



Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley

PEOPLE WHO ARE FORGETTING SHOULDN'T BE FORGOTTEN

May 2024



**Our Memory Cafe community –
volunteers and participants packing
the house for our Volunteer Celebration!**

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Testimony

By Fargo Mayor, Tim Mahoney



"To me, the Mission of Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley is profoundly beautiful. This organization recognizes that people living with memory loss have so much value. And as volunteers, you all are honoring the people you serve."

I want you to know that your contributions are not unnoticed. Fargo is truly grateful for all you do."

Happy Birthday, Memory Cafe!

When I look back on the seven years Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley has been in existence, I am in awe of how we've grown and the impact we have had - and continue to have, in the lives of our participants, in our community, and in this region.

When we started MCRRV, we met three times per month with the help of six volunteers, were led by a Board of Directors comprised of five people (including my co-founder Beth and me), our average attendance was about a dozen people, and our programming included just one caregiver support group - the Caregiver Cafe.

Since then, we have out-grown our meeting locations four times and we are actively searching for a new permanent home. We recently hired our new Executive Director, Maggie Ness, and thrive with the support of Leeora Windingland. Our board of directors is now comprised of our eleven well-respected community leaders and medical providers. We are supported by our 'Dream Team' of over eighty volunteers, and we meet three times per week which includes two caregiver support groups as well as our monthly Caregiver Cafe. We've added a Young Onset Dementia support group, supported the start of the *Sing From Your Heart* dementia friendly chorus, and our average weekly attendance is well over one hundred participants! Wow!

But the most important impact of MCRRV isn't our growth in numbers and programming; it is the sense of belonging and deep friendships that are developed between everyone who regularly attends our gatherings, including our participants and volunteers. Memory Cafe is a warm, safe place for the memory loss community to gather and openly share their knowledge, joys, frustrations, and concerns with one another. They know they are accepted, respected, and truly loved by their Memory Cafe family which empowers them with the courage, strength, and resources they need to move forward in their journey.

"I just can't imagine what we would have done without Memory Cafe." "Memory Cafe is our lifeline." "We've learned so much from Memory Cafe and have made such wonderful friends here."

I am incredibly grateful for the way God has blessed Memory Cafe and given Kim and me so many rich friendships and opportunities to engage with our dear friends here. Thank you, Memory Cafe!

Warmly and gratefully,

Deb

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.



Possibilities

Green sprouts are appearing now

The sun warms their head

Possibilities renewed

Sandy Robin

Submitted by Jean Anderson

Brain Health Benefits of Being Outdoors

Hagley.org (Excerpted)



Spending time outside is really, really good for your brain. Exposure to nature has been proven to lead to better cognitive function in a number of studies. It's also been shown to decrease stress and boost happiness, both of which are crucial for maintaining good mental health and fighting depression and anxiety. One study showed a significantly lower risk of psychiatric disorders (such as depression, mood disorders, and schizophrenia) in children who grew up with more access to nature.

Mourning the Passing of our Dear Friend, Mark



"I just LOVE coming to the Men's group at Memory Cafe! We laugh and have such a great time together!", Mark used to say about his time at Memory Cafe on Monday mornings. He made such good friends there and was loved by everyone, including our leaders and volunteers.

Mark, we will miss your sweet, gentle presence, but join your dear family as they celebrate a life well-lived. Thank you for sharing your journey with us. Our thoughts and prayers are with Teryl and your lovely family.

"STILL HERE, STILL ME"

Voices of Those Living With Memory Loss

By Jim Mann

Pathways to Living Well With Dementia (Excerpted)



I remember how it felt when the doctor said to me – "You have dementia." Some people have referred to this moment as a punch in the stomach. Others have expressed relief that what they have been experiencing has a name. So, you are probably thinking, now what? This can be the start of a period of uncertainty, which is unsettling and disorienting.

It is often said that if you have met one person with dementia, you have met one person with dementia. We all have different backgrounds, different experiences at home, at work, and culturally, so every person diagnosed with dementia will encounter different challenges.

