



Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley

PEOPLE WHO ARE FORGETTING SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN

May 2025



May 24, 2017!
Happy 8th Birthday,
Memory Cafe!

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MONDAY MORNINGS AT MEMORY CAFE

By Greg Mayo, Volunteer

Good morning. I am writing this note post Easter and recounting the amazing blessings in my life.



One of them is the time spent volunteering at Memory Cafe on Monday mornings. I have met so many wonderful people from the area that are dealing with memory loss through various ways.

They come from all walks of life and represent many different age groups. We start our morning off at Bethel Church with a group exercise led by Jake and then head downstairs for coffee, snacks, and a group project of some kind. The whole morning is planned around activities to strengthen our bodies, minds and instill a sense of community. (Con't on page 2)

Hi Memory Cafe Friends,

We're delighted to invite you to be a part of this year's Redefining Memory Loss Conference taking place on June 3rd at Holiday Inn Fargo. Whether you have attended our past conferences or you are joining us for the first time, this year's event promises to deliver new insights, incredible speakers, and opportunities to connect with others.

In this section, I would like to breakdown and explain the sessions that will be offered and who may want to attend each of these sessions.

Opening Keynote: Understanding Dementia in 2025

This session is for everyone! We will have the opportunity to hear latest updates from Mayo Clinic, Neurologist, Dr. Stuart McCarter on what we know about dementia, what's new and what's next.

Breakout Session 1 Options:

Overview of New Treatments in Alzheimer's Disease - This session is geared more for medical professionals prescribing medications.

How Do I Live This? - Nicky Holzworth, OT, will lead a session on helping you navigate this journey. Whether you are living with changes to your cognition or you are a caregiver, she will provide you with practical tips to live well on this journey.

Activity Planning for People Living with Dementia - This session was planned with our professionals in home care and long-term care settings in mind. Joan Danks, ND Program Director with the Alzheimer's Association, will share strategies on how to best connect and engage in purposeful and meaningful ways.

Breakout Session 2 Options:

Ask the Doctor - This session is for community members to have an opportunity to ask their questions with a leading-Neurologist in the field. Bring your questions to ask Dr. McCarter!

Beyond Medications - Reducing Behaviors that Challenge us in Persons Living with Dementia - Angela Lunde will speak with professionals about ways to reduce behaviors through non-pharmacological approaches.

Ending Keynote: The Practice of Self-Kindness

In a time, where we can be very hard on ourselves, Angela is going to remind us of the importance of self-kindness and ways to be kind with yourself along this journey.

I hope this has helped to build your excitement for this year's conference—it certainly did for me while writing it. We can't wait to see you on June 3rd!

With gratitude,

Maggie Ness

Tis a Fearful Thing

By Yehuda Halevi

A 12th century Jewish poet and philosopher

Note: This poem was shared by Angie Schulz, Wright Funeral Services during our recent funeral planning event and printed here upon request.

Tis a fearful thing

To love

What death can touch.

To love, to hope to dream,

And oh, to lose.

A thing for fools, this,

Love,

But a holy thing

To love what death can touch.

For your life has lived in me;

Your laugh once lifted me;

Your word was a gift to me.

To remember this brings painful joy

Tis a human thing, love,

A holy thing,

To love

What death can touch.

MONDAY MORNINGS AT MEMORY CAFE (con't from p. 1)

I am so impressed with the staff and other volunteers as they have created a safe space for all to get out and enjoy fellowship with other people going through the same life challenges.

I have only been a part of the volunteer team for a few weeks but am excited to see what opportunities lie ahead as I can't think of a place I would rather be on Monday morning than hanging out with my new friends at Memory Cafe.

STILL HERE, STILL ME

Voices of Those Living With Memory Loss

By Craig McEwen, Memory Cafe Participant

Three years ago I began to experience memory loss issues; forgetfulness, confusion, difficulty communicating, balance problems and right- side hand and leg tremors.

My primary doctor prescribed a neuropsychologist-administered memory test . I scored fairly well.

