Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley

Changing The Way We Think About Memory Loss

April 21st, 2020

Mary Schmidt is graciously offering to make masks for anyone from Memory Cafe who needs one! If you are interested, please call Mary at 701-235-3083 Thank you Mary!

In This Issue

Hello Memory Cafe,

How are you? I am wondering how many of us have been sharing the same new experiences. The past few weeks have been a whirlwind of trying to learn new technology, finding ways to stay active at home, and managing to go the grocery store only once a week (and wearing a mask while I do). There are many things right now that are beyond my control, and I found this graphic so helpful to remind me to focus on what I can control. For me, the best thing I did was to turn off the news. I still check in once a day, but I found my level of stress decreased immensely when it was not on all day long. I also have been doing what I can to stay positive; such as taking the time to eat well, and going for a walk when the weather allows. However perhaps most important on this list of things I can control is my kindness and grace. I believe you can always find small moments of grace if you look for them. For example, during this time at home my daughter and I have been able to finish that bible study we had been meaning to do. My uncle has found time to tackle that box of pictures and found some wonderful memories of my Dad in the process. My sincere hope is that you can reflect on these past weeks and find a moment of kindness and grace as well. Hold on to those moments, and remember to focus on what you can control.

Stay well dear friends!
Beth Ustanko

Wanted: $10,000 Reward for any information leading to the arrest of these masked "Coviders"!!

Announcing Memory Cafe's First (and possibly ONLY) Silly Hat Contest!!

Open to ANYONE, INCLUDING FRIENDS AND DONORS!

Rules:

- You must use items from your home. No shopping allowed!
- Take your picture wearing your hat.
- Send it to Hello@MemoryCafeRRV.org.
- Photos will be published in our next newsletter and voted upon.
- Everyone is eligible to vote on their favorite hat, one vote per person.
- Prizes, not very nice ones, will be given away to our TOP THREE winners!

GOOD LUCK!!

Coronavirus Communication Tips:

- Use simple language that is easily repeatable by you.
- Use words that have meaning to your loved one, such as " the flu" instead of "a virus".
- Avoid scary details and try to convey confidence that everything is going to be okay.
- Avoid watching the news.
- Individuals living with advancing dementia are often extremely perceptive of the moods and feelings of those around them.
- So, offer frequent smiles, hugs, jokes, games, and dance invitations.

Smiles and laughter are highly contagious and good for ALL of us!

Member Spotlight: Mark Bratlie

A Slower Pace
By Mark Bratlie

Quick, quick, hurry, hurry
time is passing with a flurry
Things to do, no time to linger
life is caught up in a wringer

But whoa, whoa let's slow the pace
life need not be an all-out race
What of life's gifts that pass on by
as treasures lost to make one cry

Season's colors and nature's beauty
ask for time for us to see
A slower pace allows some focus
as life's wonders beg for notice

A leaf, a cloud, a summer shower
a rainbow's arc, a full moon's power
A child's giggle, a lover's sigh
a sweet embrace, a refreshing cry

An open mind, a relaxing breath
a calm acceptance of life and death
The invitation is ours to ponder
as we focus on a life of wonder

Health Tips

Drink plenty of water.
Remember to BREATHE!
Drinking too much alcohol is a common, but serious problem among caregivers, even without the added stress of the coronavirus. Be careful.
MOVE as frequently as possible.
Get as much fresh air as possible, even if it's just opening your windows.
Be patient and kind to yourself. You are doing the best you can!

What is Bringing a Smile to Your Face During the Coronavirus?

- "I have great gratitude for getting things accomplished that I normally wouldn't. I've found things I didn't know existed, like a pair of really nice shoes that were still in the box! " Jeff Knoll
- "Family and friends and maintaining my health and independence." Joann Relling
- "Our kids and others checking in with us." John and Joyce Stende
- "Getting up in the morning." Peg Anderson
- "Having a choice of whether to answer Deb's questions or not!" Dennis Anderson
- "Dancing and watching Mark's signature dance move!" Jean Anderson
- "Getting positive feedback on my poetry." Mark Bratlie
- "Being outside and getting stuff done." Steve Froslie
- "People calling me. I haven't heard from some of them for a long time! My grandkids. " Linda Froslie
- "Keeping busy, phone calls." Marlys Jacopson
- "Seeing Gary point and smile at me on facetime." Phyllis Olson
- "Mary's zucchini bread!" Bob Schmidt
- "Looking ahead to when this is all over!" Lloyd Correll
- "We're taking the advise of Dr. Jurivich and trying to laugh 100 times every day!" Shirley and Ralph Nordick
- "Staying off social media...lots of noise with little signal." ND Governor Doug Burgum

(To be continued in the next newsletter)

Just For Laughs!

Content Provided by Steve Froslie

You thought dogs were hard to train? Look at all the humans who can't sit and stay!

When this is all over we're throwing the biggest St Patrick's Easter de Mayo Memorial of July anyone's ever seen!

I'm so excited it's time to take out the garbage. I wonder what I should wear?

