, Jill Kohles decided to treat everyone to a long weekend of camping in the summer instead.

“Because of COVID we weren’t able to be together,” Jill said. “So, I gave everyone this trip and told them we’d celebrate in August.”

Jill couldn’t say enough about the recently concluded trip, which included more than 20 family members.

“We had this wonderful, wonderful time in Acadia,” she said. “All of us being together was such fun.”

Family members traveled to Under Canvas Acadia, a luxury camping site located near Acadia National Park. They arrived at different times, but everyone was there to spend a long weekend together that included kayaking under the stars, hiking up Cadillac Mountain, relaxing on the beach, stargazing and an evening sunset cruise. There also — of course — was lobster.

“For Friday night we had a great big lobster dinner,” Jill said. “That was one of the high points for me.”

A visit to Maine had been on Jill’s to-do list for a long time, and she is grateful she got to accomplish that goal with so many fam-

ily members. Each family had its own tent, equipped with king-sized beds, private bathrooms, decks, and other amenities.

“I can’t tell you how marvelous Under Canvas is,” Jill said. “They do everything for you, and everything you could need is provided. I can’t recommend it enough.”

Under Canvass has 10 locations, each located near a national park.

Jill is settled back in at Brittany Pointe Estates for now, but the memories of her summer trip will long remain.

“I just can’t imagine a better time, especially because we hadn’t been able to all be together for so long,” she said. “It was a vacation that was truly spectacular.”



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SPOT OF T



COURTESY OF TERRY ALBURGER

The sun rises over the ocean in North Carolina’s Outer Banks.

By Terry Alburger

Two years in the making, I was finally able to enjoy the North Carolina sun on the state’s beautiful Outer Banks again. It was indeed a different kind of vacation, dictated by the delta variant, COVID’s current threat.

For me, all I need is the ocean — no fancy restaurants, shopping sprees or tourist attractions. Especially not this year. Just the company of my family and the ocean’s majesty.

The beach is my happy place, as they say. I watch as my troubles roll out to sea with each passing wave. It is serene and peaceful, and perpetual. It is my respite and my replenishment. And I am drawn to it like a moth to a light.

During the rest of the year, I normally groan as

my alarm clock breaks the morning silence, rousing me from sweet slumber for another day of work. However, at the beach, I awake for sunrise, often without the need of an alarm clock. I greet each morning watching the sun peek over the horizon, reflecting off the calm ocean and the fins of the ever-present dolphins swimming by in search of breakfast. Paradise.

In the quiet of that time of day, I watch as the waves lap the shore, depositing a new load of oceanic treasure on the shore for us beachcombers to find, and returning others to the ocean floor. It’s as if God was playing with a giant Etch-a-Sketch, creating and erasing, offering different treasures with every swipe.

Each year, the treasures are different and varied. With last year’s COVID situation, I had to sit out this

amazing experience, making this year’s trek all the more special. Every piece of treasured beach glass or each spiral shell or unique oceanic fragment is incredibly intricate and fascinating.

Every once in a while, we all need a respite from the rote of everyday life. Though I am by nature a happy person (or I’d like to think so!) every now and again, it is nice to withdraw completely from our “real lives” and enjoy a week where the responsibilities of the daily grind cannot reach us. Unplug. Unwind. De-stress. Take time to be still, in the majesty of the great outdoors, and savor it. Over the past two years, I think I lost sight of just how important that downtime is.

I hope you are able to take some time away from the daily grind, to just relax and be still. Even



COURTESY OF TERRY ALBURGER

Terry Alburger spotted this dolphin from a boat while vacationing in the Outer Banks.

playing with grandkids, catching up on my kids’ busy lives, it was all very relaxing. I actually was able to read a book and a half in a week! That is unheard of in my everyday hustle and bustle.

There is usually a jigsaw puzzle set up for all to contribute a piece or two — though this year we forewent it due to a 2-year-old’s very active and curious nature! And that in itself was a pleasant diversion for me.

So, what is it that you enjoy during downtime? Why not give yourself a day or two and enjoy the simple pleasures in life? Stay away from electronics and enjoy the ensuing silence, or the time focused on those you love. One last retreat before the summer comes to an end. What better way to bid farewell to the lazy hazy days of summer?

“Stay-cations” accomplish this goal. With all the bad news on the TV and our

phones, it’s nice to unplug and go old school. Family game nights,

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## TRAVEL

# Here are things to consider if you're planning a trip

By Association of Mature American Citizens

WASHINGTON, D.C. » Travel experts will tell you that September has become the prime time for seniors to schedule their vacations, according to Rebecca Weber, CEO of the 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens. The most popular holiday destinations start to quiet down at summer's end, making for conditions most seniors favor when getting away — smaller crowds, easier access and lower prices.

Weber notes: "September of 2020 saw a sharp decline overall in travel due to the coronavirus outbreak. That was then and this is now. The pandemic was well established by this time last year and we didn't have vaccines. It is likely that this year the success of the Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines — and soon to be available booster shots — may prompt many people to travel than last year."