A second test, a year later, showed slight decline. I didn't think I did so well.

My neuro-psych disagreed. "You're pretty smart," she said. "Why didn't they tell me that in 9th grade?" I responded.

Last November a third memory test showed that my cognitive abilities had diminished. An MRI was ordered. After a 9-month wait to see a neurologist, his diagnosis was Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI).

Immediately anxiety set in. I started reading memoirs from those who were on the same or advanced journey. Doing so triggered doom, gloom and uncertainty about what my future may hold.

I needed a support group. I stumbled across information about Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley. I recognized people in its brochures. I attended my first meeting in March. I'm hooked.

WITH LOVE & SYMPATHY

Jan and Gene Jones have been very active participants in Memory Cafe for many years. Their faithful presence, wisdom, and kindness have been deeply appreciated by each of us. It is with sadness and gratitude we say goodby to Gene who passed away last month. Gene's Celebration of life will be held on Saturday, May 17th at noon at Faith United Methodist Church with a meal to follow. Address: 909 19th Ave N. Fargo.



We were also saddened to learn that our friend, Al White, passed in April. Our warm condolences to his lovely wife, Shirley and their family.

HOPE AND STRENGTH REMAINS

"Alzheimer's may have taken away much of my grandpa's memories, but it cannot take away the love and the bond we share. And in that love, there is still hope and strength to carry us through the hardest of times." ~ Josie Peterson





FOR OUR HEALTH ART + WELLNESS: ENHANCING EMOTIONAL HEALTH THROUGH CREATIVITY

Source: Plains Art Museum, Fargo



Large-Scale Artwork by Anne Labovitz

EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

- Emotional health is deeply influenced by social determinants such as community connection, access to cultural resources, and stress reduction tools.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) identifies arts engagement as crucial for improving mental health and reducing negative health effects.

KEY STATS/CATEGORIES:

- Participating in arts-based programs can reduce loneliness by up to 30% and improve resilience by 40%, according to WHO findings.

MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

- Arts engagement reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression by up to 20-30% in clinical and community settings.
- Participation in group arts activities improves emotional regulation and provides a sense of belonging, reducing feelings of loneliness.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

- Arts programs targeting underserved communities have been shown to increase social cohesion by 40%.

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- Studies show that engaging in arts programs reduces stress hormone levels and enhances emotional regulation.
- Creative participation can lower anxiety by 25-30% and improve self-esteem across diverse populations.
- Programs like Arts on Prescription are linked with reduced GP visits and emergency admissions. (WHO)

JUST FOR LAUGHS STEVE FROSLIE AND FRIENDS



Steve and his lovely wife, Linda.

It's allergy season again? You've got to be pollen my leg.

I used to think the secret to happiness was finding the perfect job, but now I realize it's about finding the perfect couch. Comfort is everything.

A retired man who volunteered to entertain patients in hospitals and nursing homes went for a visit and took his portable keyboard along. He told some jokes and sang some funny songs at their bedsides. When he finished, he told the group, "I hope you get better." An elderly man quipped, "I hope you get better, too."

If I had to describe myself in one word, it would be, "Not very good at following instructions."

The cable repair man was on my street and he asked me the time. I told him it was between 1 and 5pm.

'Mr. Clark, I have reviewed this case very carefully,' the divorce Court Judge said, 'And I've decided to give your wife \$775 a week,' 'That's very fair, your honor,' the husband said. 'And every now and then I'll try to send her a few bucks myself!'



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"If you want an easy job to seem mighty hard, just keep putting it off."

~Richard Miller





WHAT YOU ARE DOING IS LOVE

By Angela Lunde, RML Keynote Speaker



"I was 55; Stuart was 57. The first inkling that something was wrong started with Stuart's ability to drive. Prior to GPS navigation, he could find his way anywhere, with or without a map. But he was becoming confused when driving to familiar locations and at stop signs and traffic lights, not stopping — or stopping half a block too soon. Stuart was also experiencing wild dreams — he would twitch, shout, toss and pound on the bed. He'd often say he was fighting off a bear.

