



Alzheimer's Aid Society's FORGET-ME-NOT

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THE CAREGIVER

By Margie Eisenhower

"Strength does not come from winning. Your struggles develop your strengths. When you go through hardships and decide not to surrender, that is strength." – Unknown.

Caregiving – such a tough job! So many feelings and emotions are involved. I thought I'd share some true 'moments' and 'experiences' from people who have Alzheimer's patients in their lives (names have been changed):

Louise (wife): "The hardest part is that our kids don't think there is anything wrong with their dad, that I am exaggerating. Dealing with him is hard enough, but their lack of understanding hurts me a lot. I try to see a counselor once a month. That and my gardening help me cope."

Patty (adult child): My dad has Alzheimer's and Mum is trying to take care of him. They are both 85. Mum berates dad for forgetting and getting muddled, and dad refuses any kind of help from Mum. I feel like a referee rather than a daughter. It is a comfort to hear of others' stories and know you're not alone while battling with practicalities, difficulties and downright angst. My poor dad is not going to improve and my Mum is not going to turn into Mary Poppins, so we all stagger on in an unhappy state. Losing one's grip on the world must be horrible, and taking care of one in that situation must be horrible as well. We can only do our best.

Mary (adult grandchild): My grandmother is always frustrated about her clothes, saying those in her closet don't belong to her, over and over. I now pretend that

someone lovely has left her some 'nice surprises' in her closet. I have learned over the past two years, that if you get tired and upset, you have to walk away, call a friend, cook something, take a walk. You are human. You need time for yourself, your spouse, your children and your friends. Even when I get really disturbed, I have learned that if I smile and approach a hard situation with a smile, it will often change her attitude. Sometimes I will sing an old tune she knows (off key!) or ask about her friends from long ago, and these things seem to appease her.

Clarisse (daughter): I've found out how important it is to get their medications balanced. Be firm with the doctor on this. I have read many books on Alzheimer's and am grateful every day for interaction with other caregivers. Every caregiver should read, "The 36-Hour Day," for its wisdom and practical presentation. You *have* to remember that your loved ones have a 'disease' and it's impossible to change *their* behavior. You must change *your* behavior.

Brad (husband): "After two years and some terrifying months, I finally had to put my wife into a care home. She was escaping from the house in ways I could never come up with myself! She was caught in someone's car a few streets away and was almost run over. People in my neighborhood still tell me that Irene didn't seem 'that bad' to them. It's hard to feel misunderstood and to keep from letting these people fill me with guilt. They just didn't know the true situation.

Continued on page 2...

THE CAREGIVER

By Margie Eisenhower

Continued from front page...

Situations like those described can be helped by attending support groups. One little statement made to me personally, helped beyond words. When my mom entered a care home and I was leaving after visiting her, there were many times she'd ask beseechingly, "Margie, you're not going to leave me here with these *strangers*, are you? Please take me with you." Of course, she didn't realize she had A.D. and was even *living* in a care home. She only knew she was somewhere 'strange' and was being left behind. The guilt would eat me up and I would cry all the way home. Well, someone 'in the know' about Alzheimer's said, "The moment you leave, and your mom turns around, she forgets you were even there. Her mind goes to other things instantly. So don't do this to yourself." What a blessing it was to realize that.

My mom was not much of a talker throughout her life, so when visiting with her in the care home, it was difficult to think of things to discuss. One day I began asking her about her childhood because I knew that more recent things were the things forgotten. I heard 'detailed' descriptions of her childhood home (a place we visited often when I was a child). I loved it! I learned my mom played the piano for the congregation in Sunday School as a teenager! I learned that at age 5 she had what they called then, "leakage of the heart," and she had to stay in bed for many weeks. A little cot was set up for her in the kitchen, where she could be near the family, instead of upstairs alone in her bedroom. Mother told me about her mom frequently putting her ear to Mother's back, to see if her 'heartbeat' was irregular. To learn previously unknown things about my mother as a child means the world to me! Plus, details about my grandparents as well as Mom's three brothers as children that I'd never known.

This disease is such an odd one -- and the brain is such a mystery. To think, my Mother could give me all these *details* about a life 75-80 years ago, and yet forget I had been visiting her five minutes before?

I so admire you caregivers and wish you strength and wellness. Join a support group! Read up on this disease. Good luck!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark Your Calendar!

Mini-Seminars

Mini-Seminars offer two to three speakers on a variety of subjects. They are free of charge. Refreshments are served. Call to register.

