



# MASE Monthly Newsletter



Proud Recipients of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

## September 2022



The last few weeks have devastated many people and sadly there is little any of us can do about recent announcements regarding the cost-of-living increases. These will affect everyone's lives. Unfortunately we all just have to take this on the chin. Be more aware of remembering to switch off unused appliances and lights, turning down the heating just a little during the Winter months, will all help. Invest, if you can, in some lightweight blankets, which can wrap around you and your cared-for to give that extra layer of warmth when watching TV. (There will be some small velour blankets as raffle prizes soon). As long as we are careful in the home, and wise in our choice of food, we will get through these turbulent times.

With everything that is going on around us, the long-term sustainability in this economic climate for our MASE groups is of course very fragile. As we are not core-funded, Trustees have to raise all funds to ensure our Groups continue. So, with this in mind, Trustees have taken the very difficult decision to STOP all buffets from **October**. However, please be assured our groups will still have the same 'feel good factor' and there will be hot and cold drinks throughout the afternoon/evening, with cakes and sealed packs of biscuits on each table. This is not all doom and gloom Carers, and we promise you that making these changes will enable us to continue with the MASE Groups for longer.

We will, of course, have entertainment and will try to get some interesting speakers to come into the Groups to talk to you all. The MASE Groups are there to support our Carers and their cared-for and that is exactly what we will continue to do, but sadly without the buffet. Maybe on very special occasions we can organise small buffets - but unfortunately not for the foreseeable future.

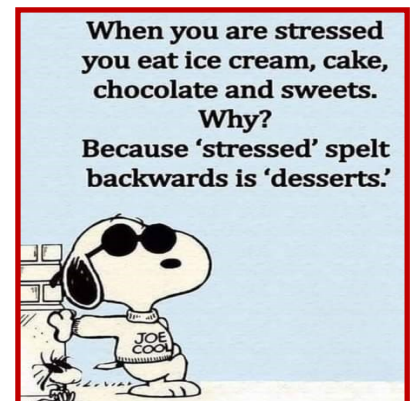
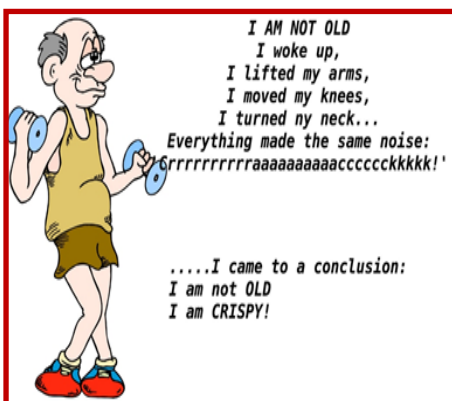
By way of this Newsletter we are also taking the opportunity to thank Lisa for her excellent service over the years. So Carers please make the most of the buffets during September, and do not be despondent, there will still be the same lovely atmosphere as always at our Groups.

On the brighter side, our volunteers (who always work tirelessly during the Groups) will have more of an opportunity to sit with you and chat. Personally, we think that will be an added bonus for you all. You know by now that the Trustees and all Volunteers at MASE always have your interests at heart and long may that continue. This is not the end of the MASE - just the beginning of a new chapter in our book. Keep smiling through these difficult days and remember we are always here if you need us.

*Daphne, Richard, Michael, Dave Degg & Dave Godden - MASE Trustees*

### Time for some reflection and a perhaps even a smile!

*Can you spare a moment to show someone you care, to comfort someone lonely and in a sorrow share?  
A kind word is priceless, it lingers in the heart, gives to life new meaning and to hope, a brighter start.  
Helping hands are needed in our world today; let's look out for someone we meet along the way.*



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 - Changes in behaviour at dusk

## What is sundowning?

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

Sundowning symptoms might include a compelling sense that they are in the wrong place. The person with dementia might say they need to go home, even if they are home, or that they need to pick the children up, even if that is not the case. Other symptoms might include shouting or arguing, pacing, or becoming confused about who people are or what's going on.

## Why does sundowning happen?

There are lots of reasons why sundowning occurs. As the day goes on, the person with dementia becomes more tired, and this can lead to their symptoms worsening. Hunger, thirst and physical pain can also play a part. As darkness falls, street lights come on and people settle in for the evening. Some people with dementia become increasingly concerned that they are in the wrong place.

## Tips for managing sundowning as it happens

- use distraction techniques: take the person into a different room, make them a drink, give them a snack, turn some music on, or go out for a walk
- ask the person what the matter is. Listen carefully to the response and if possible, see if you can deal with the source of their distress
- talk in a slow, soothing way
- hold the person's hand or sit close to them and stroke their arm

## Practical tips on preventing sundowning

- Follow a routine during the day that contains activities the person enjoys. Going outside for a walk or visiting some shops is good exercise
- Limit the person's intake of caffeinated drinks. Caffeine-free tea and coffee are available
- Encourage the person not to drink alcohol later in the day or to stop drinking it completely. They might enjoy alcohol-free beer and wine instead
- Try to limit the person's naps during the day to encourage them to sleep well at night
- Close the curtains and turn the lights on before dusk begins, to ease the transition into night-time
- If possible, cover mirrors or glass doors. Reflections can be confusing for someone with Dementia
- Once you are in for the evening, speak in short sentences and give simple instructions to the person, to try and limit their confusion
- 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, listening to music, stroking a pet etc. However, try to keep television or radio stations set to something calming and relatively quiet as sudden loud noises or people shouting can be distressing for a person with dementia

## Patience really is a virtue

- Your loved one will need so much patience from you as the Carer.
- Trying to understand the fear and trepidation they are going through is beyond comprehension. Be kind, be tolerant and try to reassure your loved one as much as you can. They may start hallucinating at dusk and this can be a very frightening time for both you and your loved one. They may see things that you don't see. Flowers on the wallpaper could in their eyes be spiders crawling on the wall; stripes on the carpet may make them think there are steps, and so they will move slowly before taking a step forward.
- The role of a Carer can push you to your limit, be kind and try to be tolerant and as understanding as you can.
- Carers please remember to **be kind to yourselves** too, because you are playing a really important part in the life of your loved ones!

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) 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)