



MASE Monthly Newsletter



Proud Recipients of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

February 2021



14th February - Valentines Day and Dementia: Taking care of a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or dementia can severely test the vows you made to one another many moons ago. It is a very difficult and strenuous job that inevitably causes pain and grief for the person you once knew - before dementia came crashing into your lives.

However, whilst loving and caring for someone with dementia can be hard, you will find it incredibly rewarding if on Valentine's Day you take time to reflect on the following points:

Dementia does not define who the person is

Being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, or another form of dementia, is devastating and life-changing both for the patient and for their loved ones. However, it is crucial to remember that you knew who they were before their diagnosis, and it is important to hold on to your precious memories of who they really are.

Love your partner for who they are now

Watching the person you've spent your life with change before your very eyes is a devastating experience, but it is essential that you learn to love your partner with dementia and hold on to the memories of what they were like before. Once you have grieved for the loss of the person you loved - and learned to love them a new - accepting the fact that you may not be able to 'reach' the person they once were becomes easier. The key to coming to terms with this loss is to realise that the human being you have known and loved is still there, but their persona has been masked by Alzheimer's.

Expect the unexpected

It is important to be realistic in your expectations for yourself and your loved one. Make sure the goals you set are realistic, and don't get wound up if they are not met. For example, if an activity your partner used to love now causes a negative response then accept this and try something different. Remember, it is the progression of the disease that is causing their behaviour.

Learn to let things go

Learning to let things go when your partner suffers from dementia is one of the most challenging and frustrating aspects of the disease, but it is a crucial one. Their mood swings, personality changes and memory loss are caused by the illness; so try to ensure you don't argue with them over a forgotten memory or the way they are behaving as it will only upset you both. Be willing to take the high ground and simply 'let it go'.



RECOGNISING A TELEPHONE SCAM



Almost 5 million people aged 65 and over in the UK believe they have been targeted by scammers. Of these people, 12% responded to a scam, which means around half a million older people may have fallen victim to scams - please don't be another person on their list of successes.

If when you answer the phone, there is a **five** second delay before someone speaks, the call is probably not from this country. **Simply put the phone down immediately.** If you answer a call and they say there is a problem with your computer, or your internet provider; again put the phone down immediately. The longer you stay on the phone the more vulnerable you become. If you get a call from **AMAZON** be warned this is most definitely a hoax. Amazon rarely make telephone calls. Do not enter into a telephone conversation with anyone you are not familiar with; sometimes by keeping you talking on the telephone over a certain length of time, valuable information can be accessed. It's important to know about the types of scams taking place and how to spot them, as scammers can be very convincing. Many victims don't realise that they are being tricked and believe that scams only happen to 'other people'. All scammers are cruel and they have no integrity. Please Carers take care and be on your guard, these people are ruthless and completely heartless. They know older people are lonely, particularly during Lockdown and they will try to befriend them during a telephone call. They are devious, unscrupulous characters who do not care how much hurt or pain they cause, when they take money from a person. If you are ever asked for your bank details: sort code, account number or pin number, **NEVER** disclose them. As once you do that, if it is a SCAM, you will lose everything, because you personally divulged the information to a third party. We have MASE Carers who have lost thousands of pounds to scammers: please Carers make sure you are not the next person on their list. **If in doubt, contact your local Police or Council Consumer Protection Department. Make a note of these numbers and keep them safe just in case you should ever need to call them.**

TRUSTEES: Daphne or Richard: ☎07939 505455 Mike Creek: ☎01785 663596 Dave Degg: ☎07974 983459 Dave Godden: ☎07968 848120

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

A 12-Point Plan to help Dementia Carers

- The memory of someone with dementia can be compared to a filing cabinet. Top drawer memories go first - things they did yesterday, or five minutes ago. Initially they will still remember things in the lower drawers of their cabinet - their childhood, when you met - but eventually they may lose those too. **However they will still be the same person you know and love.**
- Try not to correct statements you know are incorrect. Tell people about your loved one's memory problems and always include them in conversations.
- In the early stages, help your loved one to feel useful - doing jobs such as washing-up, or setting the table, even if you have to secretly correct things later.
- Try not to argue if you are being blamed for something trivial - the incident will quickly be forgotten.
- When this pandemic is over try and join groups, like the MASE, and find social activities for people with dementia. The company and support of people in a similar situation is a big help.
- If you don't get a night's sleep, try to rest in the day when your loved-one has a nap. Do not do other jobs, make the most of this time for you to rest too.
- When you need to do something in the house, keep your loved-on occupied with magazines, drawing books, DVDs or music.
- Make an album of your loved one's early life - anything which might jog their memories - this will help if nursing or day-care becomes necessary.
- Fit door alarms, so you know if your loved one is leaving a room. Put child locks on cupboards, remove sharp objects and lock bleach and kitchen cleaners away.
- Try to keep your life as normal as possible for as long as you can.
- Share holidays with other friends in a similar situation to you. www.revitalise.org has been recommended by others - so well worth a look. If going away take enough medication with you. Pack medicines in separate bags in case a bag goes missing and always take extra supplied in case of delay. Always Keep a note with you detailing all medication both you and your cared-for are taking.
- Imagine you are at the beginning of a life-changing journey. Think of the entrance to a tunnel; if you can pass through the darkness, you will eventually come into daylight again. Hopefully this will lead you to care with patience you never knew you had.

Lets start our own epidemic



*Smiling is so infectious, you can
catch it like the flu.*

*When someone smiled at me
today, I started smiling too.*

*I passed around the corner and
someone saw my grin.*

When he smiled, I realised I'd passed it on to him.

I thought about that smile, then I realised its worth.

*A single smile, just like mine could travel round the
earth.*

So, if you feel a smile begin, don't leave it undetected.

*Let's start our own epidemic quick, and get the world
Infected!*

A Note from the Trustees

In these difficult and trying times for us all, it is so difficult to find something that makes us smile. We really hope this little poem will help to bring a smile to you all.

The days feel so long and the weather has been really dreadful just recently, so we know that many of you will be finding it difficult to cope. Try to stay strong and keep focussed. Telephone friends and share your feelings. The Trustees are always at the end of the telephone should you want to have a chat. Our numbers are on the front of each Newsletter.

Restrict yourselves to one news bulletin a day - it does no good to listen to and watch everything that is going on in our hospitals.

Simply follow all the guidelines we have been given; stay safe and keep well you are all very precious and are coping brilliantly.

Many of you will have had the vaccine now, and others will be on the waiting list and should get yours soon. We hope this will help you feel a little more confident. You are all in our thoughts and prayers and hopefully we will be able to get together again soon.

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

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