But, Weber cautions, while it is true that the vaccines are effective against the coronavirus, including the Delta variant, it's still a good idea to play it safe. For example, you might want to consult with your doctor. Explain when you plan to leave and where you intend to go and ask if there are any specific precautions you should take.

Dr. Leana Wen is an emergency physician and visiting professor of health policy and management at the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health. She says: "The most important factor to consider is the medical risk of your household. Specifically, is everyone in your house vaccinated? If everyone is vaccinated and generally healthy, you are very well-protected from getting severely ill from Covid-19. Many people in this circumstance might decide that



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they could take the risk of mild symptoms if they were to contract coronavirus and proceed with all their original travel plans."

Making sure you are fully vaccinated is the most important of the precautions you should take before you get on your way. Selecting a safe destination is a close second and how to get there is not far behind as far as your considerations are concerned, says Weber. Obviously, you know whether you've had your shots and so your first decision is to pick where you want to go.

Domestic travel is arguably safer than an overseas trip. In addition, you can

pick a spot that is accessible by getting in your family car, allowing you to avoid public transportation and practice self-distancing en route. Do your research and find vacation venues that offer the amenities and experience you crave that are within a tolerable driving distance from home.

But if you decide to go abroad, do your homework so that you can avoid the destinations that could be particularly dangerous. You can start by checking out a new addition on the website of the Centers for Disease Control, a simple but comprehensive color-coded global map that that

shows the safest and most dangerous destinations. It's accessible at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notices.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notices.html).

Here are some quick tips for vacation travel:

- Get tested with a viral test one to three days before your trip.

- Wearing a mask over your nose and mouth is required on planes, buses, trains and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within or out of the United States and while indoors at U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations. Travelers are not required to wear a mask

in outdoor areas of a conveyance (like on open deck areas of a ferry or the uncovered top deck of a bus). CDC recommends that travelers who are not fully vaccinated continue to wear a mask and maintain physical distance when traveling.

- Avoid crowds and stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who is not traveling with you.

- Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol).

In addition, you may also wish to consider additional trip protection. In addition to making sure that your health insurance will cover you no matter where

you travel in the U.S. and abroad, you might want to purchase travel insurance just in case you need to cancel your trip. It may also be wise to look into purchasing a travel assistance plan as well. There is a difference. Travel assistance plans help pay for things such as an emergency medical evacuation and travel arrangements, a nurse escort, a traveling companion and other emergency costs you might encounter if you get sick or hurt while traveling. It can even provide emergency cash advances.

Here are a couple of tips after reentry when you get home:

- Get tested with a viral test three to five days after travel.

- Stay home and self-quarantine for a full seven days after travel. It's also a good idea to stay home and self-quarantine for the full 7 days, even if you test negative.

- If your test is positive, isolate yourself to protect others from getting infected.

- If you don't get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.

- Avoid being around people who are at increased risk for severe illness for 14 days, whether you get tested or not.

- Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.

Follow all state and local recommendations or requirements.

*The 2.3 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [www.amac.us](http://www.amac.us) is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country.*

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CHARITY EVENT

# White Horse Village excited to have celebrity support at annual Walk to End Alzheimer's

By White Horse Village

**NEWTOWN SQUARE** » Both White Horse Village and Malcolm Poindexter III are looking forward to working together at White Horse Village's annual Walk to End Alzheimer's in partnership with the Alzheimer's Association Delaware Valley chapter this Friday. Poindexter, who will be the event's celebrity guest and DJ, admits that he, "accepted the honor before the question was fully asked." The name "Malcolm Poindexter" means a lot to many people in the Philadelphia region. It could be because they hear Poindexter III's voice as an overnight traffic reporter on KYW Newsradio, telling them the best way to get

where they are going. It could also be because they recall his late father of the same name, who worked at KYW Newsradio as well, but truly made his mark at KYW Channel 3, where his career as a reporter and host earned him four Emmys, and a spot in the Philadelphia Broadcast Pioneers Hall of Fame. Losing his legendary father to Alzheimer's 11 years ago, as well as having a mother with advanced dementia, has created a personal connection for Poindexter III to the White Horse Village event. "It means so much to have this opportunity to give back in such a meaningful way," he said. "It has opened up a lot of emotions for me — I get goosebumps

just thinking about it." Just as important as any lesson learned in the newsroom were the life lessons he was taught by his father. "He would encourage me to communicate with people, to listen to them, to experience meaningful interaction," he said. "He taught me all that through example time and time again, and it influences me still, both personally and professionally." In addition to being a celebrity guest and decorating contest judge at the Alzheimer's Walk, Poindexter III, also a professional DJ, will be playing music at the event. "I look forward to putting together a fun playlist," he said. "I believe there's a huge connection between music

and memory. My goal is to create good memories with my music, and maybe bring back some old ones that will make people smile." If you would like to support White Horse Village's Walk to End Alzheimer's, visit their team page at <http://act.alz.org/goto/whitehorsevillage> where you can join their team, or make a donation. The Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline (800-272-3900) is available round the clock, 365 days a year, where specialists and master's-level clinicians offer confidential support and information to people living with dementia, caregivers, families, and the public. Situated on 96 acres in southeastern Pennsylvania, White Horse Village is an active senior living community offering a full range of living options and health-care services. The community creates opportunities for extraordinary living in a vibrant, diverse community through personal growth, connectedness, and relationships. As a nonprofit organization, White Horse Village reinvests earnings back into the organization to further the mission and vision. For more information, please visit [www.whitehorsevillage.org](http://www.whitehorsevillage.org).



