



# Senior Sassy

*February*  
**2026**



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# Changes

**By Gretchen Hook**

*Little Elm Residential Care Home*

Change occurs. It happens in our daily lives, and we generally handle it well. But what if changes keep happening in our lives or to those we love, and we struggle to cope?

As we age, change is inevitable. Our health can decline, our bodies change, our minds change, and our beliefs and actions evolve. Some of these changes are positive, but others can be harmful and may challenge our daily lives. As a therapist and owner of a care home, I hear from families that they are struggling with the changes their loved ones are making. Most often, it involves cognitive decline and the decisions placed on decision-makers. Not only does the decision-maker have to do what is right or best for their loved one, but they must also face the struggles with their loved one's changes.

How do we handle these changes in a positive way and help our loved ones with the changes that are happening to them? I hope the following will help during these difficult times.

**Education:** when our loved one or even ourselves are diagnosed with a medical condition that will cause significant changes, it is our responsibility to learn as much as possible. This includes participating in appointments, talking with others who have the same diagnosis, seeking individual or group therapy, and sharing what you've learned with your family, loved ones, and friends.

**Self-Care:** If you are caring for some-

one who is making changes, it's vitally important to prioritize good self-care so you can be better prepared for these changes. Often, changes happen quickly, and we are caught off guard. We become stressed out from daily living, caring for our loved one and ourselves, and the stress that comes with knowing our loved one is changing. When our self-care is neglected, our ability to adapt to day-to-day changes becomes increasingly difficult.

**Respite:** it's okay to know when to say when. Respite options are a great way to take a break from the day-to-day responsibilities of caring for someone who makes changes. What does respite look like? If you and your loved one are at home, there are facilities and care homes that offer a room (for pay) where your loved one can be cared for, so you can get a much-needed break. Your loved one will thank you for it, and you will be much better at caring for them in the long run if you prioritize yourself.

**Hand over the baton:** what do I mean? If you're caring for someone full-time and find it increasingly difficult due to the changes they are making, it may be time for your loved one to be placed in a care facility or care home. It's okay to admit that you can no longer provide the necessary care. It's okay to work with professionals who specialize in caring for others. And, it's okay to acknowledge that you need help. You're not defeated; you're helping yourself and your loved one. Remember, resentment and anger often stem from holding on too tightly to prove you can do it all, rather than humbling yourself and recognizing when you need support.

**Delegate:** If you have family or friends willing and able to assist in caring for your loved one or even yourself (if you're the one making changes), delegate tasks to others. Again, if you're not alone in caring for your loved one, allow someone else to take over for a while (as long as it's safe to do so) to give yourself a break. We all want to believe we are Superman (woman), and most of us are; however, even Superman needed a vacation every once in a while.

The overall message is that we need community, help, and it's okay to ask for it. When we or our loved ones are changing and we can no longer care for them or ourselves, we must ask for help, educate ourselves, and conserve our energy for the future. Caring for someone or ourselves isn't easy when our bodies and minds are changing. It can be scary, frustrating, anger-provoking, and humbling all at once. Keep in mind the adage: we must put on our own oxygen mask before we can help anyone else. My goal is to help those who are in need, who need support, or who need ideas on how to get support. Please feel free to reach out if you need support for yourself or your loved one.



Solve the code to discover words related to heart health.  
Each number corresponds to a letter.  
(Hint: 9 = S)

- A. 8 23 22 9 3**  
*Clue: Throbbing of arteries*
- B. 8 10 3 9 9 23 10 3**  
*Clue: Continuous force*
- C. 8 23 20 8 6 25 14**  
*Clue: Moving blood through body*
- D. 2 3 9 9 3 22 9**  
*Clue: Veins and arteries*

Answers: A: pulse B: pressure C: pumping D: vessels



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*Did you know?*

**Valentine's Day is a celebration of relationships and love for people across the globe. Although Valentine's Day is widely celebrated across North America and Europe. The holiday also is celebrated in parts of Asia and Latin America. The Philippines is famous for mass weddings on Valentine's Day. Days devoted to love also are celebrated outside of February in different countries. Brazil celebrates Día dos Namorados (Lover's Day) in June, while Colombia celebrates Día del**

