



Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley

People Who Are Forgetting Shouldn't Be Forgotten
October 2023



October/November Wednesday Schedule All meetings held from 1 - 2:30 pm

- October 4**
Medicare/Medicaid - Attorney Susan E. Johnson-Drenth
Hope Lutheran Church - South Campus, 3636 S 25th St
- October 11**
Impact of Social Isolation and Intergenerational Connections - Jeremy Holloway, UND Med School. Hjemkomst Center
- October 18**
Pottery Project with Katherine Kilbourne Center for Creativity and Music with Touchmark Choir
Hope Lutheran Church - South Campus, 3636 S 25th St
- October 25**
Caregiver Cafe, Call 701-404-6712 for details
Linger Laugh and Learn Center - 1122 1st Ave N, Fargo
- November 1**
Care Partner Month Kick off Celebration! Care Partners, this day is all about YOU! Join us as we celebrate who you are and all you do.
Hope Lutheran Church - South Campus
- November 8**
Rockin' with Musician Steve Worner
Hjemkomst Center
- November 15**
Care Partner Panel Discussion
Hope Lutheran Church - South Campus
- November 22**
Caregiver Cafe, Call 701-404-6712 for details
1122 1st Ave N, Fargo

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- *Sing From Your Heart Chorus* - Deb McTaggart
- *Too Soon to Forget* Young Onset Support Group
- Family Testimony - Cheri Lehman
- Circle of Six - What is it and why is it so important?
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- The Psychological Family - Pauline Boss, PhD

Hi Memory Cafe!

"If everyone is moving forward together then success takes care of itself." said Henry Ford. Boy, oh, boy, did we ever move forward together last month!!

After months of discussion, negotiating, planning, and hard work we are now living with the deep satisfaction of successfully transitioning into several new venues at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Hope Lutheran Church - South campus, and the Moorhead American Legion for our first 'Dine and Dance' event! We've also welcomed many new volunteers to our volunteer 'Dream Team' and many new participants for our various programs. Additionally, we've developed several new programs including a formalized training program for our volunteers, participants, and the community; a large muscle - based movement program using games developed by our friends from Park Christian School; Montessori based programming during our Monday morning 'Coffee and Conversation' session with Maria Ueland; and a new men's care partner support group! WHEW...these monumental efforts took a lot of moving forward together!

Thank you to everyone who worked so hard and committed so much time getting us moved and settled into our new venues! A special thank you to our new friends at Bethlehem Lutheran church, Hope Lutheran church, and Scott Moen at the Moorhead American Legion who have welcomed us into their 'homes' with open arms. And thank you to our forward-thinking board of directors who consistently provides a strong backbone of support for our amazing Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley.

George Eliot once asked, "What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult to each other?" Memory Cafe personifies that life mission perfectly. Thank you everyone who helps make it so.

Warmly and gratefully,
~Deb



Blast Off into Cyber Space!!



We are now strategically posting invigorating content on Facebook and Instagram every Tuesday and Friday...with an occasion burst of fun on Wednesdays! Please help us change the way our world thinks about and supports memory loss by 'following', 'liking', 'responding', and sharing our posts with your followers and friends. Together, we will have a MUCH greater impact!

The mission of Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley is to recognize the intrinsic beauty and value of individuals living with memory loss while inspiring in them and their loved ones hope, joy, and a sense of empowerment.

A Falling Leaf

by Mark Bratlie



Today a leaf came down to greet me
falling gently on a breeze
With intentions to remind me
of the things I must release

Nature teaches of life's cycles
when to cling and when to fall
There is a time for every season
and solace if we hear the call

But letting go is not so easy
may need more than just a breeze
Graceful falling takes some practice
and a lesson from the trees

This human mind is often yearning
for some past or future day
But opening to present stillness
allows a more fulfilling way

We cannot control our seasons
grasping only brings more grief,
Let us settle in the moment
Like the falling of a leaf.
like the falling of a leaf

Mindfulness Moments Healthline.com

The following exercises are intended to transform everyday moments into mindful moments:

1. **Gratitude list** - 3 - 5 new items every day; journal them.
2. **Walking meditation** - in a line or circle; inside or out.
3. **Mindful driving** - focus on the weight of the car around you, the sound of your tires on the road, the texture of the surface of the road you're driving on.
4. **Single - tasking** - focus on one task at a time. how you're breathing, the sensation of your clothes on your body, how your body feels in your seat or how your feet feel on the floor; your body's posture.
5. **Mindful eating** - turn off the TV and put your phone away; focus on one bite at a time, eat with your non-dominant hand.
6. **Mindful gardening** - what does the soil feel like? The weather? Do you hear other sounds around you?