We scheduled an appointment with Stuart's doctor. After several days of testing, Stuart was diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment and REM sleep disorder. Feelings of disbelief and fear overwhelmed us.

When we got home, we called our children. I was a basket case. I couldn't sleep or eat. In my head, I went directly from the mild cognitive impairment diagnosis Stuart had received to the final stage of dementia. Stuart and I have been happy together for years. It's not to say we've felt that way every day, but on the whole, we simply love being together. Stuart makes me laugh. I make him laugh. Would we laugh again? I felt like I was in quicksand and couldn't find solid ground."

This reflection comes from Marsha, a caregiver I have come to know and greatly admire. Marsha offers a raw glimpse into the beginning of one person's journey as a care partner. Over the past two decades, I've met thousands of women and men like Marsha who find themselves in a new role called caregiver, or care partner, yet each one has her or his unique experience. (Con't p. 7)

MEET ABBY HUSAR, PROGRAM MANAGER



Hello Memory Cafe Community! My name is Abby Husar, I recently joined the amazing staff at Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley as the Program Manager.

Prior to joining Memory Cafe I worked as an occupational therapist for the past 14 years and have a passion for supporting those who are experiencing memory loss, along with their families. You may have seen me in a previous Memory Cafe programming session where I have shared education with various groups. I also serve on the advisory board for the Sing From Your Heart Chorus. I am in awe of the growth of Memory Cafe and feel incredibly blessed to now be a part of this organization.

I find it hard to put into words what I have experienced these first few days at Memory Cafe. Not only have I been given the warmest welcome by staff, volunteers, participants and board members but after sitting in on programming on Wednesday, I witnessed firsthand what Memory Cafe means to those who take part. In one caregiver support group session there was laughter, tears, stories, successes, sorrows, joy and most of all a sense of community and support within the group. I immediately felt the impact that Memory Cafe has on so many people, including myself.

I look forward to participating in programming in the upcoming weeks and meeting more of the amazing people that make up the Memory Cafe community.

See you soon!

Abby

Redefining Memory Loss Conference

Tuesday June 3, 2025 | 8:00-4:30 | Holiday Inn | Fargo ND

This Activity has been approved for up to 4.5 credits AMA PRA Category 1

Cost	Before May 6	After May 6	
Community Members	\$55	\$65	
Community Group Rate	\$45—fill a table of 6	\$85	
Professionals	\$75		
Professional Group Rate	\$65—fill a table of 6		



Register Early and Save

memorycaferrv.org





MAY MEETING SCHEDULE

ALL MEMORY CAFE GATHERINGS ARE FREE.

**NO RESERVATIONS OR DOCTOR'S ORDERS ARE REQUIRED.
NEWCOMERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!**

MONDAY SCHEDULE

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

9:00 - 9:30 - Fitness and Friends Exercise with Coach Jake Heile

9:30 - 11:00 am - Coffee and Conversation

Support Groups with Free Respite Care.

Caregiver support groups for men and women; respite provided in a separate room by our dementia trained volunteers. Monthly caregiver education. April 17th - Morning Caregiver Education - 'Circle of Six' education/process.

9:30 - 11 - 'The Gathering'

A support group for individuals experiencing early stages of memory loss or other neurological changes from advancing age or other medical reasons.

1:00 - 2:30 pm - Monday Afternoon Programs:

May 5th - Music, Memories, and Musings with Music Therapist, Deb McTaggart

May 12th - Education: Overview of Valley Senior Service Programs and Services; Woodburning with Jerry; Joyful Moments with Val

May 19th - Creative Therapies with Kristen Young

May 26th - Memorial Day - No morning or afternoon programming

'DINE AND DANCE' WITH RETRO COWBOY!

No Dine and Dance this month due to the Memorial Day holiday. Let's dance in June!

'THE GATHERING' SUPPORT GROUP

Support group for individuals experiencing early stages of memory loss caused by aging or any medical reason. No diagnosis or reservation necessary. Every Monday, 9-11am, Bethel church.