Malcolm Poindexter III

er's. Together, we can end Alzheimer's. The Alzheimer's Association is a worldwide voluntary health organization dedicated to Alzheimer's care, support, and research. Its mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Visit [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) or call 800-272-3900.

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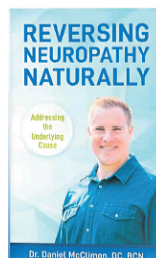
"I cannot believe, it's 3 1/2 months later, and I am able to work in my garden. When I first started, I couldn't even walk 4 minutes, now I am walking 45 minutes. It's like a miracle. I thank God that he sent me here." - Mary S.

"I went from not being able to tolerate wearing my hiking boots to wearing them for 7.5 hours and 3.5 miles over the weekend. No pain in my feet or ankles at all after doing the hiking." - Sharon G.

"To me, it is like celebrating Christmas every day, to be able to get out of bed, to be able to walk in my bare feet, and I also have better balance. I could go on and on because this is so exciting for me." - Susan D.

"I am getting much better. My legs don't hurt when I walk. My feet don't burn at night time. My ankles were extremely painful when I started, and now they very seldom hurt anymore. I can go up and down the steps again. I'm feeling way better, and I'm starting to lose a little weight." - Gerri V.

"I couldn't sleep. I was having terrible pain when I went to bed. I was sleeping less than 2 hours per night. I almost lost my job. Now I can sleep as long as I want. I had blister-like pain under my feet. I don't have that anymore. It is working for me." - Lily N.



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Essential oils are used in aromatherapy.

# Aromatherapy benefits for seniors and caregivers

**By Samantha Gordon**  
Communications and outreach manager, The Hickman

Aromatherapy is a popular holistic healing treatment that involves using natural and essential oils from plant extract to promote health and well-being.

This type of therapy can encourage the body, mind, and spirit by boosting physical and emotional health.

It acts to release stress and tension and each oil is used to focus on a certain aspect of the mind and body. Both seniors and caregivers alike have benefited from aromatherapy, and it's essential to consult with your doctor to ensure aromatherapy is a good fit for you.

**Common aromas used**

There are numerous essential oils involved in aromatherapy, all targeting different aspects of the mind, bod, and spirit.

There are a few popular scents many seniors and caregivers use to relax, relieve stress and overall calm down, depending on what they are targeting physically and emotionally.

Here are the top aromas

used in aromatherapy:

- Lavender
- Peppermint
- Rosemary
- Frankincense
- Sweet Orange

**The benefits of aromatherapy**

There are many benefits that can come with this type of therapy, from using it in the comfort of your own home to taking it with you to lunch.

Aromatherapy is a convenient stress release to bring with you. Some benefits that come to using aromatherapy:

- Stress release
- Reduce pain such as soothe joint pain
- Limit anxiety and depression
- Improves sleep and immunity
- Improves digestion

**How to use essential oils**

Since aromatherapy can be used at home or where you may prefer, there are different ways to use essential oils and target our physical and emotional health:

- Hot/cold compressors
- Lotion/creams
- Bath/shower oils
- Room diffusers

PANDEMIC

# 'We'll get through COVID resurgence'

*Association of Mature American Citizens*

Here we go again. Just when we thought we were safe, a new COVID variant has surfaced. Those few weeks of freedom when we didn't have to wear our masks, when we could socialize after a year and a half of isolation, felt pretty good.

It lifted our spirits, promising a return to some semblance of normalcy. But that promise was broken and we are once again victimized by the pandemic. So, what does the future hold?

"We got through it the first time, and we will get through it again," said Rebecca Weber, CEO of the Association of Mature American Citizens. "After all, America's senior citizens led the way in the first round of the battle with the coronavirus and are ready to show us the way to go on fighting in the face of adversity. They don't call them the greatest generation for nothing, having lived and led us through some of the most threatening moments in our nation's history: the Great Depression, World War II, Korea, the Cold War and, of course, the polio epidemic."

That's not conjecture; it's the truth backed up with multiple studies that have been made since the pandemic began. The research shows that the older you are, the better able you are when coping with COVID-induced anxiety and depression, the reason being that they've "been there and done that" when it comes to dealing with adversity.

And that's probably due to the fact that we are not born knowing how to be resilient when times get tough; it's something you have to learn as you age.

According to one report by the University of British Columbia and published by Science Daily: "Our findings provide new evidence that older adults are emotionally resilient despite public discourse often portraying their vulnerability. We also found that younger adults

are at greater risk for loneliness and psychological distress during the pandemic."