I was diagnosed in 2007 at the age of 58. The experiences, the conversations I've had, and the reactions I've heard have all added to the richness of my life. Some have been heartwarming, and some have been jaw-droppingly surprising.

There is widespread misunderstanding around Alzheimer's and other dementias, and there is certainly a stigma around the condition. I have been touched by what Jonathan Evans, MD, a geriatrician, said in the Person-Centered Matters video produced by Dementia Action Alliance:

"Even though dementia is something that affects the brain, dementia does not equal or result in a loss of intelligence. On the contrary, people use their intelligence to overcome some of the impairments that dementia causes."

I especially valued his comment that, "Dementia doesn't rob you of your ability to experience joy or to be happy."



"Merely surviving is no longer the only option. Now, thriving is available to us as well."

~Individual living with Alzheimer's disease 2

FOR OUR HEALTH:

THE SCIENCE OF AWE (EXCERPTED)

JOHN TEMPLETON FOUNDATION

[HTTPS://WWW.TEMPLETON.ORG/DISCOVERIES/THE-SCIENCE-OF-AWE](https://www.templeton.org/discoveries/the-science-of-awe)



Recent research is casting new light on one of the most profound human experiences.

What can the science of awe teach us about this most mysterious and mystifying of emotions? A majestic waterfall, the Taj Mahal, towering redwoods, the Grand Canyon, a tornado, Beethoven's Symphony Number 9, Monet's Water Lilies, a fractal, a spiritual experience, a performance by Prince, a child being born, a speech by Martin Luther King, Jr., the view of Earth from space – all different experiences that can induce deep feelings of awe.

Awe is a complex emotion that can be difficult to precisely define. Feelings of awe can be positive or negative – unlike most other emotions – and can arise from a wide range of stimuli. Awe experiences are what psychologists call self-transcendent: they shift our attention away from ourselves, make us feel like we are part of something greater than ourselves, change our perception of time, and even make us more generous toward others.

Although awe has been explored and debated by philosophers, poets, and religious scholars for thousands of years, it was largely ignored by psychologists until the early 2000s. Since then, there has been growing interest in exploring awe empirically. This has led to a number of fascinating discoveries about the nature of awe. The John Templeton Foundation recently commissioned a [white paper](#) reviewing more than 75 studies related to awe to gain a perspective on the past, present, and future of awe-focused science.

See: www.templeton.org/discoveries/the-science-of-awe

Kindred High School Philanthropy and Youth (PaY) Award!

We were thrilled to hear we have been awarded a \$750 grant from the Kindred High School PaY (Barry Foundation) to be used for sensory equipment for our Memory Cafe participants! We went shopping on the Alzheimer's Store website and found all kinds of items we are excited to purchase with these funds! THANK YOU KINDRED HIGH SCHOOL philanthropists!



JUST FOR LAUGHS!

Content Provided by
Steve Froslie and Friends!



Steve and his lovely wife, Linda

Wife: "Can you stop yawning when I'm trying to talk to you?"

Husband: "I'm not yawning, I'm trying to say something!"

Walmart had to remove 50,000 milk cartons from their store. The labels had to be changed from "Open Here" to "Open at Home"

Today I'm doing nothing because I started doing it yesterday and I wasn't finished...and I'm no quitter!

It's better to grow old with a sense of humor than to grow old with no sense at all.

My fitness trainer asked me, "What kind of squat are you accustomed to doing?" I said, "Diddly."

You're not losing your memory... You're just really good at letting go of the past!

Help wanted: Now hiring people who show up.

Everyone talks about leaving a better planet for our children. Why doesn't anyone talk about leaving better children for our planet?



In order to make an appointment, he first had to update his operating system, download an app, get a username, choose a password, log in to a health portal, navigate to messages and write to his doctor...by then it was too late.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The moment one gives close attention to anything, even a blade of grass, it becomes a mysterious, awesome, indescribably magnificent world in itself."