"Still Here, Still Me"

Voices of Those Living With Dementia



Sam Simon

Trained as a lawyer, Samuel A. (Sam) Simon started his career as a member of Ralph Nader's first legal advocacy group in Washington, D.C. He went on to start his own consulting firm and became a regular commentator on national news programs. In 2018, he was diagnosed with MCI (Mild Cognitive Impairment). In 2021, he was diagnosed with early Alzheimer's disease. He has written and is performing a play, *Dementia Man: An Existential Journey*, about his experience with the disease. When interviewed, here's what he has to say:

Interviewer: Your character describes your shockingly insensitive treatment by your first neurologist. When you asked, "What's next?" he replied, "There's only one future for you, down. Things will get worse." What do you have to say about that now?

Sam: 'The neurological world is profoundly broken. I experienced Susan (my wife who wasn't expected to live) going through breast cancer. People were there to help. There were support groups. There was literature. But with my diagnosis of dementia (I prefer "neuropsychological disease") it was, "Get your affairs in order." I wasn't told about any support groups. It was about as stark a contrast as you can get.'

Interviewer: What's next for you?

Sam: It never occurred to me that I could write and perform a play with Alzheimer's. A theatrical friend and colleague encouraged me. She had seen *The Actual Dance*, a previous play I had written. I can't tell you how energizing it is. I have a huge need to change the narrative around and reimagine the use of that dirty word "dementia" and the stereotypes. This feels like the most important work of my life. My mission is to make it available to everybody who needs it. I believe in the power of the arts.

My goal is to show that even with a cognitive disorder it is possible to live with dignity and have a meaningful life. I am so animated. I'm in the early stages and every day I learn something new. There's no doubt I'm impaired but only mildly impaired now. I am now at the five-year mark from the initial MCI diagnosis. We have since learned a lot more about Alzheimer's. And I can sense things getting worse. It raises the stakes on what to do next. I'm not going to walk away from my disease and feel sorry for myself. I will embrace the life I'm given. Choose life. I've been made to use my disease to be useful to myself and others.

**For Our Health:
Finding a 'Neurobic' Hobby (excerpted)
by Marilyn Abrahamson, Brain-Health Specialist
~ Ceresti Health, July, 2023**



Taking time pursuing your hobbies or developing new hobbies is an excellent way to engage more fully in life. This is especially true for people living with memory loss and their care partners. Spending even a few moments each day will build connections and provide moments of joy for both of you.

To make the most of your hobby make sure it's **Neurobic**. This means that it helps you make new connections in your brain. More connections mean a bigger brain, and more **cognitive reserve** - and that's what helps you stave off age-related cognitive decline.

To make sure a hobby is **Neurobic**, choose one that's new to you so you can learn from it. Choosing a hobby that involves all of your senses is a bonus, as that's what creates new neural connections that light up regions all over your brain!

How do you choose a hobby that's **Neurobic**? Begin by thinking about your interests and personality traits. Are you interested in group activities or do you prefer to go it solo? Group activities could include dancing, learning a new card game, or joining a book club. Solo activities could include taking an online class about wines, watercolor painting, travel, or photography.

For some relaxed, quality time together, consider a hobby that you and your loved on can do together such as jewelry - making, learning and playing a new card game (rules can be adapted as necessary), and bird-watching, even out of your living room window if you cannot get outside.

Hopefully, some of these ideas will help inspire you to do something NEW and DIFFERENT and GOOD FOR YOUR BRAIN....something **Neuobic!**

Speaking of DANCING...

'Dine and Dance'

Moorhead American Legion

303 30th St N. Moorhead (north of Frying Pan)

Monday, Oct. 23th, 11:30 - 1:30 pm

The Accordion Band from Sons of Norway will provide our dance music!

Did you know...

Our monthly rent expense rose from \$300/mo. to \$1600/mo. in September???

Just for Laughs!
Content Provided by Steve Froslie and Friends!



Steve and his lovely wife Linda

Did you hear about the poor guy who accidently had vinegar poured into his ear? He now suffers from pickled hearing!

You know you're getting older when you and your teeth no longer sleep together.

You know you are getting older when caution is the only thing you care to exercise.

Have you ever seen a line drive?... No, but I have seen a baseball park.

Let's be thankful...there is always something to be thankful for. If you can't pay your bills, for example, you can at least be thankful you're not one of your creditors.

Why aren't there knock-knock jokes about America? Because freedom rings... it doesn't knock

Communication from church...Ladies, don't forget the upcoming rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Which takes longer to run: from first to second base or from second to third base?... From second to third base, because there is a shortstop in the middle.