July 9th 2011

at: Paramount Court 9:30 am—12 noon
3791 Crowell Rd.
Turlock, CA
(209) 664-9500

Speakers:

Robert Hopper of A Place Called Home
"How to Speak Alzheimer's"
Cynthia Wilson of UniQue ImAging
"Art Therapy"

August 6, 2011

at: Ponte' Palmero 11:00 am—2:00 pm
3083 Ponte' Morino Dr.
Cameron Park, CA
(530) 677-0100

Speakers:

Deborah Poff
Director of The Light-house Memory Care Unit at Ponte' Palmero
"Dementia Awareness: A Fresh Look at How Behaviors Manifest"
Roberto Chiesa—Writer and Director
"Inside My Being"

MODESTO'S

3rd Annual Conference FOR CAREGIVERS

July 30th 2011

at: Season's Event Center

A full day of education, information and support! All of the details can be found in the brochure/registration form included in the center of this newsletter. Register by mail, by phone or online!

FORGET ME NOT

Before You Decide to Travel

Past a certain point in Alzheimer's progression, travel is almost never an enjoyable experience for the patient. Unfamiliar faces, sights and sounds can produce fear and anxiety. The day's activities may be forgotten quickly and replaced with a sense of being lost. Where, exactly, is that "certain Point in progression"? The answer is not clear-cut. That line is crossed at different stages by different patients.

Consider how your loved one does in local unfamiliar settings to help you decide. Then, perhaps try an overnight stay at a destination a few hours away.

Do not feel guilty if you decide that travel is not in your loved one's best interest! The trip, however, may be just what a tired caregiver needs. Consider respite care for your loved one and a few days apart.

KIM'S KORNER

By Kim Winters, BSG, M.Ed.

Kim is an independent Alzheimer's and Dementia Consultant in the Sacramento Area

When You've Decided to Travel

The earlier you start preparing for your trip, the less stressful it will be. Although people with dementia usually do best in environments that provide routines, and familiar settings, travel can be successful given the right conditions and thoughtful planning. It is important to weigh the risks and the benefits, and be prepared for the challenges.

Many professionals agree that your loved one should never travel alone, or unescorted. Too many things can go wrong, and agitation and anxiety can become explosive without a travelling companion.

The first order of business is to consult with their physician, to make sure they are healthy enough to be traveling for pleasure, and give you the support and advice on making your trip successful. Make sure you have enough medications for the entire length of the trip, and extra. If possible organize medications into a daily dispenser. If your loved one is known to have some form of anxiety, or agitation, talk to their physician for possible medications that may make their trip more enjoyable and less stressful for both of you.

Make sure you have an identification tag, or lanyard with ID. List the medications and time given, their physician's information, your information, and the

address and phone number of your destination. It may be helpful to research the medical facilities on your route of choice, just to be safe. Make sure you don't forget to bring a brief medical history, including any allergies they may have.

Bring some of your loved one's favorite items. For example, a pillow, clothing, picture books for reminiscence, travel books or brochures that show your destination, music, magazines, travel games, and of course favorite snacks. By keeping your loved one engaged in activities, and mentally stimulated, they will also need rest, and frequent stops in the car. If your loved one becomes agitated, it is safer for you to reassure or comfort them if you are stopped.

Try to keep the schedule and routine closest to their actual times of meals, and sleep patterns. Staying consistent with structure is essential with someone with Alzheimer's Disease while traveling. So make sure you allow plenty of time for activities, and flexibility.

If your loved one has never flown, now is not the time to start. Chances are they will become overwhelmed and agitated by the crowds and procedures at the airport itself.

If you do choose air travel, try flying out when the crowds are the smallest, and allow plenty of time for airport procedures, as they have changed dramatically since 9/11. Hold all boarding passes, ticket information, and personal information,

on an outside pocket of your carry on, and request to board the plane first. It would be beneficial to pack light and only use carry-on luggage, thus eliminating waiting at the carousel for luggage. Fly direct when available. The extra money spent may be well worth avoiding challenges you could face with connecting flights.

If you are staying in a hotel, it is best to share the same room, preferably with a "child" proof door knob or door alarm. When making the reservations ask questions targeted toward safety of your loved one. Explain the situation, and limitations. There are laws developed to protect our loved ones, whether they are children or family members with dementia. Request a large quiet room, preferably without a sliding door. Plan your itinerary well in advance. If you plan on staying with family or friends please make sure they are aware of what Alzheimer's disease is, and how they can be helpful. You will need to rest once you get to your destination. Try to minimize time with large groups, noisy places or energetic children. The interaction that you may enjoy from family members and their children may be overwhelming to your loved one with Alzheimer's Disease.

Ask for assistance from those either traveling with you, or the airline or hotel staff. As always keep a sense of humor, and allow plenty of time for everything. Flexibility is the key to a successful vacation, and a lifetime of memories. Take care, and have a wonderful vacation!