~Unknown



BUILDING SKILLS AND COMMUNITY



REDEFINING MEMORY LOSS CONFERENCE: COMMUNITY DEMENTIA CONFERENCE

RECOGNIZING THE INTRINSIC VALUE OF INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITH MEMORY LOSS



Chris Coelho

Tuesday, June 4th, 8:30 - 3pm, Holiday Inn, Fargo
Keynote Speakers - Chris Coelho AND Kristy Mellons!
Abe's Garden, Nashville, TN.



Kristy Mellons

ADDED BONUS! Keynote Speaker DUO!

Kristy Mellons will be joining Chris as our Keynote speaker! She plays the fiddle and will add an extra dose of levity and FUN to this fabulous conference!

Kristy Mellons, is a Lead Educator for The Hearthstone Institute at Abe's Garden Community. She graduated from Belmont University in Nashville TN with a BBA and has 14 years of experience in the healthcare field in both clinical and social service settings.

She enjoys training throughout the country and educating Hearthstone Centers of Excellence on the specialized communication and engagement principles of the I'm Still Here Approach© developed by Hearthstone.

SCHEDULE

8:30 - 9:00 REGISTRATION & VENDOR EXHIBITS
9:00 - 9:15 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
9:15 - 10:45 SESSION 1: LIFE STORY: THANK YOU FOR SEEING ME FOR WHO I AM
10:45 - 11:15 BREAK & VENDOR EXHIBITS
11:15 - 12:15 SESSION 2: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: I STILL HAVE A VOICE
12:15 - 1:00 LUNCH, VENDOR EXHIBITS & RAFFLE
1:00 - 1:30 VIDEO, TESTIMONY & SING FROM YOUR HEART CHORUS
1:30 - 2:30 SESSION 3: SUCCESS STRATEGIES: CELEBRATING MY STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS
2:30 - 3:00 WRAP UP, DOOR PRIZES, RAFFLE

Cost

	Before May 23	After May 23
Community members	\$45	\$65
Professionals	\$65	\$85
Group Rate	Fill a table of 6 for \$36 per ticket	

Registration

Visit www.memorycaferrv.org
Or scan the QR code



Approved for 4 CEU hours for ND and MN Social Workers

Celebrating our Conference Sponsors!

CHAMPION LEVEL (\$6,000)
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Heartland Trust Company

The First Lutheran Church Foundation is also sponsoring RML at a \$2,200 level. Thank you so much, First Lutheran Church!!

Annoucing our Raffle Items!

1. Custom Pet Portrait



Morgan

Local artist, Morgan Niemiller, is booked months in advance with varying artistic commissions! She has created, donated, and sold over 200 pieces of custom artwork. We are grateful for her donation of a commissioned Pet Portrait for our raffle this year!

2. The Wave Waterpark Resort



The upper Midwest is buzzing with excitement for the opening of Fargo's The Wave Waterpark Resort! Thank you Epic for donating a free overnight stay at the resort for our raffle!



Raffle tickets will be sold at the conference for \$10...cash, checks and credit cards accepted!





MAY MEETING SCHEDULE

Questions? Call 701-404-6712



MONDAY SCHEDULE

Meet at Bethel Church (2702 30TH Ave S. Fargo)

Monday Schedule:

9:00-11:00 am - Coffee and Conversation

Six breakout groups; something for everyone!

No Coffee and Conversation on Memorial Day (May 27th)

1:00 - 2:30 pm - Afternoon Programming:

- 6th - Music, Memories and Musings with Music Therapist, Deb McTaggart
- 13th - Education - 'Talk Saves Lives', Barb Hanson, RN; Woodburning with Jerry & Janine; Joyful Moments with Val
- 20th - Creative Therapies with Kristen Young
- 27th - Memorial Day - no programming.

SING FROM YOUR HEART CHORUS

Rehearsals:

May 2nd, 9th, 16th, 30th, 1pm, Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Saturday, May 18th, 1pm - Spring Concert: **How Can We Keep From Singing?**

Young Onset Dementia Support Group

No Meeting in May

The next meeting will be held Monday, June 24th. Newcomers warmly welcome!