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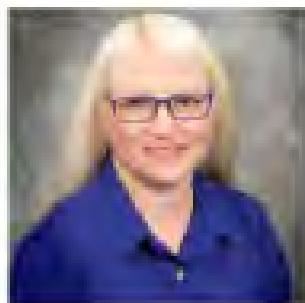
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To help make information about Medicare easier to understand, UnitedHealthcare® also has an educational program called Medicare Made Clear®. This program provides general information about Medicare to help people better understand their choices.

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SPFL180901

# CareAge HomeCare enters 20 years of delivering care at home

By Michele Weisman

Delivering home care to their clients for twenty years, owners of CareAge HomeCare, JoAnn Walter and Vickie Smith, fueled their success through compassionate care. Smith's vision to build a home health care business, encouraged by Walter's mom, Mary Walter, brought the two women to Central Texas.

Smith, from the area, and Walter, wanting to support her friend, filed the license application with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. Once approved, they opened on June 1, 2006.

Their first office location was Walter's home, where they hired their first caregiver who worked for them for 14 years.



There has always been one leading question as Walter and Smith built their business. What care would they want provided for their own parents?

Outgrowing the home office after two years, they moved to the business park in Temple where they are to this day.

Their brochure states, they provide “*non-medical personal assistance services for in-home care.*” Their signature care has always been 24-hour care and Alzheimer's care. Clients can opt for three hours a day a few days a week, up to 24-hour care seven days a week. CareAge HomeCare serves clients in the local area and beyond, including Killeen, Cameron, and Salado.

Excellent care means hiring exceptional caregivers and staying on top of current training that continues their education in the field. Smith's background in leading *Train the Trainer* to professionals nationally, prior to at-home care, inspires her to take current visual training for their caregivers and transform it into multi-sensory training.

Smith said, “My focus is to help you stay at home. You do all of those activities of daily living because that's what drives your life. When you get frail, you just might need some assistance to keep you safe in your home. And not wear out your loved ones.”

Smith opened up about a cherished moment with a client and her husband, whom she drove for 15 years to appointments. She passed this Dec. at the age of 99. But before leaving, she left Smith a priceless gift.

While in route to the beauty salon, driving her client, a retired nurse supervisor at the former Santa Fe Hospital said, “Vickie, honey, you're doing God's work.”

Smith said, “That's part of it. And you have to understand, if you don't have a heart of compassion for caring for people, you need to not do this. I see this through a different lens than just running a business and making money.”

To the reader who is at home and finding they can do less, or their spouse is needing more help than they used to, Smith's message is "get help."

A dream stirred with encouragement over Pennsylvania Dutch cooking by JoAnn Walter's mom, Mary Walter, two decades ago, put Walter and Smith into the home care business. As they glance back to their beginnings, there are no plans to slow down. Looking toward the future, they continue their education in the field of aging while providing caregivers who are caring.

To find out more, visit [www.careagehomecare.com](http://www.careagehomecare.com).



