

TRANSITIONS

VOL 8.2 • APR '25

human and animal grief: a profound connection across species by Sarah Arnold Spiggle



Grief is a deeply human experience, a complex and emotional reaction to loss. Yet, as scientific research and poignant anecdotes reveal, grief is not exclusive to humans. Many animals also display signs of mourning, and their behaviors often mirror those of people who are grieving the loss of a loved one. One of the most compelling examples of animal grief involves elephants, whose sensitivity and emotional depth have been captured in various remarkable accounts.

In a touching story shared by Rabbi Leila Gal Berner, Ph.D., we are introduced to an extraordinary act of mourning among elephants. When a beloved human friend passed away suddenly, two herds of elephants—some traveling great distances—gathered near the deceased man's home, moving in what can only be described as a solemn procession. Their behavior, described as "almost 'funereal'" in nature, was a silent homage to the man who had nurtured them and shared his love with them during his lifetime.

Rabbi Berner's reflection on the event invites us to ponder the idea of interconnectedness. She describes how, when the man's heart stopped beating, the hearts of hundreds of elephants seemed to mourn. The bond shared between the man and these elephants was profound, and in the wake of his death, the elephants returned to pay tribute to their lost friend. They recognized his passing not through the usual sensory channels but through a deep emotional connection that transcended species lines.

This touching display of empathy and mourning is just one of many examples that suggest the emotional lives of animals are far more complex than we may have previously assumed. Elephants, in particular, have long been known for their extraordinary intelligence, strong family bonds, and social cohesion. These creatures display behaviors such as grieving for deceased companions and relatives, engaging in what can only be understood as mourning rituals. In some cases, elephants have been observed gently touching the bones of dead elephants, even showing signs of depression and withdrawal after a loss.

But the connection between human and animal grief is not limited to elephants. Studies have shown that other animals, including dogs, primates, dolphins, and even birds, exhibit grief when they lose a member of their social group. In many cases, the animal's grief is expressed through altered behavior, including changes in eating habits, withdrawal from social interactions, and displays of anxiety or sadness. Some animals, like elephants, may even engage in specific behaviors to honor the deceased, while others exhibit signs of stress and confusion in response to the loss.

For humans, grief is an intricate process, influenced by cultural, psychological, and emotional factors. Yet, across species, the core experience of grief appears to be deeply rooted in the shared need for emotional connection, attachment, and love. Whether expressed through tears, mourning rituals, or simply a quiet withdrawal, the emotional responses to loss highlight the universality of grief. It is a reminder that we, as humans, are not alone in our vulnerability to the pain of loss.

Rabbi Berner's poignant reflection on the elephants of Thula Thula serves as a powerful reminder that we are all part of a larger web of life, where the bonds of love and loss transcend the boundaries between species. The elephants' mourning for the human they had loved is a profound testament to the deep emotional capacities of animals and to the interconnectedness of all beings. It shows us that grief, whether human or animal, is a universal expression of love and connection, an enduring reminder that we are all linked in our shared experience of loss.

In moments like these, we are invited to reflect on the beauty of interspecies relationships and the ways in which our lives intertwine with those of other sentient beings. And perhaps, in understanding animal grief, we can cultivate a deeper sense of empathy, not only toward our fellow humans but also toward the many species with whom we share this planet.




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“Change brings opportunity”

Dear Friends,

The Monarch Butterfly is at the tipping point of being listed as an endangered species :

- | Decline in primary food source
- | Widespread use of herbicide
- | Habitat destruction
- | Climate change
- | Deforestation

Although change often is accompanied by growing pains, it can also bring unrecognized opportunity.

Over the years we have invited those who are grieving to join together every August for an annual gathering to help restore spirits and honor loved ones. In light of monarch butterfly conservation, we are taking time to discover and implement new elements for the aftercare of those we serve.

Our Change: Our annual release will not take place given the concern for the longevity of the monarch species. We are sorry to all who looked forward to this healing event. It is hard for us too!

“Change brings opportunity,” says Lebanese-American businessman, Nido Qubein. We don’t always welcome change, but often we won’t recognize its benefits until it has been realized. Stay tuned as we navigate these new opportunities and shift our approach to best support you.

Sincerely,

Michael & David Perotto



**GRAND
OPENING**
*Bartolomeo & Perotto
Butterfly Haven*

Sunday, July 20
1pm – 3pm

Join us -
Be inspired,
dig in & plant with us!

