



# MASE Monthly Newsletter



Proud Recipients of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

**December 2019**

The MASE Trustees and Volunteers would like to take this opportunity to send you all good wishes for Christmas and let us all hope for a Peaceful, Happy and Healthy New Year.



As the month of December arrives, everyone gets very involved with the Festive Season and sometimes it is difficult to remember that some of our people have perhaps lost a loved one during the past year; also that some of our Carers may even be spending Christmas alone. Let's all offer the hand of friendship at this special time of year and make one phone call on Christmas Day to someone you know will be on their own. The Spirit of Christmas is Peace and Goodwill to all, let's try make a resolution to speak to at least one person who is on their own at Christmas; maybe even invite them over for a cup of tea and maybe even a piece of Christmas cake!

## A Thank You to all Carers

December is most definitely a month to pay tribute to and say thank you to our wonderful Carers and the tremendous work they do. It's no wonder that at times Carers can get burned out and feel like they've lost themselves along the caring journey. It's critical to your success as a Carer and personal well-being to slow down and take care of yourself. It is not selfish to make yourself a priority.

Making yourself a priority starts with you. These eight tips to be a more optimistic Carer are a great starting point to putting yourself first, focusing on self-care; always remember you cannot pour from an empty cup

1. **Look for the good.** Try to keep negative thoughts at bay and make a daily list of what's good in your life.
2. **Speak kindly to yourself.** Remember what you learned as a child and apply it to your thinking, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all."
3. **Lean on positive people.** Surround yourself with positive people, not those who take energy from you. These supportive people can be local friends and family and even online support communities.
4. **Find happiness through health.** A healthy diet and exercise can improve your mood and positivity.
5. **Remember you are doing your best.** Even if you feel like you failed at a task or the whole day, you're still there and supporting your loved one.
6. **Laugh to lighten your load.** Laughter relieves stress and tension and helps you stay positive.
7. **Keep it simple.** Don't set yourself up to fail with unrealistic goals. Sometimes doing the basics is all that's needed.
8. **Take time for yourself.** A few minutes here and there, lunch with a friend, respite from a friend or professional Carer can go a long way to helping you feel recharged.

Let's not forget you are ALL doing a wonderful job which at times may feel like a thankless task.

The love and care you give will probably never get recognition from your loved-one; but deep inside they will be grateful to you for all the time and effort you put into making them feel safe, comfortable and loved.

Daphne Sharp ☎ 01785 211140 or 07939 505455 **Trustee /MASE Co-ordinator** ✉ Daphne.ssharp@ntlworld.com

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

## The Silver Line Helpline – 0800 4 70 80 90

**The Silver Line operates the only confidential, free helpline for older people across the UK that's open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year.**

They also offer **telephone friendship** where they match volunteers with older people based on their interests, facilitated group calls, and help to connect people with local services in their area. 68% of calls to the helpline are made at night and weekends.

The Silver Line is the only confidential, free helpline for older people across the UK open every day and night of the year. Specially trained helpline team can:

- \* offer information, friendship and advice
- \* link callers to local groups and services
- \* offer regular friendship calls
- \* protect and support older people who are suffering abuse and neglect



### **Who can use The Silver Line?**

The Silver Line is a helpline and friendship service for people aged 55 and over.

### **All helpline calls are free**

The Silver Line Helpline is free to callers. All costs of calls are covered by The Silver Line. We rely entirely on donations from organisations and people who care about the welfare and safety of older people. Find out more about how to support The Silver line [here](#).

### **All helpline calls are confidential**

The Silver Line is a confidential helpline. Callers are free to express their feelings, and describe their lives honestly, and can trust us to respect their privacy. In cases of abuse or neglect, with the callers' permission, we will involve specialist safeguarding organisations such as Action on Elder Abuse or the appropriate social services team.

## Christmas with Alzheimer's

### **Tip 1: Get everyone on board**

If you are a Carer, you might be feeling nervous about how friends and family will react to your loved-one with dementia on Christmas day. Talk to guests in advance. Be honest explaining what is happening or simply say that they are experiencing difficulties with memory and conversation. The most important is to include the person you care for in as many decisions as possible: ask them how they are feeling about Christmas and if they want to be informed of any changes in circumstances.

### **Tip 2: Help friends and family with ways to communicate**

Share some of these tips so that friends and family feel equipped and ready to enjoy your time together.

### **Tip 3: Have a practice run**

If you are inviting a person with Alzheimer's, or want to bring a loved one out of a care home, have a few practice runs along the way. This way you will be able to gauge if it's achievable. Include the care home staff and ask how they might be able to support you. When its time to go home, say '*we have to go home now*' rather than '*you have to go home*'; if you are doing things together it can make it less confusing.

### **Tip 4: Involve the person with activities on the day**

Make sure your loved one feels included in the day. Think of ways they may be able to take part, such as laying the table or helping to prepare the meal. Watching one of their favourite films or listening to a piece of music that they love may be calming and bring back special memories.

### **Tip 5: Consider their needs**

Christmas days can be noisy: try to reduce unnecessary noise such as party poppers, loud music or blaring television when people are also chatting. A busy day can be tiring and confusing for a person with dementia, so keep it manageable. Try to take them home in daylight rather than wait until it gets dark so that they can see where they are and where they are going.

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

**Registered Charity No: 1137193 - The Monthly Alzheimer's Support Evening Limited (MASE)**

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