**Mardi Gras**  
FEBRUARY 13, 2024

**FAT TUESDAY**  
FEBRUARY 25

## Did you know?

The Cleveland Clinic notes that

**kidney pain is often mistaken for back pain.**

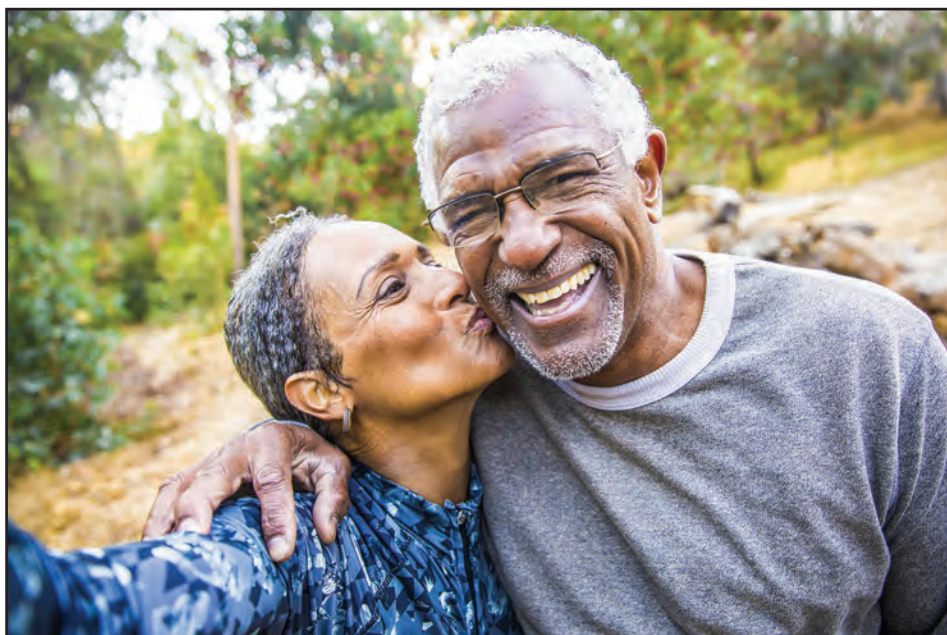
Those unsure of what's causing their discomfort should know there are some notable differences between kidney pain and back pain. Back pain typically affects the middle of the back over the spine and leads to discomfort in the lower back. Kidney pain typically occurs to the right or left of the spine just below the rib cage where the kidneys are located. Kidney pain may feel deeper than back pain, and can radiate to other areas of the body, including the abdomen or groin. If back pain goes beyond the initial area, it tends to radiate down the legs. Individuals experiencing pain sufficient enough to feel discomfort that does not subside are urged to speak with a physician to determine if the pain is indicative of a back problem or an issue with their kidneys.



# Happy Valentine's Day

## 8 unique Valentine's Day gift ideas

Gift-giving is a key component of Valentine's Day celebrations every February 14. Valentine's Day is a mere month-and-a-half after the holiday season, so ideas for more thoughtful gifts may be in short supply. Let these Valentine's day gift ideas serve as inspiration.



**1. Custom painted portrait:** Many local artists paint beautiful portraits from photographs. Find an image you like and have it made into an even more impressive work of art.

**2. Doll likeness:** The well known Funko POP! brand known for its pop culture figurines enables customers to create likenesses of

themselves or loved ones. You can have custom dolls made in your sweetheart's likeness.

**3. Preserved roses:** While fresh roses may only last a few days to a week, preserved or 'eternity' roses are treated and specially packaged so they can endure and serve as lasting, welcome reminders of Valentine's Day love.

**4. Journal or scrapbook:** A decorative scrapbook or journal enables your special someone to keep track of moments spent together and key milestones.

**5. First date map:** Gift a framed picture of a map marked with the specific location of your first date, whether it was a restaurant, park or museum.

**6. Birthstone jewelry:** Jewelry is a popular gift on Valentine's Day. Make gifts even more special by finding pieces that include your special someone's birthstone. The American Gem Society offers a handy chart at [www.americangemsociety.org/birthstones/](http://www.americangemsociety.org/birthstones/).

**7. Experiential gifts:** Experiential gifts may be just what is needed this Valentine's Day. Some options include a couple's cooking class, tickets to a sports game or concert, a vacation to a romantic locale, or a day or night out on the town.

**8. Prepare a favorite recipe:** Learn what your loved one enjoys eating the most and then recreate the recipe as a thoughtful gift and dinner at home.

This Valentine's Day, people can consider these unique thoughtful gift ideas.

