



# Caregiver Network News

*A newsletter for  
caregivers of loved ones  
with memory disorders*



**PLEASE CONSIDER**



**IN YOUR YEAR-END  
GIVING!**



[CLICK HERE](#) to donate.

## Did You Know

# you can make a TAX-FREE donation to MemoryCare directly from your IRA?

An IRS provision allows retirees age **70 1/2 years and older** to donate **up to \$100,000 tax-free from their IRA** each year to a qualified charity, such as MemoryCare.

Generally, when you take a distribution from your IRA, it is treated as taxable income. Under this provision, the assets are excluded from income if the distribution is made directly to charity.

The distribution is not included in your income so you **avoid all the effects that a regular IRA withdrawal creates**, including taxes on Social Security benefits.



## KEEP CALM & BE PREPARED!

The holidays are here again, and along with them the predictably jolly and often chaotic family gatherings we have come to expect as tradition. But when there is a person living with dementia in the family, some of those expectations can be unrealistic. Dementia causes changes, and different family members may have different perspectives on the situation, especially if it's been a while since they have visited. Assumptions can be made, misunderstandings can arise, and before we realize what's happening, an otherwise happy holiday can be spoiled by hurt feelings.



If you are the caregiver of a family member with dementia, it's easy to forget that others may be surprised or even upset by appearances or episodes that, to you, are normal.

You live with this every day; they don't.

They expect Mom to be the same as last time they visited.

You expect them to realize that she isn't.

You blame them. They blame you.

It is an argument waiting to happen.

But with a little advance communication, you have a better chance of dodging this bullet. Letting the rest of the family know what changes to expect can minimize the surprise factor and help their visit go more smoothly for everyone. As the "on site authority" in this area, it falls to you to update them on recent changes that may have occurred since they last saw Mom. Perhaps the easiest way to do this is send a letter or email in advance of their visit, something along the lines of the following:

[Click Here](#) to continue reading this article

# DEMENTIA

## (It's More Than Just Memory Loss)

*In this series, Caregiver Network News (CNN) addresses a myriad of common symptoms of dementia, maybe even some that you hadn't been aware of, and will take a deeper look at what is happening and how you can respond.*

*Our focus for 2018 will be on what are commonly referred to as Executive Function skills, which include judgment, decision-making, insight, logic and reason, sequencing, safety awareness, social filters, and self-awareness. These are our higher thought processes, and are located in the prefrontal cortex of the brain. Nearly all forms of dementia target this area early in the disease - but often the changes are not obvious or even very noticeable to the casual observer.*

### Part 4 - LOSS OF IMPULSE CONTROL and SOCIAL FILTERS

***"I can handle the forgetfulness, I can handle the constant changes - but Dad has started doing embarrassing things in public, and I don't know how to make him stop!"***



It's one of the symptoms of dementia that is the hardest for families to face: as the disease robs their loved one's "thinking" brain, it also takes away a sense of social norms, of what is acceptable behavior, of when and how to control emotions and inhibitions. As a result, Dad may loudly accuse you in public of stealing his wallet, or Mom may make noisy comments about someone's appearance. Even undressing in public or making improper sexual overtures can happen.

These episodes are understandably distressing for us, but in most cases, the person with dementia isn't aware that they are acting inappropriately. Reminding ourselves that "it isn't Mom, it's her disease" helps us keep in mind that they aren't doing this on purpose - it's due to the changes in their brain.



### What Can You Do?

[Click Here](#) to continue reading this article

**WANT TO READ THE PREVIOUS INSTALLMENTS IN THIS SERIES?**

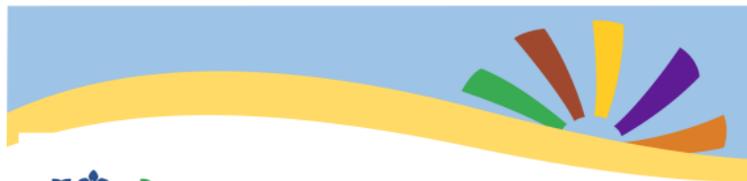
[CLICK HERE](#) to read **Part 1, Loss of Initiative**, from the Jan-Feb issue  
[CLICK HERE](#) to read **Part 2, Loss of Logic, Reason, & Rational Thought**,  
from the Mar-Apr issue  
[CLICK HERE](#) to read **Part 3, Loss of Sequencing**, from the Jul-Aug issue

## CAREGIVER TIP of the MONTH

"As my wife's Alzheimer's progressed, she lost her ability to use words that we could understand, or even to follow what we were saying to her. But even though she couldn't carry on conversation, she still loved it when someone would sing, and would often join in. When the holidays approached that year, we worried about how other family members, especially the children, would relate to her since they couldn't talk with her. Someone had given her several years earlier an apron with snatches of familiar holiday carols all over it. She loved that apron, and when we brought it out this particular year, she insisted on wearing it all the time. We quickly learned that we could point out one of the songs on her apron and begin singing it, and she would immediately sing along, usually finishing the whole carol herself. Not only did it provide a happy alternative to conversation, it became a popular game with the children. They never tired of coming up to her and picking out a song from her apron, and she never tired of singing with them. It created unexpected moments of joy that holiday season that we still treasure many years later. Although my wife is no longer with us, her apron is worn by the grandchildren every year, and we all share stories about her."