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

All meetings are held from 1 - 2:30 pm at various locations as noted below:

May 7th- Sing From Your Heart Spring Chorus Concert - Hope Lutheran Church, South Campus

14th - Memory Cafe's Inaugural Art Show! See p. 6 for details. Hjemkomst Center, Moorhead.

21st - Education: The Loneliness Epidemic with Wendy Tabor-Buth, LSW, Hope Lutheran church, South Campus.

28th:

9:30 - 11am - Moving Ahead: Life After Loss Support Group. 1 - 2:30pm - Caregiver Cafe. Both groups meet at the Linger, Laugh and Learn Center, 1122 1st Ave N. Fargo

30th - 5th Wednesday, No Programming

MOVING AHEAD: LIFE AFTER LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

For widows/widowers who have lost their loved one from dementia.

May 28th, 9:30-11am, Linger Laugh and Learn Center

VOLUNTEER MEETING AND EDUCATION

May 13th, 1 - 2:30PM

Linger, Laugh and Learn Center

Education - Getting to Know Abby Husar, OTR!

YOUNG ONSET DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP

No meeting this month due to the Memorial Day holiday

WEST FARGO EXTRAVAGANZA - MAY 8TH!!



West Fargo seniors will again sponsor the popular annual Extravaganza on May 8th from 8:30-2pm at the Rustad Recreation Center at 601 26th Ave E. West Fargo. There is no fee but pre-registration is required by calling 701-433-5360 or online at www.wfparks.org.

Kevin Wallevand will be the opening speaker and other speakers will speak on a variety of topics of interest for seniors. Lunch and beverages will be served. Over 30 vendor booths will be available. Join us for a day of fun and education!



Sing From Your Heart Chorus

Presents

Let Your Spirit Sing!

A Free Public Concert

Saturday, May 3rd - 1:00 pm
 Bethlehem Lutheran Church
 613 16th Street South Fargo



MEMORY CAFE ART SHOW!

Because Art is GOOD for EVERYONE!!



The growing **Arts in Health movement** shows that creative engagement **reduces stress, improves mental functioning, and fosters social connections**. A 2019 WHO study that reviewed over 900 scientific publications confirmed that the arts **positively impact mental health, chronic illness, and social isolation**—all pressing concerns for communities with limited access to healthcare.

(Source: Plains Art Museum)



Memory Cafe is THRILLED to promote the creative arts by sponsoring our first Art Show on Wednesday, May 14th from 1 - 2:30 at the Hjemkomst Center!



Bring your sculptures, paintings, fiber art projects, books, essays, poetry, stained glass projects, wood carvings...anything you **or** your loved one has created qualifies!



There will even be a People's Choice Blue Ribbon AWARD!



Hope to see you and your piece of creativity there!

CARE PARTNER CORNER

By Teryl Clausen, LSW (retired)
 Care Partner Support Group Facilitator

When is it time to place my loved one in a Memory Care facility?



This is a question many caregivers ask at some point in the dementia journey which is a difficult and emotionally challenging decision to make. Many caregivers never have to make this decision, as they are able to keep their loved one at home, or circumstances arise which makes placement necessary.

Issues to consider regarding placement:

- Current needs for care: dressing, bathing, eating, incontinence, medications and your ability to meet these needs.
- Cognitive and behavioral changes (wandering, aggression, hallucinations, agitation) which may create unsafe situations for both you and your care receiver
- Are current support services meeting your needs for help and respite care?
- Are you able to meet your own needs for sleep, exercise, social interaction, physical health?
- Is this option financially feasible?
- Will you be able to handle the grief and guilt that may come with a placement? (normal for many in this situation).

Are you at or close to the point when you know that although you may not want a placement to occur, it is the right thing to do. Consider the whole picture: what will life be like without your loved one in the home? Can you fill the time with activities other than caregiving? Will you be healthier mentally, emotionally, and physically? What impact will a placement have on others in the family?

