

# The **MASE** Monthly Newsletter

## January 2017



**Winners of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service**

### Happy New Year

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

Finally 2017 is here. All the build-up to the Festive Season just fizzles out and we begin to wonder what all the expense and fuss has actually been about.

For our Carers, whose lives do not change significantly over the festive period, we send our best wishes and hope that you did manage to get a few good days and enjoy yourselves. We salute you all for the wonderful work you do all year.

The New Year also is a time for reflection and for those of you in 2016 who had a loved one go into residential care, or suffered a bereavement, we understand this will have been a difficult time for you. We hope that you and your families spent some precious time together over Christmas sharing happy memories and reminiscing about happier times.

To our fantastic Volunteers - Thank You for all the time you continue to give so graciously to each of the Groups.

With the New Year comes hope for peace, health and happiness.

We wish you all a Very Happy New Year. *Daphne, Elaine, Jim & Richard*

### 0800 470 80 90 Silverline Help Line - Loneliness during the Festive Period

The Silver Line helpline team had their busiest-ever time across the festive period. They received more than one call every minute from lonely and isolated older people, every day of the festive break – peaking with over 1,600 calls on Monday 2 January alone.



Silver Line's CEO, said: "When you are lonely, the Christmas and New Year festivities really magnify the feeling of isolation. However it is also important to remember that for many older people, isolation will be the reality of every day of the New Year".

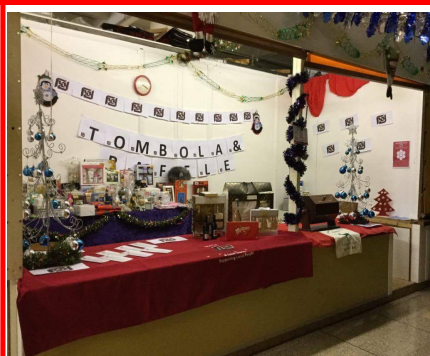
**The Silver Line is a free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people.**  
**It is open 24 hours a day.**

**As we get older... ..**

As we get older we can tend to take people for granted. We all do it and it's so easy to do. Maybe it's a partner, a parent or even close friend? Make sure that every now and again you tell those people just how much you appreciate them and how much they mean to you. Always remember sometimes a little hug, or a simple thank you in appreciation goes a long way.



### Cannock Market Tombola Stall raises money for The MASE



The Trustees of the MASE are always so humbled when people say they want to raise money for our Groups. So when the ladies on Cannock market said they were doing a tombola stall to support our Cannock Group we were so amazed. Doris (her husband Eddie), Linda and Val raised a staggering £617.58, which after Gift Aid will be **£771.97**. This amount of money will pay for two of our Groups in Cannock. Thank you seems so inadequate when people have worked tirelessly to raise funds and to have done so completely off their own initiative shows that they have hearts of gold - for which we are very grateful. Hopefully they will be with us at the Cannock Group in January and we can spoil them all and show them how much we appreciate their support.

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**Alzheimer's Society Dementia Helpline 0300 222 1122 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and Saturday and Sunday 10am - 4pm.**

## Resolutions for the New Year

If there's someone with Alzheimer's disease or dementia in your life, the last thing you need to ring in the New Year are more nudges toward self improvement. You may already be thinking, "forget resolutions about losing weight and giving up alcohol - I just need to figure out how to survive the stress in 2017."

Fear not. This short list of resolutions is meant to help you. How? By making taking care of someone with dementia easier. It's stuff you may already know, what I'm asking is that you consider it through fresh eyes. Make it your ultimate resolution to see tough situations as opportunities to make life better for yourself.

So as the new year begins, why not make a few resolutions:

### **Bite your tongue rather than say the dreaded words, "You just asked me that!"**

There's an old saying, If you want to get along, go along. Losing patience, or quarreling, lets you vent your frustrations, but actually makes the situation worse, since the person with dementia is apt to grow frightened or agitated. Learn little tricks for smoother communication. For example, when repetition is a problem and your patience is near the end, try moving to a different room to redirect the conversation around new, different objects and things. Find fresh ways to help my loved one stay occupied and connected. True, it's worth trying to think up meaningful activities for someone with dementia to do. But in the long run you save time by making the person feel more content. Staying busy provides a fortifying sense of purpose, even if it's folding (and refolding) towels or organising (and re-organising) a tool box.

### **A starting point is Music.**

Because of the way the brain is organised, music can reach even those who never showed the slightest artistic inclination.

### **Let it go, let it go, let it go.**

When you catch yourself second-guessing, or doubting yourself take a deep breath and just stop. Nobody is a perfect caregiver...because nobody's perfect.

### **Be open to advice—but throw out what doesn't fit.**

Each person's disorder manifests uniquely. So catch up all the info you can find on day-to-day life with dementia, but realize that it won't all apply to your situation. Don't waste a second feeling isolated or like you're doing something "wrong" if a certain approach doesn't work. There are many approaches you can try and one will definitely succeed.

### **Draw yourself a support circle.**

Can't get out of the house often enough? There is no excuse nowadays. Like-minded people with big hearts and lots of ideas are only a telephone call away. The MASE will give you plenty of support and hopefully you will have built up lots of networks of support - believe me, we all need friends, and people we can confide in.

### **One final resolution: Tear up those this-year's self-improvement lists!**

A whole year is too much to plan for. If you're caring for someone with dementia, all you can do is take it one day at a time

## Christmas Festivities at Rugeley



Volunteers at the Rugeley Christmas Party did us proud - all turning up in their festive outfits. Darren is in the fantastic Elf outfit, and of course Father Christmas (Jim) was there to keep us all in order. It was a lovely evening and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Our team of volunteers put on a special Christmas raffle raising £182.60, which after adding Gift Aid amounts to **£228.25**.

If you have a computer please take a look at our website which covers all MASE activities: [www.themasegroup.com](http://www.themasegroup.com)

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