During the polio epidemic, which lasted from 1949 to 1960, tens of thousands of children died or were paralyzed by the virus until Dr. Jonas Salk's vaccine became available in 1955, and by 1960 the disease was all but eliminated.

The Atlantic reports, people "stopped handling money, and some refused to speak on the telephone, believing that germs traveled through the transmission lines" during that epidemic.

Polio was crippling and killing at record numbers, mainly among children. Then, as now, quarantines were imposed and it took its toll on travel and commerce.

So, what are the near-term prospects for the COVID crisis? The question was put to the folks at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, which asked several teams of modelers to

provide an answer.

Justin Lessler, an infectious disease epidemiologist at the Johns Hopkins, led the effort and here's what they came up with: "In three of the four scenarios, we see cases going down and staying low, deaths going down and staying low, and hospitalizations going down and staying low. If we have low vaccine hesitancy, or we're very slow and cautious in how we ease back NPIs, that's where the models send us.

"We level off at lower numbers (of cases), and they get lower a lot faster, if you both keep some control in place and have high vaccination. If we're high on either dimension (NPIs or vaccination), numbers go down ... But if we have low vaccination and quickly roll back the NPIs, then we start seeing resurgences in the fall."

(NPI stands for nonpharmaceutical interventions such as mask wearing, both mandated and by individual choice; restaurant capacity

rules; and even personal decisions about whether to go out and do activities as before the pandemic occurred.)

In other words, we've got a pretty good chance of our seeing a happy ending to the drama that is COVID.

So, as Bette Davis once said, "Fasten your seat belts; it's going to be a bumpy ride."

In other words, we'll get through this, just the way our nation's senior citizens persevered during the trials they suffered in the last century," Weber explained.

*The 2.3 million member Association of Mature American Citizens, www.amac.us, is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a nonprofit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country.*

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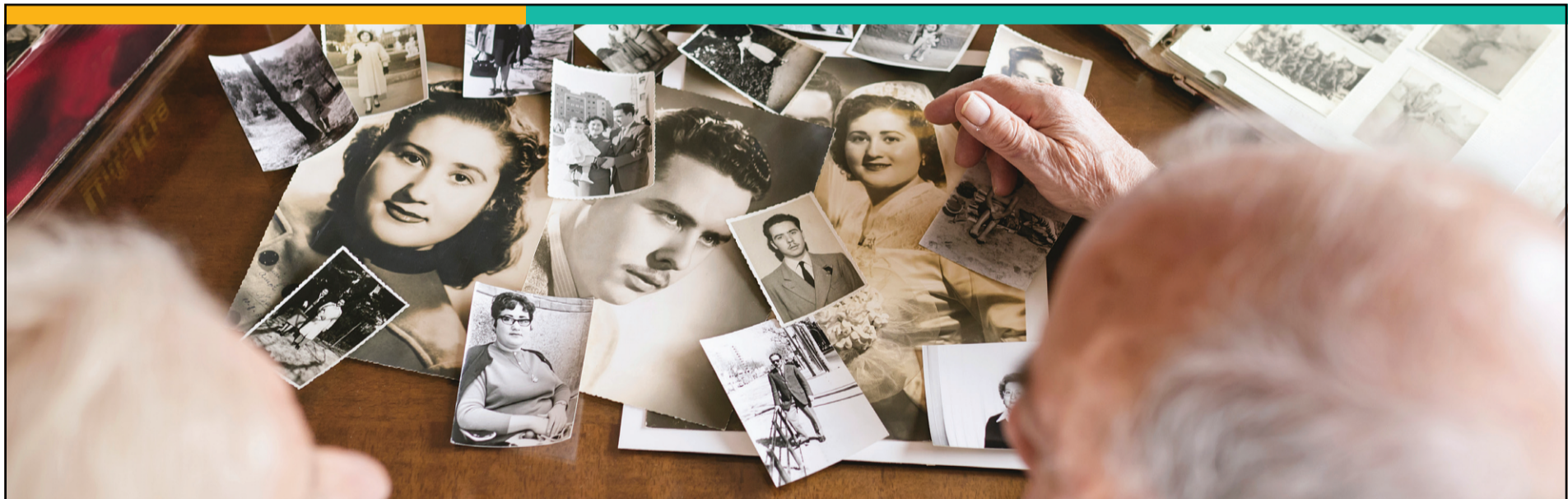
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TECHNOLOGY

# Social media's 'grandfluencers' are debunking aging myths

By Leanne Italie  
The Associated Press

**NEW YORK** » Joan MacDonald's health was in shambles at age 71. She was overweight and on numerous medications with high cholesterol, rising blood pressure and kidney trouble.

Her daughter, a fitness coach, warned that she'd wind up an invalid if she didn't turn things around. She did, hitting the gym for the first time and learning to balance her diet with the help of a brand new tool, an iPhone.

Now 75, MacDonald is a hype beast for health with a bodybuilder's physique and 1.4 million loyal followers on Instagram.

