



MASE Monthly Newsletter



Proud Recipients of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

April 2022



"April showers bring May flowers". April is the rainy season; May then is the beginning of Spring when all the new flowers start growing. We all so look forward to seeing the array of different colours when spring plants start to peep through the soil later this month.

Smiles as we get older... ..

Eventually you reach a point when you stop lying about your age, and actually start bragging about it. Getting old is when you sink your teeth into an apple and they stay there!

We don't know how to act our age as we've never been this age before; remember 'laughter is the best tonic ever'



The MASE Gala Celebration in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee 1952-2022 will be held in the large room upstairs at **Lea Hall, Rugeley WS15 2LB on Sunday 29 May from 1:00-4:30.**

Please speak to Michael if you will require transport to the venue. It is important that you also register your attendance to ensure our caterer Lisa has the correct numbers for the Buffet on the day.

Acts of kindness for someone with dementia

Being kind to others helps to build connections and boosts mental wellbeing. We can show kindness to others in many different ways. Here are seven acts of kindness for someone living with dementia:



1. Smile and make eye contact

Sometimes, when people know someone has a diagnosis of dementia, they behave differently towards them – for example, they might avoid speaking to the person for fear that they'll get it wrong. Instead, smile and make eye contact with the person with dementia and, if helpful, keep conversations with them light and happy.

2. Enter their world

One of the most difficult decisions a person can face when caring for someone with dementia is how far to support that person's version of events. People with dementia deserve respect and a key part of this is telling the truth as the first basis. However, it is often better to enter the world of the person with dementia rather than trying to reimpose the present moment on them.

3. Reminisce

Even though a person living with dementia may find their memory becoming worse, they may still benefit from activities that require their long-term memories to be accessed, rather than relying on recent memories. Discussing events and experiences from the past can evoke memories, stimulate mental activity and improve a person's well-being. Reminiscence can often be supported by props such as video, music, pictures and objects that may have particular meaning for an individual.

4. Play their favourite music

For people with dementia, music can help them express feelings and connect with past memories, which may be easier to recall. This might involve playing music that is significant, such as favourite songs, a piece of music from a wedding, or a lullaby the person used to sing to their children.

5. Make their favourite food

Try to follow your loved one's normal likes and dislikes when it comes to food and drink. If they have a smaller appetite, keep their portions small, and talk them through what's on their plate if that would help them. Check in with them during the meal to see if they are managing, and discreetly offer help, if needed.

6. Create a Life Story

Try to think of things to do that might engage or evoke memories for the person with dementia. For example, you could build a scrapbook together using photos of their favourite memories. You could create a Life Story book with the person with dementia. This could include aspects of who they are, such as their background, interests, and who and what is important to them. A Life Story acts as a record of information and can be shared with others to help them better understand and relate to the person with dementia.

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.

Sundowning



If you're feeling a little sleepier than usual or a bit out of rhythm, you're not alone. With the clocks going forward recently, we have all lost one hour of sleep. For some people living with dementia, this shift in routine can worsen confusion or feelings of anxiety around dusk. You might have heard this referred to as 'sundowning'. If someone you know is experiencing these symptoms, these techniques may help them feel safer and calmer as the evening sets in.

1. Distraction can be a good way to help reduce the person's anxiety. You could make them a drink or a snack, play some music that they enjoy listening to, or go out for a walk.
2. Speaking in short sentences in a slow, soothing way can help avoid confusion and make the person feel more at ease. You could also hold their hand or sit close to them and stroke their arm to reassure them.
3. Ask the person what the matter is and listen closely to their response. Even if they cannot fully communicate what is wrong, having the opportunity to talk about the reason for their distress may help lessen their fear.

Sundowning

Sundowning is a term used for changes in behaviour that occur in the evening, around dusk. Some people who have dementia experience a growing sense of agitation or anxiety at this time.

Sundowning often makes the person with dementia feel very strongly that they are in the wrong place. They might say they need to go home, even if they are at home, or that they need to pick the children up from school, even if they're now adults. Other symptoms might include shouting or arguing, pacing, or becoming confused about who people are or what's going on around them.

Why does sundowning happen?

Sundowning has several causes. As the day goes on, the person with dementia becomes more tired, and this can lead to their dementia symptoms worsening. Hunger, thirst and physical pain can also play a part.

As darkness falls, streetlights come on and people settle in for the evening. These changes can make the person increasingly concerned that they are in the wrong place, or that they have forgotten to do something during the day.

Tips for managing sundowning

- Use distraction techniques: go into a different room, make the person a drink, have a snack, turn some music on, or go out for a walk
- Ask them what the matter is. Listen carefully to their response and if possible, see if you can deal with the reason for their distress
- Talk in a slow, soothing way
- Speak in short sentences and give simple instructions to try to avoid confusion. Hold the person's hand or sit close to them and stroke their arm

Tips for preventing sundowning

- Follow daytime routine with activities the person enjoys, like going for a gentle walk or visiting the shops
- Try to limit the intake of caffeinated and alcoholic drinks. Instead, offer caffeine-free tea, coffee and cola, or alcohol-free beer or wine. You might want them to consider stopping drinking alcohol altogether.
- Try to limit daytime naps to encourage them to sleep well at night.
- Close the curtains and turn the lights on before dusk to ease the transition into night-time.
- If possible, cover mirrors, windows and glass doors with a towel, sheet or curtain. Reflections can be very confusing for people with dementia
- Avoid large meals in the evening as this can disrupt sleep patterns
- Introduce an evening routine with activities the person enjoys, such as watching a favourite programme, (avoiding anything with raised voices) listening to calming music, stroking a pet etc.



Please Carers remember the rules for our monthly raffles have changed. If your number is drawn out and you have already won a prize at any of the other groups you have attended during the month, then as a courtesy to others, another number will immediately be drawn again. We hope you will understand why we are implementing this procedure; everyone at the groups then has an opportunity to leave with a gift.

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

Registered Charity No: 1137193 - The Monthly Alzheimer's Support Evening Limited (MASE) Company Limited by Guarantee No: 7228424

DISCLAIMER - Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this newsletter is correct at the time of going to publication. MASE Group accept no liability for the accuracy of the content. Company limited by Guarantee in England & Wales. Registered No: 07228424 Registered Office: 3 Hartwell Grove, Stafford ST16 1RW.

MASE is a registered Charity - Number: 1137193 The Monthly Alzheimer's Support Evening Limited (MASE)