### *Did you know?*

Valentine's Day symbols like heart-shaped boxes of chocolate, Cupid shooting his arrow and roses are ubiquitous come February. Each of those symbolizes is meant to signify the love individuals have for their significant others, but perhaps no Valentine's Day image is more symbolic of love than doves. According to LiveScience.com, doves have been a symbol of love since the Middle Ages, when many people believed birds chose their mates on Valentine's Day. But the history of doves and their affiliation with love dates back even further and can be traced to the days of Greek mythology. Aphrodite is the goddess of love in Greek mythology, and she is often depicted as being surrounded by doves. Doves' own traits also have helped them become symbols of love, as LiveScience.com notes that male doves help their female partners incubate and tend to their young, bolstering their image as caring, loving birds.

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Email: [activities@beltonseniorcenter.org](mailto:activities@beltonseniorcenter.org); Activity Director, Judy Owens: 254-770-7958;



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Zumba Class on T/Th is from 6-7 \$5/class No class on 1st/3rd Thurs,						
1	2 9 Exercise 9 Woodcarvers 10 Improver Line D 12 Dominos 42	3 8 Mex.Train Doms. 8/9 Beg. Line Dance 10 Improver Line D. 9 Quilting/12 Canasta 6 Zumba Class	4 9 Exercise 10:30 Bible Study 12 Bingo 1 Art s & Crafts	5 8/9 Beg. Line Dance 10 Improver Line D. 9 Quilting 12 Canasta 6:30 Dance	6 9 Exercise 10 Improver Line D 12 Bridge 12 Dominos 42	7 Dance is Thurs., Feb. 5, 6:30 with Bill Whitacre Band
8	9 9 Exercise 9 Woodcarvers 10 Improver Line D 12 Dominos 42	10 8 Mex.Train Doms. 8/9 Beg. Line Dance 10 Improver Line D. 9 Quilting/12 Canasta 6 Zumba Class	11 9 Exercise 10:30 Bible Study 12 Bingo 1 Art Painting	12 8/9 Beg. Line Dance 10 Improver Line D. 9 Quilting 12 Canasta 6 Zumba	13 9 Exercise 10 Improver Line D 12 Bridge 12 Dominos 42	14
15	16 We are closed for Presidents Day!	17 8 Mex.Train Doms. 8/9 Beg. Line Dance 10 Improver Line D. 9 Quilting/12 Canasta 6 Zumba Class	18 9 Exercise 10:30 Bible Study 12 Bingo 1 Arts & Crafts	19 8/9 Beg. Line Dance 10 Improver Line D. 9 Quilting 12 Canasta 6:30 Dance	20 9 Exercise 10 Improver Line D 12 Bridge 12 Dominos 42	21 Dance is Thurs., Feb. 19, 6:30 with Out of the Blue Band
22 Pot Luck on Mon., Feb. 23, 5:30, will be Trivia Night with the Belton Youth Adv. Com.	23 9 Exercise 9 Woodcarvers 10 Improver Line D 12 Dominos 42 5:30 Pot Luck	24 8 Mex.Train Doms. 8/9 Beg. Line Dance 10 Improver Line D. 9 Quilting/12 Canasta 6 Zumba Class	25 10:30 Bible Study 12 Bingo 1 Art Painting	26 8/9 Beg. Line Dance 10 Improver Line D. 9 Quilting 12 Canasta 6 Zumba	27 9 Exercise 10 Improver Line D 12 Bridge 12 Dominos 42	28

## Upcoming Events:

1. The Center is partnering with the City of Belton on offering a Zumba class on Tues. and Thurs. from 6-7 p.m., except for 1st and 3rd Thursdays when we have our regular dances. Cost is \$5 per class.
2. Dances - Thurs., Feb. 5., with Bill Whitacre Band; and Thurs, Feb. 19, with Out of the Blue Band.
3. Pot Luck is Monday, Feb. 23, at 5:30 p.m. with Trivia Night, led by the City Youth Advisory Commission.
4. We are in need of quilters who would be available on Tues. and Thurs. mornings 9-12, or work from home! Call Judy at 254-770-7958 if interested.
5. We would also like new bridge players if interested in playing or learning - Fridays from 12-3.