If you pay attention, nature teaches us incredible lessons about difficulty, change and renewal every day. Consider the caterpillar’s transformation to becoming a butterfly. It parallels our own grief journeys and gives us hope for healing. This is why you see the beautiful monarch butterfly paired with our brand and messaging for Bartolomeo & Perotto Funeral Home.

In light of the fragile condition of the Monarch Butterfly species, Bartolomeo & Perotto has decided to DIG IN for a long overdue project. This summer our butterfly garden overlooking Round Pond Creek will not only be getting a facelift, but we plan to become an **official Monarch Waystation** and grow our conservation efforts for all butterflies and the monarch that is near and dear to our heart. Stop over to the garden at 1411 Vintage Lane and DIG IN with us!



BE A PART of an important garden transformation
and learn how **you too can be a butterfly conservationist!**

RSVP - by July 16 -
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don't click – don't call

how not to let the fraudsters win

by Andrea Ruggieri

“Don't Click the Link!” ...the latest mantra. The learning curve for identifying fraud can leave you at risk. Keeping ahead of scammers as they continue to fortify their strategies with artificial intelligence is making it even harder.

In the March/April 2025 edition of AARP Bulletin in an article entitled *How They Try to Trick You Now!* by Ken Budd shares current and uplifted scams to look out for. Technology can be our friend, and foe. Read on and learn how to spot a hoax and more importantly, how to protect yourself.

Card Decline

You order something online from what you thought was a well-known company and you receive a message back – CARD DECLINED. Maybe you try again with another card – CARD DECLINED. In this scam you discover that you've been charged each time and in some cases for more than you thought. Remember, scammers are the ultimate impersonators and talented at creating a façade that looks real. **Safeguards:** Look closely at the *Text Sender* or the *URL link* – if it doesn't seem to make sense, don't click and don't call. *Extra Safeguards: In choosing Credit card or a debit card – choose a credit card, it typically grants more fraud protection. If ordering online, research and only use reputable sites.

Apps, Social Media & Wrong Number Texts – Oh My! - Investment Schemes

Fraudsters will often try to connect with their victims using the above-mentioned means. They interest you with their investment savvy and encourage you to buy in, and may even send fabricated profit

statements, which snare some into investing more. Trying to get out of it often becomes an even more expensive and frustrating venture. **Safeguards:** Wrong number calls or texts, leave them alone, don't answer. For investments, use a recommended and licensed financial advisor.

The Job that Doesn't Exist

Looking for a job? Don't get sucked in by misguided recruitment propaganda. Fraudsters make easy prey of the desperate job searcher. “Congratulations! you got the job! Now please fill out this form for our HR department...” **Safeguards:** Don't click and don't call! ... and certainly, don't give out your personal information for their agenda. Stick to *known* job search sites.

Superstar Fraud

You've probably seen it, product endorsements fronting your favorite celebrities promoting anything from weight loss to clear skin. This messaging often uses video technology so exceptional, it is easy to believe! **Safeguards:** If you are seeing a celeb-endorsed ad asking for money, do a Google search for their name, the product and the words “scam” or “fake” and get answers. Don't click and don't call!

Fraudsters are resourceful and will continue to push the line with scams. This is one area where AI (Artificial Intelligence) works against us. AI creates easier avenues for the fraudsters. BE SMART! Keep abreast of modern scamming techniques and how to protect yourself. Don't forget your aging parents who are a prime target for scams, especially if they are presenting with signs of dementia. They will need your added protection. Retain hope for the future, but in the meantime... question everything.

Source Article: AARP Bulletin | Mar/Apr 2025 | Vol 66 | No 2 . “How They Try to Trick You Now! Artificial intelligence has supercharged classic cons” by Ken Budd




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W E D

July 16, 2025

10 a m - 12 p m

Making the decision to pre-plan your funeral is not an easy one. It may not "feel right" while you are still alive. It's hard to face the fact that we are mortal.

It's okay, take a deep breath. You ARE in fact still in the land of the living! Planning your funeral is simply a means of making things a bit easier for the ones you love when the time comes. What a gift!

Set up your pre-funded account with us and we'd love to offer you a 5% discount.

Check it off your list! It will be nice to know your personal wishes will be honored and it gives you great peace of mind. **Done! Enjoy life!**

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