Returned from the grocery store with the hubby. Took masks off. Turns out it was the wrong hubby. Be attentive!

My mother always told me I'd never accomplish anything by staying in bed all day. But look at me now, I'm saving the world!!

It's like being 16 again. Gas is cheap and I'm grounded.

Free laughs available by visiting "Pluto Living" on facebook or Youtube! Thank you Karen Beulter for this lead!

Quote of the Day:

"Smiling brings a smile to my face."

--Doug Tveiten

"We Need To Go Through Our Good Fridays Before We Can Experience Easter." Rev. Paul Molick

This is so true! The changes forced upon us during this season of coronavirus have been stressful for everyone, but for some it's been especially difficult. While it's true that resilience is bolstered by focusing on gratitude and "making lemonade from lemons", it is also very important to acknowledge and talk about our feelings of anxiety, loneliness, sadness, stress, anger, and fear during this forced isolation. The isolation from this coronavirus is especially challenging because no one knows how long it will last.

"The effects of this type of isolation can be traumatizing, " Dr. Ulven of Sanford Health states. "It's okay to feel anxiety. It's a normal part of being human. We have a culture that says you should never feel pain. Most of us are feeling anxiety. As human beings, we're wired to respond to threats with anxiety. "

It's important for you to remember you are not alone; many other Memory Cafe participants are experiencing similar feelings and frustrations. Please call us or someone you trust if you're struggling and would like to talk. We're here to listen and help however we can.
Deb

We Miss YOU!!

Creating Purpose Though Meaningful Engagement

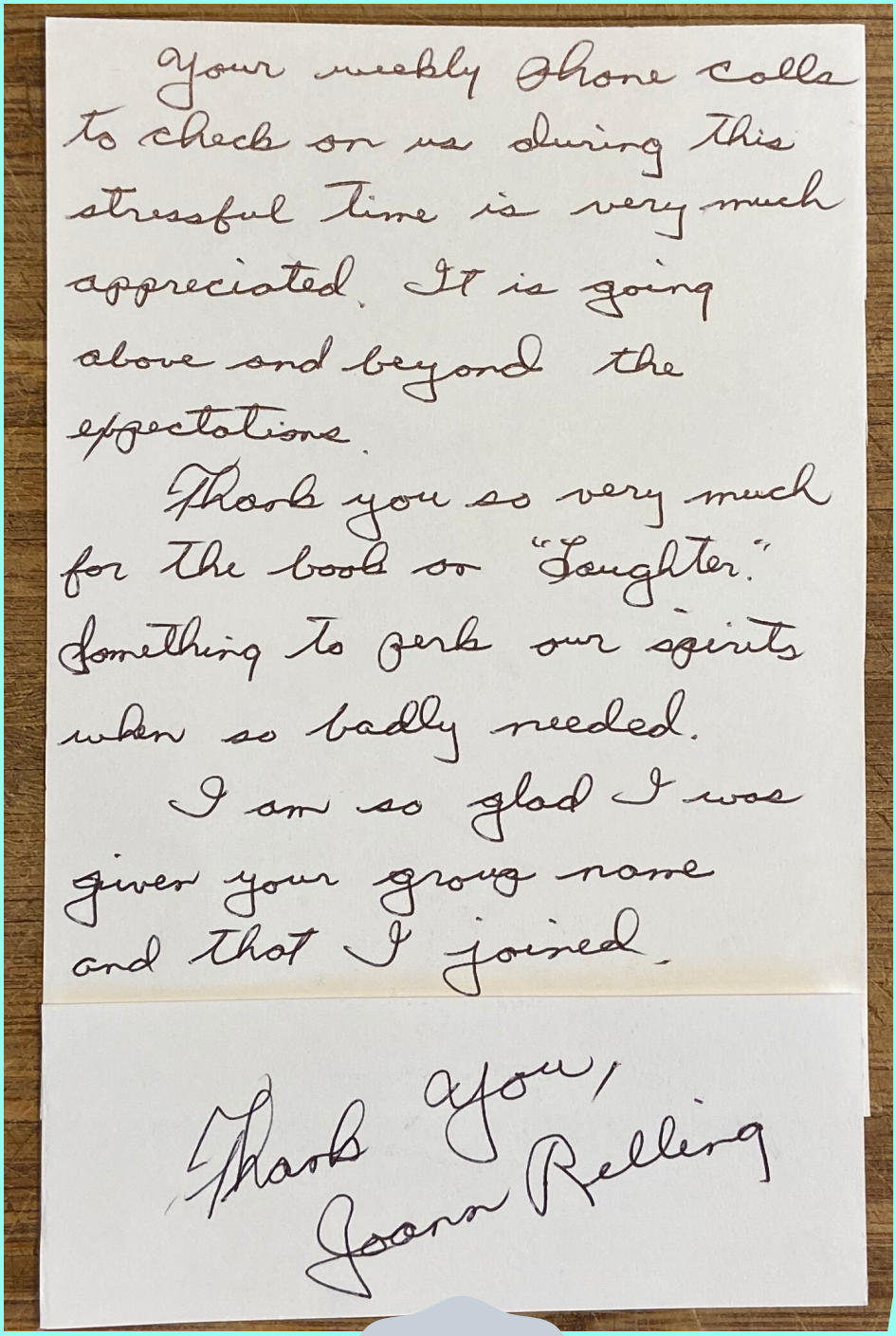
Approach your loved one slowly and from their dominant side. Establish eye contact and use his/her name before asking for their engagement. Engage them in activities they are most familiar with and solicit their assistance. For example, "Name, I would really appreciate your help with this project. You are much better at this sort of thing than I am. Would you please take some time to help me?" And remember, NO CORRECTIONS, no matter the results. Instead, offer verbal, or even written notes of appreciation for their time and sincere efforts. They can then look back on those written thank you notes, especially if they are posted on the fridge or the bathroom mirror. Our need for affirmation never goes away!

