



MASE Monthly Newsletter



Proud Recipients of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

February 2023

It is hard to believe we are now in the Month of February. At last we can start to look forward to the spring flowers pushing through, and daffodils are already in the shops heralding the fact that the Winter is over. The feeling of Spring is always welcomed and people appear to be brighter, looking forward to the longer days, and hopefully some better weather.



A Memoir of Love A short story written by Kitty, her husband Ed has Alzheimer's



February 14 - Valentines Day and I had decided to show Ed the cards and photos I had recently found in his storage unit. I went to get the bright lamp from the corner of the room and put it at the left end side of the sofa. Having illuminated the room as much as possible to compensate for Ed's poor eyesight, I was ready to start showing the cards and photos to him.

"Kitty!" He exclaimed, coming out of the bathroom. "I am so happy to see you". We had eaten our breakfast together only minutes ago, and yet it was as if it was the first time we had seen each other today. I said "I found some old photos and cards that I sent to you many years ago and I'm going to show them to you today". "Marvellous! Superb!" he answered, using the words he always used when he was happy about something.

I decided to start with the cards. Although he was no longer able to read books, or the newspaper, I hoped he would still be capable of reading the cards. He was, and he even seemed to understand what he read. He laughed at the funny ones and responded more seriously to the others. After he had seen them all, he looked up at me and said in a very quiet tone of voice, "Kitty, I am so touched that you kept these cards for all these years."

I didn't try explaining that he was the one who had kept them. Next we looked at the photographs. Some were from his childhood. There was one of him around the age of six, wearing a sailor suit and posing with his father, and another with his grandparents, sitting on a bench in a beautiful park. I was amazed when I suddenly realised some of these photographs were more than eighty years old. Then there were several pictures of us as a couple together from the 80's and 90's.

He was drawn to the photos, just as much as he was to the cards, studying each of them with interest. The last one was a picture of him with a woman standing behind him. She had her hands on his shoulders and her head was peeking around his, facing the camera. "Ah... she loved me", he murmured, an affectionate expression on his face. He kept looking at the photo. "What are you thinking?" I asked ... he didn't say anything more. Then he whispered "I am thinking of love".

"That woman in the picture is me Eddy and I still love you" I said. He looked up and gazed into my eyes the way he did when we were first lovers. I couldn't tell if he was in the past, or the present. It really didn't matter - we were together and even though my darling husband has Alzheimer's and the days are very difficult sometimes, **we still have each other!**

A special note to all Carers be kind to yourselves.

- ❖ Carers remember to always be kind to yourselves. You need an abundance of patience and remember your loved one needs you so much.
- ❖ You have a difficult role to play and it is only natural to sometimes feel angry or upset.
- ❖ Try to involve your friends and family - more to give you a little respite from the day-to-day routine.
- ❖ Give yourselves a pat on the back occasionally - because you do really deserve it.

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

Music and Dementia



When in a store how often do you subconsciously hum along to a song playing over the radio, whilst you are shopping, and how often are you taken back to a distant family memory? It's funny how music can do that.

Music seems to have a way of reaching past your mind and touching your soul. Think about what that could mean for someone with dementia.

Even when the usual means of communication become inhibited by the effect of Alzheimer's disease, or other dementias, people experiencing memory loss still remember and respond to music.

While music can be powerful at any time of year, familiar holiday tunes and hymns often have a lifetime of warm, poignant memories associated with them, making them particularly powerful for a loved one with dementia.

Try playing an upbeat song during the morning wake-up and shower routine. Or play something soothing at mealtimes and bedtimes. See how it might lift your loved one's spirits and unlock memories from long ago.



Also keeping mind that music is not just for listening. It begs participation. So sing, or hum along with the music, clap your hands, tap your toe and encourage your loved one to do the same.

A recent article on music in general said "singing daily has a positive effect on one's mental state'. Next time you are driving in the car, don't be shy about turning on the radio and singing along. It can help relieve some of your stress and lift your spirits too.

The Month of February

- * February is mostly recognized for Valentine's Day, flowers, and, depending on where you are, being incredibly cold!
- * Oddly enough, even though it's just another month, there's a lot of history behind this month of romance and love!
- * February, is the shortest month of the year.
- * February fluctuates between having 28 and 29 days per year. The 29th day only occurs every 4 years during leap years.
- * If you were born in February, your birthstone is an amethyst, and your flower is a primrose.



The Coronation of King Charles III



As this is such a special occasion the MASE Trustees have decided it is a good opportunity for us to all get together with a Gala Celebration for our new King Charles III.

We are planning to get all the groups to come together once again on **MONDAY 8TH MAY**.

This will be at Lea Hall again. The afternoon will start at 1:30 pm and end at 4:30 pm. We will, as always, be having a paid raffle

The format will be the same as the Jubilee Celebration held in May 2022. However this time we have two new entertainers; Gemma who will sing all the old songs and also play some music to get you all up dancing. Ben, who plays the saxophone, will also be entertaining us during the afternoon.

What better way to celebrate not only the Coronation, but another Bank Holiday. We need to finalise the whole programme, but can guarantee it will be a feel-good afternoon for us all. More information later.....

Michael will be taking names from you over the coming months. We also need to know if you will require transport to and from the venue.

If you have a computer please take a look at our website which covers all MASE activities: www.themasegroup.com

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