President's Message

By Sheryl Ashby

A couple of weeks ago in my Caregivers' Support Group, one of our members brought in a Dear Abby column. The gist of that article was that a gentleman's wife had dementia and his children lived too far away to be of any significant assistance to him. Apparently friends had made the general offer that many of us probably make, "If I can do anything to help, let me know." That was the last he heard from those friends by way of offers to help.

We discussed this typical situation in the support group. All of us agreed that if we had been the friend making that same general offer of help, we would not feel comfortable approaching that person again with another offer to help. We agreed that we would be perceived as being pushy. We further agreed that if our offer wasn't accepted when we made it, perhaps that person didn't want or really need our help after all. We further agreed that the friend offering the help really has no idea what type of help is actually needed. We then concluded that although the friend's offer was genuine, it was not specific enough to be perceived as truly helpful.

The group then decided that the caregiver in need of help needs to be prepared to say to that person, 'Why, thank you. I could use some help', and name some specific concerns. For example, "I could use an afternoon break to run some errands once a week", or "perhaps you could take my wife to get her hair done". Being specific allows

the person making the offer an opportunity to review their schedule to find a time when they can actually help you. We believe that most people will make the time to help if you let them know exactly what to do.

Giving of your time to someone in need is a blessing and people feel that blessing when they are given the opportunity to help. Being specific helps bridge the gap between the promise and the act.

In sum, if you are a caregiver in need of help, try to be specific as to what your needs are and allow the person offering an opportunity to be of service to you. It is a difficult thing to realize that you really have a need for help, but please know that someone who has made an offer really does want to be of service to you. Give them that chance. There will probably come a time when you can 'pay it forward' and be of service to someone else who is in need.

I hope you all have a wonderful summer and please be available to help someone in need if you have the time; and don't hesitate to ask for help if you are a caregiver. Caregiving is a difficult job and it can't be done alone without risking your health. Take your friends and family up on their offers. Most of the time "If I can do anything to help, please let me know", is all they know to say. Don't discount the sincerity, be ready to accept.

—Sheryl Ashby

Do what you can, with what you have,
where you are.

—Theodore Roosevelt

SUMMER'S HERE!

By Cynda Rennie

Summer has certainly arrived! The Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys can produce some on the hottest summer days in the country.

All seniors must take extra precautions to stay healthy during those superhot days. Persons with Alzheimer's or any dementia must be monitored closely for their comfort and safety in hot weather.

Individuals with Alzheimer's Disease are prone to the inability to recognize the source of discomfort. Hunger, thirst, an arthritic and aching hand, a headache and many other discomforts may be expressed by a variety of behaviors. The person may be irritable or angry. They may pace more, cry, or become listless. Or they may display no obvious sign that something is wrong.

Even a person who is in the early stages of Alzheimer's may not be able to keep track of the time spent outdoors in the sun. The individual may recall that they had a large glass of orange juice, but may not recall that the drink was consumed five hours ago.

Restrict, when possible, outdoor time to the early morning hours. Use sunscreen and a hat. Provide increased hydration: cool drinks and foods which are high in water content such as watermelon, oranges, plums. Avoid tea and coffee as these contribute to dehydration. Wear loose-fitting, light-colored clothing.

Consider getting that daily exercise at the local mall, that's a nice and cool place to take a walk at any time of day. You may need to find creative ways to keep your loved one out of the heat. Call the Alzheimer's Aid Society to talk to a Peer Counselor to help you find solutions or attend a support group.

Wishing you a safe and happy summer!

FORGET ME NOT

SUPPORT GROUPS

Caring and Sharing since 1981

Auburn 1st and 3rd Friday

Noon—1:30 pm
Auburn Presbyterian Church
13025 Bel Air Drive
Facilitator: Sue Galvez
530-878-2428

Amador County 4th Wed.

10:00 am
Senior Center
229 New York Ranch Rd., Jackson
Facilitator: Laurie Webb
800-540-3340

Carmichael 1st Wednesday

7:00 – 8:30 pm
Aegis of Carmichael
4050 Walnut Avenue
Facilitator: Cynda Rennie
916-723-4444

Folsom 3rd Wednesday

6:30 – 7:30 pm
Emeritus at Folsom
780 Harrington Way
Facilitator: Darlene Moeaki
916-983-9300

Lake County

Call Caroline Denny
707-263-9481
For information regarding
Days, times and location

Lodi Every Monday

10 am—11:30 am
Arbor Senior Living
115 Louie Ave.
Facilitator: Joanne McReynolds
209-333-3338