What do you call a chicken staring at a pile of lettuce?

A chicken sees a salad.

"Baseball is 90% mental. The other half is physical." ~ Yogi Berra

QUOTE OF THE DAY

**"We become brave by doing brave acts."
~Aristotle**

Memory Cafe Volunteer Meeting and Community Education
Dementia Topic: Caring for the Caregiver
 Karen Beutler and Deb Kaul



Tuesday, Oct. 10th
Volunteer Meeting - 1 - 1:30
Volunteer and Community Education - 1:30 - 2:30pm



Linger Laugh and Learn Center
1122 1st Ave N. Fargo (west entrance)



Wed. Oct. 11th - 8am - 4:30 pm
Thurs. Oct. 12th - 7:30am - 4:30 pm

Avalon Events Center

Registration fee (seniors over 60 years) - \$40/day

Includes breakfasts, lunches, and snacks

To Register call 218-299-3566 (M-F 9am-4:00pm)

Some of the topics include:

- Power of Cross-cultural Communication for Human Connectedness
- The Human Experience of Caregiving
- Aging and Strokes
- LGBTQ and Older Adults - Informing Cultural Competence
- Health Care Directives
- How to Stay in Your Home Longer
- Mindfulness: Embracing the Moment

What Matters Most About Your Brain Health?

Memory Cafe has been invited by Dr. Rodney Swenson, PhD., Neuropsychology Associates to participate in an important survey being conducted by Linus Health. They are studying what matters most to individuals with or without a neurodegenerative disease diagnosis, age 50+ and who live in the US. The survey takes 5-10 min. Participants will be asked to use their own words to say what sort of things matter to them and what they wish to continue doing for as long as possible, even if their brain health declines.

Participants click on the survey link and will be asked questions related to their everyday life, thinking responsibilities, relationships and social connections, and sense of who they are as a person. Participants will not be identified and their answers will be anonymous.

The link to ePSOM's brief overview is:

https://www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/research_progress/clinical-trials/trialmatch?tid=/widget/clinicaltrial/315975/a-survey-to-understand-what-matters-to-individuals-most-about-their-brain-health/

The study comes out through keyword search or it has a unique reference TX315975.

SPECIAL EVENT
“Suffering: Betterness or Bitterness?”

By Deacon Bruce Dahl

Tuesday, Oct. 24th, 1 - 2:30pm

St. Anne and Joachim Catholic Church
5202 25th St. S. Fargo



Deacon Bruce

Life on this earth is filled with suffering of all kinds - illness, broken marriages, natural disasters, financial concerns, etc. Deacon Bruce Dahl has devoted considerable time, thought, and prayer on this topic especially while caring for his lovely wife, Theresa who is living with dementia. He has now written a bible study on a biblical response to suffering. Please join us as Bruce presents an overview of his study. Bring your 'Circle of Six'! Free. Coffee and refreshments will be served.

Mayo Clinic 2023 Brain Health and Dementia Conference

Paths to Emotional Wellness

Saturday, Nov. 4th

Mayo Civic Center, Rochester, MN

In-person or Livestream

To register:

ce.mayo.edu/bhd23

Walk This Way Exercise Program!

Join others in the memory loss community (care partners and their loved ones) for a weekly FREE walking program at Sanford Wellness Center! Held every Thursday 1:30 - 3:30pm.

Laughing with a friend is the best kind of laughing there is.
 ~unknown



Dale and Bruce



Joy and Judy



Mark and Larry



Beth, Lee, Sharon and Sandie



The Quiet House - After Placement of a Loved One in a Care Facility by Michelle Breen



Night 1 - The house feels so empty. I feel defeated and exhausted. The continual monitoring and care of a loved one with moderate dementia has taken a toll I didn't even realize. I thought I was holding it together, I thought I could keep him with me longer. But 24 hour coverage was just too much for one person. He wandered out of the house at 10:30 pm on a frigid winter's night. I was asleep-- napping would be a more accurate term, as care partners often don't "sleep." We awaken at every noise and movement to check where they are and what they're doing. It is exhausting. Thankfully he was found quickly. We arranged placement the next day. I barely slept Night 1. So many conflicting feelings of guilt, abandonment and a deep "to the bone" sadness- so many tears. I'm living alone for the first time in 37 years- at the age of 58. My husband has Early Onset Dementia and is now a resident in a secure Memory Care facility. But he is safe- I keep reminding myself of this. Sometimes it helps and othertimes I just cry harder.