She's among a growing number of "grandfluencers," folks 70 and up who have amassed substantial followings on social media with the help of decades-younger fans.

"It's so rare to find someone her age being able to do all these things," said one of her admirers, 18-year-old Marianne Zapata of Larchmont, New York. "It's just such a positive thing to even think about."

**Aspirational and inspirational**

Both aspirational and inspirational, older influencers are turning their digital platforms into gold.

MacDonald has paid partnerships with the sportswear and supplement brand Women's Best, and the stress-busting device Sensate. And she just launched her own health and fitness app not so many years after learning how to use digital technology herself.

On TikTok, four friends who go by @oldgays — the youngest is 65 — have 2.2 million followers, including Rihanna. They have an endorsement deal with Grindr as



MICHELLE MACDONALD VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Joan MacDonald, 75, in Tulum, Mexico. MacDonald is among a growing number of "grandfluencers," folks 70 and up who are making names for themselves on social media.

they delight fans with their clueless answers to pop culture questions.

Others focus on beauty and style, setting up Amazon closets with their go-to looks and putting on makeup tutorials live.

**Grandma's Garden**

Lagetta Wayne, at 78, has teens

asking her to be their grandmother as she tends to her vegetables and cooks them up in Suisun City, Calif., as @msgrandmagarden on TikTok.

Wayne, with 130,500 followers amassed since joining in June 2020, owes her social media success to a teenage granddaughter. Her very first video, a garden tour,



KIKI ROSE VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lagetta Wayne, 78, in her garden in Suisun City, Calif. Wayne is among a growing number of "grandfluencers," folks 70 and up who are making names for themselves on social media.

**Staying connected**

Most people ages 50 and up use technology to stay connected to friends and family, according to a 2019 survey by AARP. But less than half use social media daily for that purpose, relying on Facebook above other platforms.

clocked 37,600 likes. "One day my garden was very pretty and I got all excited about that and I asked her if she would take some pictures of me," Wayne recalled. "She said she was going to put me on TikTok and I said, well, what is TikTok? I had never heard of it."

Other platforms.

SOCIAL MEDIA » PAGE 2



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RYAN YEZAK VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jessay Martin, 68, from left, Robert Reeves, 78, Michael Peterson, 65, and William Lyons, 77, in Cathedral City, Calif., in November 2020. The four friends, known as the Old Gays, are among a growing number of seniors making names for themselves on social media.

## Social media

FROM PAGE 1

Just 37% of those 70 and older used social media daily in 2019, the research showed. Since coronavirus struck, older creators have expanded their horizons beyond mainstay Facebook and gotten more voracious, often driven by

the growing number of feeds by people their own age, said Alison Bryant, senior vice president for AARP.

### The Old Gays

In the California desert town of Cathedral City, Jessay Martin is the second youngest of the Old Gays at 68.

“I thought I was going to spend the rest of my life relaxing pretty much, and I do, but this is picking up

more for us. I had a very structured week where Monday I worked the food bank at the senior center, Tuesday and Friday I did yoga for an hour and a half, Wednesday I was on the front desk at the senior center. I was just sort of floating by, not being social, not putting myself out there in the gay community. And boy, has the Old Gays changed that,” Martin said.

Like MacDonald, they do

a lot of myth-busting about what’s possible in life’s sixth, seventh and eighth decades.

“They’re showing that anybody can do these things, that you don’t have to be afraid of aging. The 20 and 30 somethings don’t often think about that,” Bryant said. “The authenticity that we’re seeing in some of these older influencers is really refreshing. That’s part of the complexity of their nar-

ratives. They’re bringing other parts of their lives to it. They’re grandparents and great-grandparents and spouses. They’re more comfortable in their own skins.”

### Cooking/beauty blog

Sandra Sallin, a blogger and artist, has slowly built her following to 25,300 on Instagram. Her reach recently extended to the British Olympic gold-medal diver Tom Daley, who

raved about her mother’s cheesecake recipe after his coach spotted it online and made it for her athletes and staff. Sallin, a lover of lipstick who focuses on cooking and beauty, also shares photos from her past and other adventures, like her turn last year in a vintage Spitfire high above the Cliffs of Dover.

“I wanted to expand my world,” Sallin said. “I felt that I was older, that

**SOCIAL MEDIA » PAGE 3**

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# Social media

FROM PAGE 2

my world was shrinking. People were moving, people were ill. So I started my blog because I wanted to reach out. After that, I heard about this thing called Instagram. It was really hard learning it. I really stumbled my way in. I'm shocked because most people who follow me are 30 and 40 years younger. But there are people who are older, who have kind of given up and say, 'You know, I'm going to start wearing lipstick.'

Toby Bloomberg, 69, in Atlanta is a Sallin supporter. She discovered Sallin after Sallin competed on the short-lived Food Network show "Clash of the Grandmas."

"She talks a lot about aging," Bloomberg said. "That's quite an unusual phenomenon on social media, which is obviously dominated by people far younger than we are."

MacDonald said she was surprised at the beginning that people actually cared what she had to say.