Lodi 1st Monday at 2:00 pm

And 4th Thursday at 6:00 pm
Emeritus at Austin Gardens
2150 W. Kettleman
Facilitators: Jenanne and Stacey
209-333-8033

Manteca 3rd Saturday

1:00 pm
Merrill Gardens
430 N. Union Road
Facilitator: Sharee Thomas
209-823-0164

Manteca 3rd Wednesday

12 noon
Prestige Senior Living
1130 Empire Avenue
Facilitator: Taylor Mead
209-239-4531

Modesto Every Monday

At 9:30 am AND
Every Monday at 5:30 pm
Alzheimer's Aid Society
700 McHenry #B
Facilitators: Cindy DenBrave
& Jill Aja
209-238-0538

Placerville 3rd Monday

10:00 am
Elder Options Annex
82 Main Street
Facilitator: Carol Heape
530-626-6939

Sacramento Every Tuesday

10:30 am – 12:00 noon
Alzheimer's Aid Society
2641 Cottage Way #4
Facilitator: Sheryl Ashby
916-483-2002

Sacramento Every Wed.

10:00am
Primrose
7707 Rush River Drive
Facilitator: Kim Winters
916-392-3510

Sonora

Call Joan Peixott
209-533-7180
For information regarding
Days, times and location

Stockton 2nd Tuesday

10:00 am
Sommerford Place
3530 Deer Park Drive
Facilitator: Chelease Adams
209-951-6500

Tracy 3rd Tuesday

6:00pm
Emeritus at Heritage Place
355 Grantline Road
Facilitator: Christina Samranos
209-835-1000

Tracy 4th Thursday

6:00 pm
Astoria Gardens
1960 W. Lowell (at Coral Hollow)
Facilitator: Antonia Hoy
209-833-2200

Turlock Every Thursday

9:30am
Covenant Village Community
2125 North Olive Avenue
Facilitator: Mike Zuniga
209-632-9587

Vacaville 2nd Tuesday

1:00pm
Emeritus of Vacaville
1111 Ulatis Drive
Facilitator: Sheena Merilos
707-447-7100

Yreka 1st and 3rd Tuesday

10:00am
Oakridge Senior Park Clubhouse
400 Hiram Page Road
Facilitator: Ronda Moser
530-459-3501

Yuba City 4th Saturday

10:00 am
Summerfield Senior Care Center
1224 Plumas
Facilitator: Mike Fortwengler
800-540-3340

Special Interest Groups for the Patient

MODESTO Every Monday

10:30-Noon
Support Group and
Reminiscence

Alzheimer's Aid Society
700 McHenry Ave. #B
Facilitator: Sheryl Ashby
209-238-0538

PLACERVILLE

Support Group for Early
Stages
Call Carol Heape if interest-
ed
530-626-6939

SACRAMENTO

Every Tuesday
10:30-Noon
2nd & 4th: Support Group
for those who wish to dis-
cuss Memory Loss and Cop-
ing
1st, 3rd, 5th: Brain Exercise
and Reminiscence—All are
welcome.

Alzheimer's Aid Society
2641 Cottage Way, #4
Facilitator: Cynda Rennie
916-483-2002

*To succeed in life, you need three things:
a wishbone, a backbone, and a funny bone.*

—Reba McEntire

Visit our Website!
www.AlzheimersAidSociety.org

FORGET ME NOT

DONATIONS RECEIVED April 16—June 15, 2011

In Memory of:

Jeanette Adkins
Gloria Barbera
Jack Best
Elaine Bond
Al Brock
Arlene Freitas
Angela Garcia
Zetta Green
Albert M. Honthaas
Catherine Howell
Kenneth Jackels
Derrell Johnston

George Pang Louie
Doris Marrello
Yaeko Mary Masuda
Ida Mohr
George C. Mooney
Grant Noble, Sr.
Mieko Ogawa
Mary Pacheco-Perrin
Thelma Parks
Al Roberts
Dr. Norman Rothenberg

Lynda Shortley
Reg Smith
Austin Squire
Betty Stecher
Alice Stedman
Roberta Stevahn
William R. Stewart
Mary Alviar Valdez
Zelpha Ward
James Whittaker
Ruth Williams
Ruby Ena Willis

In Honor of:

Leah Stephans

Donation Information

If you would like to make a donation "In Memory Of" or "In Honor Of" a loved one or friend please be sure to clearly indicate the name of the person remembered or honored. Please also include the name and address of that person's family so we can notify them of your donation.

To donate to our General Fund/Greatest Need or to the Education Fund, please indicate this on your check or online.

Donations can be mailed to either of our offices, phoned-in using Visa or MasterCard, or online using a credit card or Pay-Pal.