Night 30 - The tears have slowed. The deep sadness and lack of ability to sleep through the night continue. He has settled into the facility and seems almost relieved to have all my expectations, endless nagging reminders, lists and constant cues over with. As I look back, I see how hard it must have been for him every day to try and be the man I married, try so hard and not be able to, in spite of all his efforts. And the guilt piles up.

Night 90 - Finally a night of only waking up twice to noises to "check" on him. Some real sleep at last and I feel the fog starting to lift. The house is still SO quiet during the day, and almost unbearable at night. I'm still working, so trying to balance visiting and work, while allowing him space to live his new reality is a new challenge.

Month 6 - The first full night of sleep since he moved. I woke feeling half human for the first time in what seems like FOREVER on this journey. The guilt has lessened as I see him interacting and visiting with his new buddies. A social butterfly prior to the diagnosis, and that has not changed. He seems more relaxed and at ease. Emotionally I feel a little betrayed that he isn't missing "US" more, but intellectually I know this is such a gift- That he's living in the moment and continuing his journey. Our paths have diverged and he seems to have found his. Mine is still a work in progress. Yet I remain his biggest cheerleader, advocate and love. This disease will not take that from us.

18 months later- As I write this, he remains in the Care facility, following his path. His world has gotten smaller, friends visit less and less as his ability to hold a conversation fades. But he always has a smile - for me, and for everyone. Even if he's not always sure who I am, he KNOWS me deep down. And for that I remain grateful.

I live in a Quiet House.

JOYFUL MONDAYS!

All gatherings held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Address: 613 16th St. S. Fargo.
(Six blocks south of Main Ave on 16th St. S. - turn south at the M&H corner)

October Monday Schedule:

9:00-11:00 am - Coffee and Conversation
There will be 6 breakout groups; something for everyone!

1:00 - 2:30 pm - Afternoon Programming
(listed below)

Oct. 2nd - Music, Memories & Musings with Music Therapist Deb McTaggart

Oct. 9th - Education with Barb Hooten, Swanson Hyperbarics Clinic
Woodburning with Jerry & Janine
Donut Making with Val

Oct. 16th - Creative Therapies with Plains Art Museum

Oct. 23rd - 'Dine and Dance' - 11:30 - 1:30pm, Moorhead American Legion 303 30th St N. Moorhead. Free Music and Dancing; delicious soup, burgers, sandwiches available for purchase

Oct. 30th - Halloween Vinyl Listening Party with Dan

Questions? Call 701-404-6712



Men's Caregiver Group

Our male care partners are now spending time every week drinking coffee and sharing their stories and caregiving experiences during the 'Coffee and Conversation' gathering on Monday mornings from 9-11am. Every male care partner is warmly welcome to attend at any time; we will entertain your loved one! No advance notice required. Thank you Gary and Kim for facilitating this important new support group!



Sharon, Maria, and Lee



News from Sing From Your Heart Chorus
~Deb McTaggart, Director

Dr. Gayatri Devi is a neurologist who has been specializing in the area of dementia and memory loss for over two decades. She cared for Tony Bennett from his dementia diagnosis in 2016 until his death in July. Dr. Devi made the following statement in a recent CNN interview. This is what Sing From Your Heart is all about!

“When you have a passion and when you have a gift that you can give the world, then you should be allowed to do it, whether or not you have Alzheimer’s. People with Alzheimer’s should not be stigmatized; they can still bring joy to the world and to themselves. Just because someone has a diagnosis, it doesn’t take away from all the incredible gifts that they have to offer.”

For information about *Sing From Your Heart Chorus*, please visit our website: singfromyourheartchorus.org

Email - singfromyouheartchorus@gmail.com

Phone - call and leave a message at 701-369-0629.

Deb McTaggart, MT-BC

Sing From Your Heart Chorus Director



THANK YOU!

“What Memory Cafe means to me as a daughter.”

By Cheri Lehman

Daughter of Jim and Carol Lehman

- It means a lot to me that my mom has a place she can go and receive support from others who may be going through the same things as she is while she cares for my dad in their home.
- I’m grateful for the interaction my dad gets from others at Memory Cafe. He has been a very social person for his entire life - he’s known as a social butterfly!
- I appreciate the information mom and dad receive from guest speakers at weekly get togethers and the outings that get them out of the house.
- Last but not least is the staff -- what a blessing they are and such wonderful, caring volunteers!

Thank you to everyone at Memory Cafe who has touched my folk’s life!

~ The Lehman family

The Caring Catalog Kick-off Party!
October 3rd, 3:30-5:00pm
Linger Laugh Learn Center

Once again MCRRV was one of twenty-five non-profit organizations selected to participate in the Caring Catalog Giving Campaign sponsored by our friends at the FM Area Foundation! To celebrate we’re throwing a CARING CATALOG KICKOFF PARTY! All participating nonprofits are invited!