# HEALTHY HEART WORD SEARCH



*Answers on Page 14.*

F	L	A	H	O	F	F	S	E	V	L	A	V	M	N	O	U	O	V	I
M	A	U	O	E	K	O	R	T	S	P	V	P	H	E	A	R	T	L	P
M	U	S	C	L	E	D	Q	S	C	O	R	O	N	A	R	Y	T	U	C
H	S	N	P	A	N	I	R	N	E	Q	N	K	I	X	B	M	B	D	R
A	I	S	P	E	H	C	H	O	L	E	S	T	E	R	O	L	F	I	U
H	V	I	A	E	R	O	B	I	C	I	U	R	P	F	D	R	R	M	E
M	F	R	D	X	E	S	I	C	R	E	X	E	R	P	B	S	T	I	Q
S	S	I	S	O	R	E	L	C	S	O	R	E	H	T	A	H	K	E	F
D	I	Q	X	U	N	O	I	T	A	M	M	A	L	F	N	I	Q	S	F
L	X	P	I	X	H	E	A	L	T	H	Y	L	Q	A	H	C	E	L	D
E	R	K	C	A	R	D	I	A	C	R	P	H	C	S	P	O	N	U	S
U	N	O	I	T	A	L	U	C	R	I	C	B	E	A	T	S	X	P	F
Q	Y	S	C	X	R	A	L	U	C	S	A	V	O	I	D	R	A	C	A
A	X	F	M	O	T	H	Q	Q	V	D	N	E	V	T	O	X	A	K	R
L	S	T	R	E	S	S	D	H	B	I	Y	I	M	A	T	A	P	S	T
P	H	B	V	V	D	X	F	V	V	D	I	L	E	T	H	V	X	Q	E
D	O	O	L	B	S	Y	F	V	F	F	A	B	A	V	K	M	Y	Y	R
S	E	Q	T	H	Y	P	E	R	T	E	N	S	I	O	N	N	R	I	I
C	M	O	C	M	C	E	C	N	A	R	U	D	N	E	L	I	N	Q	E
L	H	H	A	I	M	H	T	Y	H	R	R	A	K	B	K	P	U	S	S

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

## WORDS

AEROBIC  
ARRHYTHMIA

ARTERIES  
ATHEROSCLEROSIS  
BEATS  
BLOOD  
CARDIAC  
CARDIOVASCULAR

CHOLESTEROL  
CIRCULATION  
CORONARY  
ENDURANCE  
EXERCISE  
HEALTHY

HEART  
HYPERTENSION  
INFLAMMATION  
MUSCLE  
PLAQUE  
PULSE

STRESS  
STROKE  
VALVES  
VEINS

# Arches FootCare Introduces a New Year, New Format — With the Same Great Service

*Special to The Journal*

As the new year begins, Arches FootCare is proud to announce a refreshed format that reflects its core mission more clearly than ever: helping people move better, feel better, and live with less foot pain.

While the format is new, the commitment to the same great service clients have trusted for years remains unchanged.

In the new year, Arches FootCare is sharpening its focus on what it does best: arch support and orthotics, comprehensive foot and gait assessments, and professional pedorthic services tailored to each individual. To support this focus, Arches FootCare will no longer offer general footwear sales and will instead concentrate on specialized foot care solutions.

The only footwear brand continuing to be offered is Brooks Athletic Shoes, selected for their proven compatibility with orthotics

and arch support needs. This streamlined footwear offering allows Arches FootCare to better align shoe recommendations with clinical assessments and customized solutions.

