



# The MASE Monthly Newsletter

## November 2016

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



#### The Month of November

**Birthstone:** Topaz and citrine **Flower:** Chrysanthemum **Zodiac signs:** Scorpio and Sagittarius

#### Helpline Number for Support 0808 800 2234

The helpline is for you if you are feeling concerned, worried, stressed or low or you are worried about someone you know. You may be going through a difficult time and feel that you have no one to talk to.

**Are you:** Not coping? Having a relationship or family breakdown?

Concerned about your physical or mental health? Isolated or lonely? Sad because somebody has died? Looking after somebody and need some support?

**Helpline**  
 Are you Worried?  
 Isolated? Feeling low?  
 Free & confidential emotional support  
**0808 800 2234**  
 7pm - 2am Weekdays  
 2pm - 2am Weekends

#### Dave & Cynthia Hall Celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary



Dave and Cynthia Hall have been volunteers with us at The MASE since we started nine years ago. A nicer couple you could not wish to find; over the years they have played an important role in our groups. On 25th September they Celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary, and asked for people to make donations to the MASE instead of buying them presents. A staggering **£360.00** was donated; for which we are most grateful. Dave and Cynthia have said that the November MASE will be their last one with us as volunteers. We will sorely miss them but sincerely thank them both for their care and commitment to the groups and for always being so supportive and friendly to everyone at the MASE. We wish them both every happiness for the future and hope that they will visit us occasionally as our guests.

#### Positive Thinking

Boosting your mood and helping yourself feel more positive is a great thing to do, no matter how tough life can be.

It may be that something as simple as singing along to a favourite piece of music or watching an episode of a classic comedy does the trick.

Or, if you're feeling lonely, spending time with others - especially children or animals - can help to bring some light back into your life.

Here are four tips on how to lift your spirits...

**1. Smile** [\[Let your smile change the world ... but don't let the world change your smile\]](#)

'When you smile it triggers mood-boosting hormones in the brain. So even if you don't feel happy, put a smile on your face and you may soon start to feel more positive.'

**2. Keep busy**

'It doesn't matter whether you tidy up the garden, wash the dishes or go for a walk - any activity that helps to break up your routine and gives you a sense of achievement will do the trick.'

**3. Talk to someone**

'It doesn't matter whether you meet up face to face, talk on the phone, chat online or use Skype, connecting with other people helps to bring you out of yourself.'

**4. Live in the moment**

'If you're feeling low, try to regulate your breathing and pay attention to what you can see, hear and feel at the present moment. This will help you to feel calm and bring you back into emotional balance.'

Elaine Dunlop 01785 823110 or 07812 440226  
Daphne Sharp 01785 211140 or 07939 505455

**MASE Co-ordinators**

✉ Elaine.dunlop12@btinternet.com  
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Alzheimer's Society Dementia Helpline 0300 222 1122 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and Saturday and Sunday 10am - 4pm.

# Coping with Hallucinations

## Dementia and Hallucinations

When a person with Alzheimer's /Dementia hallucinates, he or she may see, hear, smell, taste or feel something that isn't there. Some hallucinations may be frightening, while others may involve ordinary visions of people, situations or objects from the past.

### Understanding hallucinations

Hallucinations are false perceptions of objects or events involving the senses. These false perceptions are caused by changes within the brain that result from Alzheimer's, usually in the later stages of the disease. The person may see the face of a former friend in a curtain, or may see insects crawling on his or her hand. In other cases, a person may hear someone talking and may even engage in conversation with the imagined person.

Alzheimer's and other dementias are not the only cause of hallucinations. Other causes include:

### Hallucinations caused by progressive dementia usually occur during the later stages of the disease.

- Schizophrenia
- Physical problems, such as kidney or bladder infections, dehydration, intense pain, or alcohol or drug abuse
- Eyesight or hearing problems
- Medications



### Coping strategies

When responding to hallucinations, be cautious. First, assess the situation and determine whether the hallucination is a problem for the person or for you. Is the hallucination upsetting? Is it leading the person to do something dangerous? Is the sight of an unfamiliar face causing the person to become frightened? If so, react calmly and quickly with reassuring words and a comforting touch. Do not argue with the person about what he or she sees or hears. If the behaviour is not dangerous, there may not be a need to intervene.

### Offer reassurance

Respond in a calm, supportive manner. You may want to respond with, "Don't worry. I'm here. I'll protect you. I'll take care of you." Gentle patting may turn the person's attention toward you and reduce the hallucination. Acknowledge the feelings behind the hallucination and try to find out what the hallucination means to the individual. You might want to say, "It sounds as if you're worried" or "I know this is frightening for you."

### Use distractions

Suggest a walk or move to another room. Frightening hallucinations often subside in well-lit areas where other people are present.

Try to turn the person's attention to music, conversation or activities you enjoy together.

### Modify the environment

Check for sounds that might be misinterpreted, such as noise from a television or an air conditioner. Look for lighting that casts shadows, reflections or distortions on the surfaces of floors, walls and furniture. Turn on lights to reduce shadows.

Cover mirrors with a cloth or remove them if the person thinks that he or she is looking at a stranger.

**Speak to your doctor:** If the problem persists then do speak to your doctor

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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