Upcoming Caregiver Program:



MemoryCare  
Join the Journey

## Bearing the Burdens of Grief

Presenter: Bill Smutny

Please join us for this presentation at the SECU Center for MemoryCare, 100 Far Horizons Lane, Asheville, NC 28803

No fee, but space is limited so please reserve at 828-771-2219 or email office@memorycare.org.

\* An unexpected complication that comes with a diagnosis of memory loss is having to deal with grief. Permeating our thoughts and actions grief can affect the well-being of ourselves and our loved ones. In our series, Bill Smutny shares how he and his wife Laura have dealt with these burdens and how he has navigated through the maze of younger onset Alzheimer's.

**"The most precious gift we can offer others is our presence."**

~Thich Nhat Hanh

MemoryCare Education Series  
Thursday, December 6, 2018  
2pm - 3:30 pm  
Location: MemoryCare



 **ONGOING PROGRAMS**  
*Open to the Public*

### **MEMORYCAREGIVERS NETWORK** **PEER SUPPORT & EDUCATION GROUPS**

#### **FLETCHER GROUP**

First Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.  
Fletcher 7th Day Adventist Church  
Howard Gap Road and Naples Road, Fletcher, N.C.  
(just past Park Ridge Hospital)

#### **NEW HOPE GROUP**

Third Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.  
New Hope Presbyterian Church  
3070 Sweeten Creek Road, Asheville, N.C. 28803  
(across from Givens Estates)

## **NORTHASHEVILLE GROUP (formerly the Weaverville Group)**

Fourth Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

**TIME AND DATE CHANGE FOR DECEMBER!!!**

**This group will meet on THURSDAY DEC. 20 from 2-4pm!**

Woodfin YMCA at Reynolds Mountain  
40 N. Merrimon Ave (exit 23 off I-26 West)

*Network meetings are open to the public.*

*The Network relies on charitable support to keep its program going.*

*To make a donation, [CLICK HERE](#).*

*For more information about the MemoryCaregivers Network, contact:*

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828.301.0740  
[patricia.hilgendorf@gmail.com](mailto:patricia.hilgendorf@gmail.com)

## **"CAREGIVER COLLEGE"**

### **MemoryCare's ongoing educational series for caregivers**

A series of six lectures will be provided for anyone caring for a person with a memory disorder. The program is taught by one of the MemoryCare physicians, and is designed to improve caregiver understanding of different aspects of dementia care. Related presentation materials will be provided.

There is no cost for families who are enrolled in MemoryCare. For those not enrolled, the cost is \$85 for the 6-part series.

#### **Course Content:**

##### **What Is Dementia?**

**Transitioning from Independence to Interdependence**

**Functional and Behavioral Changes of Dementia**

**Dementia Treatment Options & Risk Reduction**

**Caring for the Caregiver**

**Dementia and Legal Planning Issues**

***The next ASHEVILLE session of Caregiver College  
begins on Thursday, March 14, 2019  
and continues on consecutive Thursdays through April 18  
2:00 - 5:00pm  
at the **SECU Center for MemoryCare**  
on the campus of Givens Estates***

***Watch this space for information about the next Waynesville session!***



### **Do you need a program for a group event?**

The MemoryCaregivers Network staff presents on a variety of subjects, including Recognizing Early Warning Signs of Memory Loss, Facts and Fiction about Dementia, Better Communication Techniques, and more.

We are happy to speak at your event to raise awareness and knowledge about

Contact Mary Donnelly at [network@memorycare.org](mailto:network@memorycare.org)

To see a list of  
**OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES**  
for those living with dementia and their care partners,  
[CLICK HERE](#)

*Caregiver Network News* and *The MemoryCaregivers Network* are auxiliary programs of



*We rely on charitable donations to continue these programs!*

*Please consider donating...  
perhaps in honor of a loved one's birthday...  
or a memorial...  
or a sustaining gift to support families like yours  
who depend on the services that MemoryCare provides!*

**Make a difference. Make a donation.**

[CLICK HERE](#) to donate.

**For more information about MemoryCare, click this link to visit our website:**  
[www.MemoryCare.org](http://www.MemoryCare.org)

**Thank you for your interest and support!**

*MemoryCare is a charitable non-profit organization whose mission is three-fold:*  
To provide specialized medical care to older adults with cognitive impairment;  
to support caregivers with education, counseling, and improved access to services; and to provide community  
education.

*Caregiver Network News* is written and edited by Mary Donnelly.  
Contact [network@memorycare.org](mailto:network@memorycare.org) for more information.

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