“My goal has always been to address the root cause of pain, not just the symptoms,” said Heinz Reichl, Owner & Certified Pedorthist of Arches FootCare. “

By focusing on arch support, orthotics, gait analysis, and a carefully chosen athletic shoe brand, I can provide more precise, effective, and consistent care.” Arches FootCare continues to offer:

- In-depth foot and gait assessments
- Custom orthotics and modified over-the-counter arch supports
- Expert pedorthic services
- Personalized recommendations based on biomechanics, activity level, and lifestyle

New year, new format — same great service. Arches FootCare looks forward to helping clients take confident, comfortable steps into the year ahead. For more information or to schedule an assessment, visit [archesfootcaretempletx.com](http://archesfootcaretempletx.com) or contact Arches FootCare directly, 254.773.2693



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- Diabetic care
- Individualized plan of care
- Daily activities
- Transportation

*Game answers from Page 13.*

F L A H O F F S E V L A V M N O U O V I  
M A U O E K O R T S P V P H E A R T L P  
M U S C L E D Q S C O R O N A R Y T U C  
H S N P A N I R N E Q N K I X B M B D R  
A I S P E H C H O L E S T E R O L F I U  
H V I A E R O B I C I U R P F D R R M E  
M F R D X E S I C R E X E R P B S T I Q  
S S I S O R E L C S O R E H T A H K E F  
D I Q X U N O I T A M M A L F N I Q S F  
L X P T X H E A L T H Y L Q A H C E L D  
E R K C A R D I A C R P H C S P O N U S  
U N O I T A L U C R I C B E A T S X P F  
Q Y S C X R A L U C S A V O I D R A C A  
A X F M O T H Q Q V D N E V T O X A K R  
L S T R E S S D H B I Y I M A T A P S T  
P H B V V D X F V V D I L E T H V X Q E  
D O O L B S Y F V F A B A V K M Y Y R  
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C M O C M C E C N A R U D N E L I N Q E  
L H H A I M H T Y H R R A K B K P U S S

# • FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH •

## Milestone moments in Black history

Black History Month is celebrated each February in the United States and Canada. Each nation's history is filled with notable contributions from Black individuals, many of whom overcame incredible odds to make their countries better places for themselves and their peers to call home. As Americans and Canadians prepare to celebrate Black History Month, they can consider these milestone moments in Black history.

- **Nat Turner leads a slave revolt in 1831.**

Nat Turner was born into slavery on October 2, 1800, in rural Southampton County, Virginia. Turner's intellect was notable since he was a boy, and that undoubtedly played a role in his ability to orchestrate a slave revolt that began on August 21, 1831. Turner led a group of roughly 75 enslaved people on a four-day rebellion. Though the uprising was quickly suppressed and Turner was ultimately hanged on November 11, 1831, the revolt strengthened anti-slavery sentiments in the northern United States.

- **The NAACP is founded in 1909.**

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was an interracial effort founded by a collection of individuals, included W.E.B. Du Bois and Ida B. Wells, who aspired to advance justice for Black Americans. The NAACP, which History.com notes had expanded to encompass 400 branches within 12 years of its inception, fought against numerous injustices over the years, including anti-lynching efforts in the twentieth century and has also promoted programs and policies designed to place African Americans on equal economic footing with whites.

- **Willie O'Ree breaks the color barrier in the National Hockey League in 1958.**

O'Ree was born in Fredericton, New Brunswick, on October 15, 1935. O'Ree's grandparents escaped slavery in the United States through the Underground Railroad and eventually settled in Canada. A winger whose playing career would last until 1979, O'Ree became the first black player to take the ice in an NHL game when he debuted with the Boston Bruins on January 18, 1958. Amazingly, O'Ree reached the pinnacle of professional hockey despite having been blinded in one eye two years prior to his debut with the Bruins,

who had no knowledge of O'Ree's diminished vision. Equally notable is that O'Ree had met American baseball player Jackie Robinson when the former was 15-years-old. Robinson had broken the Major League Baseball color barrier on April 15, 1947, an appearance that is considered a watershed moment in Black history.

- **Lincoln Alexander makes Canadian political history in 1968.**

Born in Toronto to Caribbean immigrant parents, Lincoln Alexander fought in World War II and became the first Black Canadian to be a member of Parliament in the House of Commons. The Government of Canada also notes that Alexander later served as the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario from 1985 to 1991, becoming the first Black person to hold a vice-regal position in Canada.

There are no shortage of milestone moments in Black history in the United States and Canada. These moments, and the people involved in them, merit celebration and attention.