'DINE AND DANCE'

No 'Dine and Dance' due to Memorial Day

Connecting The Caregiver



2024 Caregiver Conference

*Free Event, Limited Seating

June 12th | 1:00-4:00 PM

Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Ave N, Moorhead, MN 56560

To register, call Hope Their, 218.299.5514, or email Moorheadseniors@moorheadmn.gov, or online at Moorheadparks.activityreg.com

Memory Cafe is involved in the planning of this conference and it's going to be excellent! Please join us!

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

All meetings are 1-2:30pm at the specified locations

Wednesday Schedule:

1st - Musings on Life in the Northern Plains, Merrill Piepkorn
Hope Lutheran Church South, 3636 25th St S, Fargo

8th - Music & Laughter with Jerry Barnum!
Hjemkomst Center, Moorhead

15th - Emotional Aspects of a Dementia Diagnosis, Drs. Kirsten Juhl and Lindsey Dahl
Hope Lutheran Church South, 3636 25th St S, Fargo

22nd - Caregiver Cafe, Call 701-404-6712 for details
Laugh & Learn Center, 1122 1st Ave N, Fargo

29th - No Memory Cafe (5th Wednesday)

VOLUNTEER MEETING AND TRAINING

May 14th, 1 - 2:30 pm

Linger Laugh and Learn Center

Education - "My family's journey with Young Onset Dementia" - Guest speaker, Karla (DeMoe) Hornstein

SUMMER SCHEDULE CHANGES

Memory Cafe will NOT Meet on the following dates:

Monday, May 27th - Memorial Day

Wednesday, June 5th - Post-conference recovery day

"Be happy in the moment, that's enough. Each moment is all we need, not more."

~Mother Teresa



Giving Hearts Day

WE WON FIRST PLACE!

Thanks to each and every one of you, our loyal and generous Memory Cafe friends, we took FIRST PLACE in our small budget category during GHD this year! Our award is a \$10,000 gift from Dakota Medical Foundation!! Wow!!

THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH!!



Sing From Your Heart Chorus

Presents

How Can We Keep From Singing?

A Free Public Concert

Saturday, May 18th - 1:00 pm

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

613 16th Street South Fargo



Looking at new ways to test memory using smartphones

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE RESEARCH CENTER, U OF WS
APRIL 4, 2024



Lindsay Clark, PhD, and Sterling Johnson, PhD, examined data collected through the Wisconsin Registry for Alzheimer's Prevention (WRAP) and the German longitudinal study DELCODE, which determined that smartphone task performance could be used to identify those with and without mild cognitive impairment (MCI). The researchers concluded that smartphone tasks completed by older adults independently may increase access to cognitive screening and provide a way to identify or monitor cognitive symptoms for further evaluation or clinical trials.

"A remote digital memory composite to detect cognitive impairment in memory clinic samples in unsupervised settings using mobile devices," was published by *npj Digital Medicine* on March 26, 2024.

"Memory self-test via smartphone can identify early signs of Alzheimer's disease," was published by DZNE - German Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases on March 26, 2024.

JUST TELL THEM HOW GOOD THEY LOOK!

It's true, sometimes we make things too complicated! In your attempts to create moments of joy in your interactions with your loved one, simply get in the habit of telling them how GREAT they look!



TO LET GO TAKES LOVE

By Robert Paul Gilles



To "let go" does not mean stop caring; it means I can't do it for someone else.

To "let go" is not to cut myself off; it's to realize that I can't control another.

To "let go" is to admit to powerlessness, which means the outcome is not in my hands.

To "let go" is to try not to change or blame another; I can only change myself.

To "let go" is not to "care for," but to "care about."

To "let go" is not to fix, but to be supportive.

To "let go" is not to judge, but to allow another to be a human being.

To "let go" is not to deny, but to accept.