"Why would people want to follow an old broad," she giggled from her home in Ontario, Canada. "My daughter, Michelle, cleared that up. She said it's what you're representing, that people can do what they think they've not been able to do or were told that they couldn't do."

### Brunch With Babs

Grace Maier, 32, is home full time with her two kids, ages 6 months and 2. She follows Barbara Costello, a 72-year-old Connecticut grandmother who uses the handle @brunchwithbabs.

"She does these posts, 'Did your mom ever tell you?' and I followed her immediately on Instagram," Maier said. "Her content brings me joy! She's got all of these life hacks and tips that remind me of things



CHRIS PIZZELLO — THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Above: Senior influencer Sandra Sallin, 80, poses for a portrait at home in Los Angeles. Sallin is among a growing number of seniors making names for themselves on social media.

Left: Candace Cima, 74, in Ithaca, N.Y. Cima, who goes by @styleinyour70s.withleslieb, is among a growing number of "grandfluencers," folks 70 and up who are making names for themselves on social media.



GREGORY B. RUDGERS VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

my grandma shared with me before she passed. She also doesn't take herself too seriously and just seems

like the kind of person who would welcome you into her home."

### Obviously

Mae Karwowski, founder and CEO of the influencer marketing agency Obviously, has more than 100 influencers in her network between the ages of 60 and 80. With more than a billion users on Instagram alone, she points to the successes on that platform of 93-year-old Helen Ruth Elam (bad-diewinkle), 67-year-old Lyn Slater (iconaccidental) and 100-year-old style legend Iris Apfel.

There's another aspect to the reach of seniors: Grandparents and grandchildren who have teamed up to share their adventures together, from traveling the world to Nerf gun battles.

"Mainstream media, I would say, presents a really narrow viewpoint on this age group. What's great about social media is you can follow a really cool 75-year-old woman who is just doing her thing in Florida and that's fun. That's different. And she's funny," Karwowski said. "The 21-year-old fashion model influencer is managed. She has a team. She has designers falling all over themselves to give her everything. She has professional photographers. A lot of these 70-plus influencers are doing it all."

### Style in Your 70s

Candace Cima, 74, taught herself to shoot and edit video for Instagram by watching YouTube tutorials. She hopped on the plat-

form in February 2019 as a fresh voice on fashion and style while encouraging her audience not to be afraid of aging. Her husband sometimes helps out with photos for @styleinyour70s.withleslieb (Leslie is her middle name).

"I'm still in that learning curve, I have to be honest. Two and a half years ago, I didn't even know what an influencer was," said Cima, in Ithaca, New York. "I've always had a lot of ideas about aging. I don't understand why aging has such a negative connotation."

With 37,900 followers, some of her youngest fans have shared with her why they care: "They don't want to age the way they saw their relatives aging," Cima said. "They feel like they can learn something."

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## SENIOR TIPS

# Age gracefully in place with home care

### Griswold Home Care

September marks Healthy Aging Month, a time when organizations across the country share insights into how older adults can maintain or improve their health and well-being. As we age, it becomes more important that we monitor all aspects of our health — physical, mental, emotional, and social.

Every day, healthcare professionals make new discoveries and take steps to advance medical treatments. Thanks to these accomplishments, we are living longer more independent lives. As such, it is important to do everything we can to ensure that we are aging well.

Despite taking proactive steps toward improving one's health, many older adults face challenges as they age that compromise their independence, and they struggle with the idea of moving away from their homes. It can create distance from loved ones and remove the sense of familiarity and security that they have enjoyed for decades.

At Griswold Home Care, we are often contacted by potential clients or their families who all share similar stories. They require a little extra support, but they don't want to move into a senior living community or nursing home. After all, they spent years working hard to build homes that are filled with cherished memories of celebrations, raising children and the simple joys of daily life.

The additional risks of living in an institutional setting during the recent pandemic has also caused many to rethink their long-term care plans. In these instances, home care can offer safer and more attractive solutions. But what exactly



Home care workers provide companionship and more.

is home care and how does it work?

Home care offers older adults the opportunity to age gracefully in place, in their own homes, for as long as possible. While home care services typically are not paid through Medicare, many older adults choose to sign up with private pay, through veterans' benefits, with long-term health insurance, or with other helpful models.

Home Care companies, like Griswold and others, connect older adults with professional caregivers who help with "Activities of Daily Living" — often referred to as ALDs. These include assistance with cooking, cleaning, shopping, bathing, using the bathroom, grooming and many more services that allow seniors to feel as independent as possible, while in the comfort of their own home. Caregivers also often provide companionship to older adults. In some instances, many become extensions of the family.

These services can either be offered during the day, or even with a live-in caregiver if an individual needs more support. In fact, many Griswold offices offer help to individuals at all levels of health, including older adults who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's or

dementia. In these cases, specifically, the sense of familiarity of being in one's own home can be exponentially more beneficial rather than moving into a new environment.

When an individual is looking for home care, it is best to connect with a reputable company that has experience and a philosophy that promotes compassionate care.