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# Renowned Neuroscientist A Beacon of Hope for

In an era where neurological health challenges increasingly dominate public discourse, Dr. Keith N. Darrow of MyTinnitusNumber.org, a distinguished neuroscientist, professor, clinical audiologist, and Certified Dementia Practitioner, has released his latest work, *TinnituisTreatable.com*. This publication marks his third dedicated volume on the subject of tinnitus, building upon a career spanning over two decades at the intersection of brain science and auditory health. As the author of previous acclaimed titles exploring similar themes, Dr. Darrow continues to establish himself as a leading authority, offering evidence-based insights that challenge longstanding misconceptions and provide actionable pathways to relief.

*TinnituisTreatable.com* arrives at a critical juncture. With an estimated 70 million Americans and over one billion individuals globally experiencing tinnitus—a persistent perception of sound without an external source—the condition has evolved from a niche concern to a widespread neurological epidemic. Dr. Darrow's book systematically dismantles the outdated narrative that tinnitus is an untreatable annoyance and people suffering need to learn to live with it, instead framing it as a treatable signal from the brain that demands prompt, comprehensive intervention. Through a blend of clinical expertise, patient narratives, and the latest advancements in neuroscience, the text serves as a roadmap for those who have been dismissed by traditional medical approaches.

Dr. Darrow's credentials lend unparalleled weight to this endeavor. Holding a Ph.D. focused in neuroscience from M.I.T. and Harvard Medical School, being a tenured professor at Worcester State Massachusetts, and certified as a clinical audiologist (CCC-A), he has treated thousands of patients while contributing to research on auditory neurology and cognitive decline. His prior books have educated professionals and lay audiences alike on the links between hearing health and overall brain function, emphasizing preventive strategies against conditions like dementia. In *TinnituisTreatable.com*, he extends this foundation, introducing readers to breakthroughs in NeuroTechnology™—a term he employs to describe technologies that interact directly with the nervous system to modulate brain activity and alleviate symptoms.

The book's introduction sets a tone of empathy and urgency, acknowledging the deeply personal nature of tinnitus. "Tinnitus is a deeply personal experience," Dr. Darrow writes. "For some, it's a faint ringing in the background. For others, it's a constant, overwhelming noise that hijacks daily life. No matter the form, one truth remains: tinnitus is real—and it is treatable." This statement encapsulates the book's core message, countering the frequent dismissal patients encounter, such as being told to "just live with it." Drawing from his clinical practice, Dr. Darrow shares stories of individuals who, after years of frustration, found relief through structured, science-backed protocols.

Right from the start, this book delves into the prevalence of tinnitus, explaining why it affects so many in modern society. Dr. Darrow attributes the rise to factors including aging populations, pervasive noise pollution, prolonged use of personal audio devices, and systemic issues like neuroinflammation

from conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. He likens the auditory system to a sound engineering setup: the ears as microphones capturing frequencies, and the brain as the engineer processing the input. When signals degrade—due to damaged hair cells or neural synapses—the brain compensates by "turning up the gain," resulting in phantom sounds. This analogy, grounded in neuroscience, demystifies tinnitus as a brain-based response rather than a mere ear problem.

Importantly, Dr. Darrow highlights that tinnitus is not "normal" even if common. He cites global statistics, noting that over one in four U.S. adults reports symptoms, with rates increasing among younger demographics due to noise exposure. "Tinnitus is often the first sign that your hearing loss journey has begun" he quotes from colleague Dr. Ross O'Neill, reinforcing the need for proactive care.

Transitioning to the impacts of untreated tinnitus, this neurological condition is framed as a "big deal"—a warning system with far-reaching consequences. Dr. Darrow draws on functional MRI and EEG studies showing altered brain activity in tinnitus sufferers, including hyperconnectivity between auditory and emotional centers like the amygdala. This leads to a distress cycle: perception triggers emotion, which amplifies stress, perpetuating the sound. He discusses links to mental health issues, with over 50% of patients experiencing anxiety or depression, and an elevated risk of cognitive decline, including dementia.