- Sorting options:
  junk mail (save it)
  silverware drawer
  cupboards
  toolbox
  socks
  screws/bolts/nails
  yarn, fabric, thread
  different colored/sizes napkins, dishcloths, towels, washcloths, socks, undergarments
- Cutting and sorting fabric squares
- Sanding and/or painting wood pieces
- Photo journaling with pictures cut from magazines and glued or taped into a notebook
- Counting money (coins and bills)
- Vacuuming, dusting, sweeping - even when it doesn't need it
- "Organizing" photos, scrapbooks, shelves, closets, garage
- Any outdoor work - raking, sweeping
- Crushing, cutting, ripping boxes for recycling
- Food prep - washing and cutting fruit, veggies, potatoes
- Coloring books, paint by number (youth or children's level)
- Foam or plastic blocks, tools, toolboxes, games

Remember:

Our goal is to help our loved ones feel valued, significant, helpful and productive. The end product, or results of their efforts are irrelevant.

Memory Cafe: Building Skills and Community During The Coronavirus



Your weekly phone calls to check on us during this stressful time is very much appreciated. It is going above and beyond the expectations.

Thank you so very much for the book on "Laughter." Something to perk our spirits when so badly needed.

I am so glad I was given your group name and that I joined.

Thank you,
Joann Relling

Learning to Zoom Together!

The Coronavirus offers Memory Cafe an opportunity to connect with our speakers and each other in new ways. One of them is via "Zoom", a computer application that allows many people to see and interact with each other at the same time. It is free, easy to install, and user friendly, even for those of us who are technologically challenged!

If you are interested in learning how to "Zoom" please let us know. We're available to help you.

Also, check out this website: www.Cyber-Seniors.com. The free computer mentoring program was specially developed to assist seniors who want to become more tech savvy and learn new ways to stay connected to their loved ones.

Upcoming Zoom Meetings:

May 1st, 2 pm - "Patient care preferences during the pandemic." - Dr. Donald Jurivich, Sanford Health

May 5th, 1 pm - LIVE with Eric Bergesen!

Redefining Memory Loss Caregiver Conference: Creating Connections in Caregiving is coming soon! Stay tuned for details!

Thank you Nicolle Aukland and Family Wellness for your recent "Healthy Cooking" lesson! It was wonderful! Check it out on our website or our facebook page.

Keynote Speaker Cameo

HELPING HEARTS

COVID-19

A crisis response platform brought to you by

To facilitate a way for the general public to learn about urgent needs and support participating non-profits during this trying time, Dakota Medical Foundation (DMF) has established a temporary giving platform, DMFHelpingHearts.org. The site also serves as a real-time information hub so that government officials, businesses, and funders can help charities across North Dakota and northwest Minnesota meet the growing demand for social and human services. All Giving Hearts Day charities are listed on the Helping Hearts site and have been asked to update their individual profile to reflect their urgent needs in light of COVID-19.

Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley is participating in this campaign to offset some significant financial losses we've incurred for marketing materials and advertising our annual Redefining Memory Loss Caregiver Conference originally scheduled for June 4th. The conference will now be offered online at a later date. While Memory Cafe provides valuable education, support, and quality of life enhancement for individuals living with memory loss and their care partners, we are not involved in feeding, clothing, employing, or sheltering people who are experiencing tremendous challenges during this time. Our needs are not urgent. So, please give as generously as you are able to those charities who provide these vital services to thousands of individuals across ND and western MN. Thank you.

Shout out to Zandbroz Variety Store!

Greg Danz, owner of Zandbroz graciously offered to order, address, and mail all of the "Laughter, The Best Medicine" books that were recently sent to you. He is such a great friend of Memory Cafe! Other financial donors who contributued to this project included Brad and Sharon Marsten (our registration table rockstars!), Joe Leggio, and Thomas and Vonnie Marubbi. Thank you so much for your generous donation and support of Memory Cafe!

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS GIVING HEARTS DAY DONORS!

INCLUDES GHD MATCHING FUND DONORS

Champion ($5000-above)
Sanford Health
Vanneisa Krenz

Advocate ($2500-$5000)
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Remember to follow us on Facebook and Instagram. And be sure we have a current email address for you or your loved one. Thank you!