It is important to have peace-of-mind with the knowledge that your selected home care partner is dedicated to maintaining the dignity, comfort, safety, independence, well-being and happiness of your loved one by providing the highest quality professional caregivers at a reasonable cost. After all, there is nothing more important than knowing you and your loved ones are in good hands.

*About Griswold Home Care: With 168 locations in 29 states, Griswold Home Care is one of the country's top home care companies, delivering compassionate care 24/7 to its clients. Its purpose is to give people the help they need to live in the place they love. For more information, visit [www.griswoldhomecare.com](http://www.griswoldhomecare.com) or call 215-402-0200.*



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COMFORT KEEPERS

# Music creates a miracle visit with great-grandma

By Wendy Kerschner

For well over 16 months, residents of most personal care and skilled nursing communities in Berks County haven't been able to accept visits from friends and loved ones. Finally in late June

2021, the facility where my grandma resides communicated that visits would be allowed with pre-arranged appointments. I was on the phone that afternoon to schedule my visit!

My mom and uncle had the first visit with my grandma. It was sad. She has dementia so the natural progression of her health and not seeing her for over a year was a shock for them. I saw it for myself a week later.

Her hair seemed different, unkempt. She had lost her mobility and was now in a support chair. She had crumbs on her shirt that surely wouldn't have been there last year. The gleam she normally had in her eyes was gone. Although I did trigger some conversation by asking about her pets when she was young and showing her pictures of my cat, it was a sad visit too.

I encouraged my sons, her great-grandchildren, to visit her, especially my youngest son, Conlan, who would be returning to his out-of-state college soon. He's a musician so he planned to take his banjo along to pass the time and have a topic of conversation. I cautioned him that grandma wasn't the same as when we had seen her last year. I just wanted

him to be prepared for what might be a disappointing visit. To my complete surprise and pure joy, on the day of his visit I received a text message from my mother, who had accompanied him. My mom's text read, "It's a great day!" and she attached a video of my grandma listening to my son's banjo playing and tapping along. My mom's text continued, "She even knew his name! Days like these blow me away! Music definitely has a way with people! It was like a miracle today!"

I asked my son, Conlan Kerschner, a college student attending East Tennessee State University on a Musical Performance scholarship, to share his insights from the visit. These are his words:

"The power of music has long been a topic of discussion regarding aging loved ones. I have been a hospice volunteer, providing banjo music, and have seen the impact and revival it brings to many of the aging seniors. Most recently my grandmother and I visited my great-grandmother, Dorothy, in the nursing home. She has suffered the effects of dementia for years, but we have found a spark that turns her from uninspired to engaged and participative — music!

"My great-grandmother has become less responsive as she ages and her dementia continues. She can usually be found sleeping most of the hours or simply sitting in her chair keeping to herself. On our recent visit, my grandmother and I took my great-grandma outside to enjoy the fresh air and to have some privacy, then I played my banjo for her.

"As soon as I began play-

ing, you could see an immediate difference in her. She was attentive and her face was full of expression. She started to tap her toes, clap her hands, and even started singing! Songs like "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" and "You Are My Sunshine" have always proved to be recognizable and interactive. The music brought her 'spunk' back. "I have found that music has the recall-effect

**When you visit a loved one next time, be sure to take music. It has the potential to enliven and awaken them like you might have thought was no longer possible.**

of associating a memory or feeling with a certain sound or melody. For seniors, the nostalgia of hearing the popular music of their time or hearing a form of music that a family member used to play can trigger these sparks of emotion. Though these sparks of life are only temporary, they are small moments of joy in their day."

When you visit a loved one next time, be sure to take music. It has the potential to enliven and awaken them like you might have thought was no longer possible. It might prove to be a miracle visit!

Wendy Kerschner is territory manager for West Lawn-based Comfort Keepers In-Home Senior Care, [www.westlawn-206.comfortkeepers.com](http://www.westlawn-206.comfortkeepers.com).



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## MENTAL HEALTH

# For some, grief becomes ‘complicated’

By Dana Sparks

Mayo Clinic News Network

Losing a loved one is one of the most distressing and, unfortunately, common experiences people face. Most people experiencing normal grief and bereavement have a period of sorrow, numbness, and even guilt and anger. Gradually these feelings ease, and it's possible to accept the loss and move forward.

But for some people, feelings of loss are debilitating and don't improve even after time passes. This is known as complicated grief, sometimes called persistent complex bereavement disorder. In complicated grief, painful emotions are so long-lasting and severe that you have trouble recovering from the loss and resuming your own life.

Different people follow different paths through the grieving experience. The order and timing of these phases may vary from person to person:

- Accepting the reality of your loss
- Allowing yourself to experience the pain of your loss
- Adjusting to a new reality in which the deceased is no longer present
- Having other relationships

These differences are normal. But if you're unable to move through these stages more than a year after the death of a loved one, you may have complicated grief. If so, seek treatment. It can help you come to terms with your loss and reclaim a sense of acceptance and peace.