A poignant section recounts the tragic story of Kent Taylor, founder of Texas Roadhouse, whose post-COVID tinnitus escalated to unbearable levels, contributing to his suicide in 2021. Dr. Darrow uses this public case to illustrate tinnitus's potential lethality through sleep deprivation and emotional exhaustion. "Tinnitus is not merely a symptom to manage,"

# Unveils Third Book on Tinnitus: Millions Suffering in Silence

he asserts, "but a signal to act because it is a neurological disorder that warrants clinical attention." The chapter reframes tinnitus as a biomarker for broader brain health, urging readers to view it with the urgency afforded to precursors of heart disease or stroke.

For many living with tinnitus, the journey begins with frustration: being told their hearing is "normal," despite the very real challenges they face each day. Standard hearing tests (aka the audiogram), developed nearly a century ago, are limited. They measure volume thresholds up through only about half of the ear, but overlook the subtleties of neural degradation, clarity loss, and damage in the most sensitive part of our hearing range. Dr. Darrow explains how the real culprit is often cochlear synaptopathy, or "hidden hearing loss," where the connections between hair cells and auditory nerves deteriorate. These silent disruptions distort the way signals are delivered to the brain, explaining why a person can pass a hearing test yet still experience tinnitus, difficulty understanding speech in noise, and the exhausting fatigue that comes with it.

Research now supports what patients have known all along: relief is possible even when tests say otherwise. Studies such as Suzuki et al. (2021) demonstrate that individuals with near-normal hearing can experience significant reductions in tinnitus when fitted with specialized hearing technology. Waechter et al. (2023) confirmed that treatment can be effective regardless of traditional audiometric loss. A case that illustrates this well is Brandy, a 45-year-old clinic coordinator who had "normal" hearing scores yet lived with constant ringing. Her Tinnitus Handicap Inventory score revealed a measurable burden, which was alleviated after being fit with prescriptive NeuroTechnology™. Advanced diagnostics—extended high-frequency testing, otoacoustic emissions, and speech-in-noise

assessments—allow clinicians to uncover what the outdated tests miss and offer solutions that truly change lives.

Beyond diagnostics, Dr. Darrow presents practical strategies for patients to measure and track their progress. One such tool is "MyTinnitusNumber.org," a personalized scoring system that quantifies severity and offers a clear starting point for recovery. From there, he outlines a structured, seven-step treatment approach designed to retrain the brain, reduce neural strain, and restore quality of life. At the heart of this program is Prescription NeuroTechnology™—customized devices that deliver targeted stimulation to the auditory pathway. By encouraging adaptive neuroplasticity, these systems lower the intensity of tinnitus while strengthening the brain's processing of sound.

Other therapies play an important role as well. Cognitive behavioral strategies, biometric monitoring, mindfulness, regular movement, and improved sleep all reinforce recovery by calming the nervous system and building cognitive reserve. Together, these interventions reduce stress, promote resilience, and help restore a sense of control. The book also highlights how treating tinnitus protects long-term brain health, with evidence linking auditory enrichment to reduced risk of decline and dementia. Patient stories—like Mark, a 58-year-old firefighter whose "normal" test concealed significant auditory stress—show how the program brings relief that is practical, not miraculous.

What distinguishes this work is its balance of science and compassion. The recommendations are rooted in peer-reviewed research, yet presented in a way that empowers patients to take the next step. The book also critiques outdated protocols and systemic barriers that leave too many people dismissed or untreated, urging a shift toward modern, evidence-based care.

Ultimately, TinnitusTreatable.com is both a scientific guide and a message of hope. For those ready to take the first step, resources like MyTinnitusNumber.org provide a way to measure progress and begin the journey toward relief. It validates the lived experiences of millions while offering a pathway forward. In Dr. Darrow's words: "This book is for everyone living with tinnitus who deserves more than hollow reassurances. They deserve options. They deserve treatment. And above all, they deserve hope, rooted in evidence—not guesswork."

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