Consider your loved one: might he/she receive more care than what you can provide? Will opportunities for social interaction and activities increase? May he/she benefit from care providers who may be more patient, well rested, not emotionally attached or stressed, and who have training and experience in caring for people with dementia?

What are family or close friends telling you about what they think you should do? Often others can see things the caregiver can't or doesn't want to face.

There is no one-size-fits-all answer. It's when you're ready or when circumstances require it. A placement doesn't end the relationship you have with your loved one and it can feel good to return to being a spouse instead of a caregiver.



TESTIMONY

By Cate and Bill Coghlan

Bill and I have been coming to Memory Cafe for over four years. It has been, and continues to be an invaluable program. In order to keep our loved ones at home, care partners need as much support, education and friendship as possible. We are blessed on this life path to have Memory Cafe.



Cate and Bill

FORGETTING MY NAME - DOES IT MATTER?

<https://forum.alzheimers.org.uk> (excerpted)



Are you worried that your loved one with dementia has forgotten who you are? It is a very common problem as dementia progresses. Here are three examples of how others are engaging with this difficult situation with positivity:

“Although this was hard at first, I have learned to accept it and to understand that knowing my name (or not) and how/if we are related really are not important.

People (especially those who know little about dementia) often ask if my wife recognises me or knows who I am. My honest answer is that I have no idea. Looking at things from that perspective doesn't help either of us. What I do know is that she is comfortable in my presence and occasionally (by touch or a gesture) seems to acknowledge the bond between us. That is precious and far more important than knowing my name.” -northumbrian_k

“Don't take it personally, it's part of the illness, hard to understand, but it's the illness speaking not him.

It all became worthwhile when for no apparent reason while I was washing up my wife got up off her stool in the kitchen, wrapped her arms round me, kissed me on the shoulder (she was a bit of a shortie) and told me she loved me.

Keeps me going. One day you might get one of those moments of lucidity that makes it all worthwhile. I did it for her because I know she would be there for me too. “ -K

“My husband now calls me by my name instead of the nickname he has always used. Every now and then he will call me by the nickname and it takes me back. Whatever he chooses to call me, I know he still loves me and I still love him. Sometimes he forgets I am his wife, other times he has no problem remembering who I am. Take each day as it comes and enjoy the good moments.” -Rishile

WHAT YOU ARE DOING IS LOVE

(Con't from p. 4)



This reflection comes from Marsha, a caregiver I have come to know and greatly admire. Marsha offers a raw glimpse into the beginning of one person's journey as a care partner. Over the past two decades, I've met thousands of women and men like Marsha who find themselves in a new role called caregiver, or care partner, yet each one has her or his unique experience.

Many factors will impact the caregiving experience, including your relationship with the person you're caring for, other roles and responsibilities in your life, and your personal coping strategies and social support. Some caregivers find the strength, resilience, and resources to overcome many of the extraordinary challenges they face. For many however, they feel alone, overwhelmed, and unprepared for this new role. There are moments of frustration, anxiety and tension for everyone involved.

There is no right way to provide care and support to a person living with dementia; there are no easy answers; and there is not a one size fits all guidebook. However, there is hope. And when I speak of hope, I am not talking about a cure. Hope, as I see it, is an emotion and a way of thinking, and it starts with acceptance. This includes being honest with yourself about what you can and cannot control, accepting that you will make mistakes and that “good enough” is often good enough. Acceptance includes letting go of the need to be “right” and making peace with what is. Most importantly, acceptance starts with self-kindness.

I am thrilled to be part of this year's Redefining Memory Loss Conference. I hope to offer you practical skills for caregiving, as well as ways to develop the inner strength you need for the days ahead. The most important thing to remember is that you're not alone. You are part of a large family of care partners – what you are doing is love.

LOOKING FOR AND CREATING SMALL MOMENTS OF JOY

“Just because dementia has come into your life doesn't mean that joy has to go out. I think a lot about how my expectations changed over time and about what would be meaningful.”

-Katie Brandt, Care partner, MM, founder and CEO, Katie Brandt Advocacy, LLC.



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Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley

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