## Symptoms

During the first few months after a loss, many signs and symptoms of normal grief are the same as those of complicated grief. However, while normal grief symptoms gradually start to fade over time,



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those of complicated grief linger or get worse. Complicated grief is like being in an ongoing, heightened state of mourning that keeps you from healing.

Signs and symptoms of complicated grief may include:

- Intense sorrow, pain and rumination over the loss of your loved one
- Focus on little else but your loved one's death
- Extreme focus on reminders of the loved one or excessive avoidance of reminders
- Intense and persistent longing or pining for the deceased
- Problems accepting the death
- Numbness or detachment
- Bitterness about your loss
- Feeling that life holds no meaning or purpose
- Lack of trust in others
- Inability to enjoy life or think back on positive ex-

periences with your loved one

Complicated grief also may be indicated if you continue to:

- Have trouble carrying out normal routines
- Isolate from others and withdraw from social activities
- Experience depression, deep sadness, guilt or self-blame
- Believe that you did something wrong or could have prevented the death
- Feel life isn't worth living without your loved one
- Wish you had died along with your loved one

## When to see a health care provider

Contact your health care provider or a mental health professional if you have intense grief and problems functioning that don't improve at least one year after the passing of your loved one.

## If you have thoughts of suicide

At times, people with complicated grief may consider suicide. If you're thinking about suicide, talk to someone you trust. If you think you may act on suicidal feelings, call 911 or your local emergency services number right away. Or call a suicide hotline number. In the United States, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255) to reach a trained counselor.

## Causes

It's not known what causes complicated grief. As with many mental health disorders, it may involve your environment, your personality, inherited traits and your body's natural chemical makeup.

## Risk factors

Complicated grief occurs

more often in females and with older age. Factors that may increase the risk of developing complicated grief include:

- An unexpected or violent death, such as death from a car accident, or the murder or suicide of a loved one
- Death of a child
- Close or dependent relationship to the deceased person
- Social isolation or loss of a support system or friendships
- Past history of depression, separation anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Traumatic childhood experiences, such as abuse or neglect
- Other major life stressors, such as major financial hardships

## Complications

Complicated grief can affect you physically, mentally and socially. Without appro-

priate treatment, complications may include:

- Depression
- Suicidal thoughts or behaviors
- Anxiety, including PTSD
- Significant sleep disturbances
- Increased risk of physical illness, such as heart disease, cancer or high blood pressure
- Long-term difficulty with daily living, relationships or work activities
- Alcohol, nicotine use or substance misuse

## Prevention

It's not clear how to prevent complicated grief. Getting counseling soon after a loss may help, especially for people at increased risk of developing complicated grief. In addition, caregivers providing end-of-life care for a loved one may benefit from counseling and support to help prepare for death and its emotional aftermath.

▪ Talking. Talking about your grief and allowing yourself to cry also can help prevent you from getting stuck in your sadness. As painful as it is, trust that in most cases, your pain will start to lift if you allow yourself to feel it.

▪ Support. Family members, friends, social support groups and your faith community are all good options to help you work through your grief. You may be able to find a support group focused on a particular type of loss, such as the death of a spouse or a child. Ask your doctor to recommend local resources.

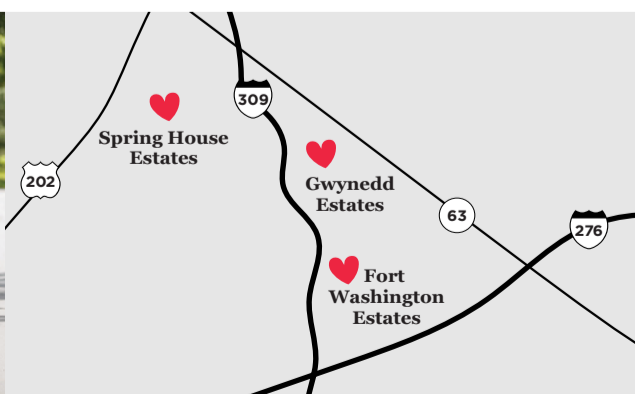
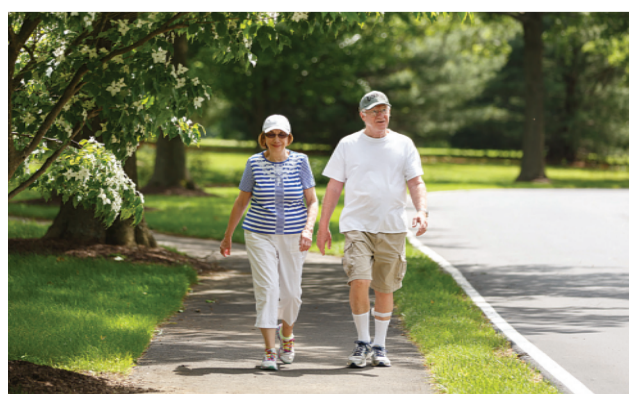
▪ Bereavement counseling. Through early counseling after a loss, you can explore emotions surrounding your loss and learn healthy coping skills. This may help prevent negative thoughts and beliefs from gaining such a strong hold that they're difficult to overcome.

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