To "let go" is not to nag, scold, or argue, but instead to search out my own shortcomings and correct them.

To "let go" is not to adjust everything to my desires, but to take each day as it comes, and to cherish myself in it.

To "let go" is not to regret the past,

but to grow and live for the future.

To "let go" is to fear less and love more.

YOU ARE WRONG...THEY ARE RIGHT...

~JOLENE BRACKEY



From this point on, you are wrong and the person with dementia is right. This is going to take some therapy for some of you. Think about it...if you think you are right and the person you're caring for thinks they're right, what's going to happen? Conflict. Where does the stress level go? Up. Where does the kindness level go? Down. What's more important, your loved one's happiness or being right?

As family members, you have expectations; you want to correct your loved one in the hope they will get better. Do they get better when you correct them? No. We've been playing family roles for a lifetime. Be gentle as you unlearn them.



HIDDEN DISABILITIES SUNFLOWER PROGRAM AT HECTOR AIRPORT



Hector International Airport has partnered with the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower organization to adopt the Sunflower Lanyard program. This UK group works to help people with hidden disabilities discreetly inform others using printed lanyards. The lanyards indicate to anyone approaching, and especially to customer service personnel, that the person may need more assistance.

'Moving Forward' Grief Support Group

By Barb Schlitz, Memory Cafe
Volunteer and Widow



Are you looking for a place to share your journey of caregiving and the loss of a loved one with dementia? The Alzheimer's Association has a program called "Moving Forward." This group meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month from 9:30 am to 11:00 am via Zoom. The group has no limit of how long you can continue to belong. Some groups only allow you to be a part of them for a year or less. That is why this group was started.

If you are interested in knowing more or have questions please call the Memory Cafe office. Once you decide you would like to join you will be sent more information and sent a link the day before the meeting by the facilitator from Duluth, MN. Everything that is shared is confidential. It's a great way to share with others who understand.

Breathing Meditation

Breathing in, say silently, "I know I am breathing in," then, breathing out, say quietly, "I know I am breathing out."



Help Children Understand Alzheimer's Disease

- Alzheimer's Foundation of America



Gardening with Grandma
An Alzheimer's Story
for Children
and Their Families

The best time to talk to children about Alzheimer's or any dementia-related illness is as soon as you can," says Jennifer Reader, LCSW, SIFI, AFA's director of educational services and social services. "This conversation is about nurturing and maintaining the bonds between the family members while also helping to eliminate the fear of the unknown for children."

Gardening with Grandma, AFA's latest children's book, offers help in starting these conversations. AFA developed Gardening with Grandma as a tool to help start a conversation with a child about Alzheimer's. This book and AFA's beloved first book, Dancing with Granddad, are available at shop.alzfdn.org.

If the person with Alzheimer's is able to and feels comfortable, have a conversation with them and the child together. Having the child hear from their loved one directly about what they are experiencing can be helpful. If possible, invite feedback from the person living with Alzheimer's about what they are experiencing.

Encourage questions from your child to address with your loved one. For instance, "What can I do for you when you can't find something?" or "If you seem sad, is there anything I can do to make you feel better?"

Be mindful that this type of conversation is more effective when the person is in the earlier stages of Alzheimer's. If the person is unable to have this conversation, or feels uncomfortable doing so, do not force the issue.

Children are highly intuitive. No doubt they have been picking up on these changes in their loved one, but they may not feel comfortable asking questions about them. It's important to welcome questioning.

Share information at a level appropriate for the age and maturity of your child. Explain that Grandma has Alzheimer's, an illness that affects memory and speaking. She may forget words and ask the same questions over again.

There may be a time when a person with memory loss won't know the child or remember their visits. This may be difficult for the child and make them feel worried about how to engage with their loved one. Reassure the child that although their loved one may not remember a visit or a conversation, they can still hold on to the emotions they experience, carrying with them the happy and joyful feelings they felt during their time together.

CONTACT US: MEMORY CAFE RRV

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 Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley

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