We print and distribute 6,500 newsletters bi-monthly. Your donations are greatly appreciated.

Your donations are tax-deductible.

Thank You!!

NOTES FROM OUR OFFICES

MODESTO

The Modesto office is pleased to announce the completion of the Forget –Me-Not Room for the Early Stages Support Group! Everyone is thrilled with the new quarters! We're also pleased with the changes to the front office and the sunshine color that envelopes us. Many thanks to all of our volunteers for their hard work on this five-month project: Robert Blanco, Jerry and Alison Hetrick, Jeff Hollis and Undean Parshey.

Modesto is gearing up for our third- annual Caregiver's Conference coming up on July 30th! Please join us for a great learning experience with informative speakers!

—Cindy DeBrave
Volunteer Coordinator

—Len DeBrave
Office Manager

SACRAMENTO

Hurray, Hurray, Hurray! The Alzheimer's Aid Society's new and revised "BLUE BOOK" is complete! It will be available at no charge to caregivers and families starting in July. We will mail "Blue Books" to our new callers and have them available at our support groups and at health fairs. You can also pick up a copy at either the Sacramento or Modesto office.

The new "BLUE BOOK" is a practical guide for caregivers. It features 52 pages of articles and information by local professionals including Dr. Barbara Gillogly, the Gerontology Chair at American River College.

—Cynda Rennie
Program Director

FORGET ME NOT

WILLS AND TRUSTS

Arturo Benavidez, Esq.
Benavidez Law Firm

Wills and Trusts are devices which can be used to provide for the distribution of your estate upon your death. In deciding whether a Will or a Trust best fits your needs you must look to your own unique set of circumstances.

What does a Will do?

A Will is the legal document that, upon your death, allows you to distribute your

To ensure your wishes are carried through, you would appoint an executor of your estate.

property to beneficiaries of your choice. Beneficiaries can receive specific items from your estate or receive everything in your estate. You might give your two children, for example, all of your estate, to share equally, but reserve the antique coin collection as a specific bequest to your nephew, Sam.

To ensure that your wishes are carried through, you would appoint an executor of your estate. That person/entity will be in charge of your estate during the distribution of your assets, pay your bills and/or initiate probate proceedings. In California (as of 2011) an estate worth \$100,000.00, or more, will have to go through the probate process, even with a valid Will.

A Will can give the parents of minor children the opportunity to nominate a guardian. Ultimately, the court will make the final decision as to who will be the guardian for your children after your death, but the court will try to honor your nomination.

A Living Trust is used as a device to manage your property before and after your death.

A Will can be as simple as a statement in your own handwriting (holographic will), dated and signed by you, declaring who will be executor and who will receive property upon your death.

What does a Trust do?

As stated above, a Will comes into effect only after you die. However, a trust can benefit you while you are still alive. Trusts can be revocable or irrevocable. A living trust is a revocable trust established during your lifetime. You are both, the Grantor (person creating the trust) and the Trustee (person managing the trust). You are also the beneficiary of the trust during your lifetime. Therefore, all of the assets in a revocable trust are still under your control, used for your benefit and the trust is changeable (by amendment). Living Trusts become irrevocable (unchangeable) only upon the Grantor's death.

A Living Trust is used as a device to manage your property before and after your death. Should you become incapacitated, or disabled, the trust is in place to manage your financial affairs through a successor trustee that you have previously nominated. Upon your death the distribution of the assets of the trust are a private affair as a trust avoids the publicity of probate.

Trusts can be as simple or as complex as your estate demands. The most common trust today is the Living Trust, a revocable trust as described above. There are Marital Deduction trusts that allow a doubling of the Federal Estate Tax exemption for a husband and wife. There are irrevocable Special Needs Trusts, Medicaid Trusts and Intentionally Defec-

Trusts can be as simple or as complex as your estate demands.

tive Irrevocable Grantor Trusts. These trusts offer more than just probate avoidance, they can offer tax avoidance and asset preservation as well.

In essence, a Trust should be made like a good suit, tailored to your needs and desires.

You must look to your own unique set of circumstances

DID YOU KNOW? These Famous People Had Alzheimer's:

Peter Falk
Arthur O'Connell
Rosa Parks
Pauline Phillips (Dear Abby)
Otto Preminger



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



LIFE IS GOOD
Jerry Hetrick

"Life Is Good" by Modesto artist, Jerry Hetrick. It was created in the Art Therapy program at the Modesto Alzheimer's Aid Society with Art Therapist Cynthia Wilson, MA, AT, MFTI, of UniQue ImAging.
www.uniqueimaging.org