OUR MEMORY CAFE SWAG IS WONDERFUL! PLACE YOUR ORDER TODAY!

Memory Cafe now has an online storefront at **Shirts From Fargo!** Memory Cafe will profit from **every item ordered!** Orders are made on-demand and completed within 2 weeks. Order your soft short sleeve t-shirt, high quality zipper light-weight jacket, soft winter beanie, heavy canvas tote bag, and stickers. All items are high quality and delightful to wear!



TO ORDER:

Scan the QR Code or

Visit <https://shirtsfromfargo.com/memory-cafe/>



What is a ‘Circle of Six’? Why is it so Important?



Caring for someone living with any form of cognitive impairment is not only challenging, it is physically, emotionally, spiritually exhausting. If care partners attempt to do the caregiving alone - as is too often the case, it poses an actual risk to the care partner’s health. Did you know that care partners have a **6x** greater chance of developing dementia themselves and that **18%** of healthy spousal care partners die before their loved one with dementia? These statistics are shocking!

For these reasons Memory Cafe strongly encourages ALL of our families to gather a ‘Circle of Six’ people to support them throughout this journey. These are people they trust, who have agreed to be available as needed, and with whom they can share freely. They should be dementia educated (Memory Cafe will train them) and very familiar with your loved one’s life story.

Developing your ‘Circle of Six’ is a life-changer and could be a life-saver for YOU! Please let us know if you have questions or need help with this process.



Too Soon to Forget

Young Onset Dementia Support Group

(For people diagnosed between ages 35-65 years old)



Karen and Ray

Jody

Paul and Sandy

Meetings: 4th Monday of each month at 6:30pm.

For meeting information please email Ray B. at

rcbakke@outlook.com or Jody A. at

jodya@midwestinfo.net



**Thank you
Park Christian School!!**



PCS 10th -12th graders created numerous CREATIVE and FUN large muscle games for MCRRV! They are a HUGE HIT and have already provided MANY moments of laughter, friendly competition, and joy! Thank you PCS!!



Dale Carnegie's Golden Book

Cultivate a Mental Attitude that will Bring You Peace and Happiness.

How to Break the Worry Habit Before it Breaks You.

1. Fill your mind with thoughts of peace, courage, health, and hope.
2. Never try to get even with your enemies.
3. Expect ingratitude.
4. Count your blessings - not your troubles.
5. Do not imitate others.
6. Try to profit from your losses.
7. Create happiness for others.

1. Keep busy.
2. Don't fuss about trifles.
3. Use the law of averages to outlaw your worries.
4. Cooperate with the inevitable.
5. Decide just how much anxiety a thing may be worth and refuse to give it more.
6. Don't worry about the past.

The Psychological Family

Loving Someone Who Has Dementia

by Pauline Boss, PhD



When someone you love has dementia, the players in your family may be reluctant and without sympathy. Some may live far away and don't see the urgency of the situation. Others live nearby, by assume that a designated family member will do the caring work. You may even apologize for them, saying they are too busy with their own lives, so they can't help. Or that no one else can care the way you do. This attitude can lead to trouble. Just as dementia's loss is strange and confusing, so are the family relationships that follow.

If you don't have family to help you, I am giving you license to make one up. A neighbor becomes a grandparent or mother, a friend becomes a sister, and therapist becomes a generic parent. Form a family of choice, one made up of like - minded people who give mutual support and help one another. Or if certain people were comforting to you in hard times while they were alive, then keep them in your heart and mind now. Remember what they said and say it to yourself as if you are now their proxy. Imagined support can lower stress as much as actual support. Many people also keep a spiritual presence. They tell me they walk with God and that feeling his presence is their ultimate comfort. And today we see millions of people connecting regularly via the Internet -- chat rooms, blogs and social media. Groups of caregivers become like families.

Real, live, accessible people make up our psychological families, but so can those who are not physically available if they continue to exist in our hearts and minds.

Community Testimonies: Margie and Dr. Dick Bailly, Neurologist



"I absolutely love the Memory Cafe because they celebrate art and music which we now know fires the synapses in our brain, keeping it alive and well! Thank you Memory Cafe for doing this so well!" - Margie

"As a neurologist, I've found throughout the years if you don't stay engaged in social activities throughout your life, especially in your advancing years, you are more likely to develop dementia. For those who already have dementia, socialization helps to maintain important connections with other human beings." Dr. Dick Bailly

MEMORY CAFE

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