

BRAIN Waves

JANUARY 2018



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Contact us ...

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 Follow Us!

Quote of The Month ...

*"It's important to
have a twinkle in
your wrinkle."*

~Author Unknown

Leah's Notes ...



Leah
Zehel,
Director

At The Gathering Place we are very fortunate to have some wonderful creative individuals who use their abilities and share their gifts of creativity and art with us. When our group engages in art, memories that they had long forgotten appear to come back to them and they begin to talk about those memories. This helps them to re-establish their place in the world and reconnect with those they love. It is believed that the reason adults with memory loss are able to reconnect through art therapy is because the memory tends to capture pictures or moments in time, making art therapy a useful tool.

As memory loss progresses, it can become harder for your loved one to be able to say what they mean or even find the words. They may become agitated and increasingly upset. Art therapy provides a creative outlet that allows them to show you how they are feeling and what they mean, thus improving communication.

You do not have to be an amazing artist to do "art" with your loved one.

- **Go to an art museum.** If your loved one with memory is able, take them to an art museum to explore. Many art museums have tours and programs for seniors with Alzheimer's or dementia.
- **Bring the art to them.** If your loved one is unable to go to an art gallery or a museum, bring the art to them. Take a trip to your local library or bookstore and check out some art books to

bring home.

- **Have them make the art.** Even if your loved one has not been artistic in the past, have them paint, draw or color. Try molding with clay or making other forms of art. You may be surprised at your loved one's artistic ability, even more so you might be surprised by the stories your loved one tells you.
- **Create a scrapbook.** If there are certain photographs or memories that make your loved one with memory loss light up and tell stories, start a scrapbook about them. This can not only help them have a creative outlet, but it can help them to have conversations about their past. Seeing certain pictures can cause them to recall memories and moments, helping them to connect with you and helping them

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VOLUNTEER CORNER

By Carol Bimmel

Upcoming Family and Volunteer Training

I wanted to let you all know that there will be two training sessions offered for our Families and Volunteers at The Gathering Place on Monday, February 19th with Paula Gibson who is the Regional Director of Sales and Communication for Azura Memory Care. Paula is a Certified Dementia Practitioner, Certified Virtual Dementia Tour Trainer,

Certified Cognitive Stimulation Provider, Certified Challenging Behaviors Trainer, CBRF Fire Safety Instructor and the creator of Azura's exclusive "MO-SAIC Connections" training program. In addition, Paula provides various community and medical provider presentations on topics related to dementia, focusing on communication, positivity,

caregiving, behavioral or expression intervention, brain health, memory loss and person-centered care. She has spoken throughout the State and beyond providing audiences with an informative, yet fun experience that engages them to learn and inspires them to provide better, more compassionate care!

The first training session is for our Families and that will be offered from 2:00 – 3:00. Then the second training will be for our current and potential Volunteers from 4:00 – 6:00 with a light supper included. Please RSVP to any staff at TGP or email carolb@stpaulfalls.com to register. ■





Memory Minute: What is Intentional Memory?

By Leah Zehel

This month in Memory Matters we all agreed that improving your memory and even maintaining your memory takes work and a lot of practice! You have to practice the techniques in order to receive the benefits. Intentional memory is the process of intentionally recalling previous experiences and information. Intentional memory takes practice. It is essential to activate the relevant information and inhibit

the irrelevant information. For example, if you are trying to remember where you parked your car, every place where you have ever parked your car might come to mind, which of course would not be beneficial. This type of information that you would want to inhibit as much as possible. The type of essential information, however, that you want to activate is exactly where you parked your car this time.

A good way to practice intentional memory is to prepare yourself before you want to remember something specific, such as where you parked your car or remembering a person's name.

Here are some tips to try, when you want to intentionally remember something.

- Breathe in and out deeply
- Clear your mind and concentrate
- Repeat the information several times
- Repeat the information out loud.
- Associate the information with something.
- Create a funny scenario using the information you want to remember
- Write down the information
- Believe that you WILL be able to remember it. ■



Memory Matters Calendar

January 4 ~ How do We Learn Best

- Reading group with our preschool friends

**January 11 ~ Expressing Creativity
Art Class, with Joann**

January 18 ~ Creating our Stories

- Variations of Creative Expression

January 25 ~ Outing to JMK

- Healthy Cooking Class





Leah's Notes continued from pg.1

feel more like themselves.

- **Decorate cupcakes or cookies.** This is not only an artistic outlet, but a yummy one that contains an element of aromatherapy. If you're loved one has a special recipe for icing or cookies, bake them. The familiar smells and taste will awaken your loved one's senses and can potentially help them remember a long ago past time when they would make this recipe.

The Gathering Place is so blessed to have art instructor Joann Luke, teach art class to our group on

Thursdays, Joann uses many different mediums, and has such a gentle effective way of teaching. Even those participants and volunteers who never wanted to set foot in the art room, look forward to the next art project!

A word from Joann:

We have had many pleasant days these past few months in the art room as we have been stretching our creative energies into many new forms of media. This fall we enjoyed working on fabric scrolls which combined drawing on mini canvases with markers which were then stitched onto burlap and further embellished with



colorful lines of stitchery. The combination of color, texture and skills made this a very exciting project. Every project was beautifully unique and reflected the personalities and styles of each artist. Clay has been our focus in November and December. We first got to know the media by making simple plaques embellished with stamped

or freehand designs. The ease our artists had with working with the soft clay led us onto the more ambitious project of covering wire armatures with clay. We have created a wonderful menagerie including fish, angels, flowers, trees, people and much more. And as always, our creative endeavors brought out our smiles, conversations, and even a song!

Thank you Joann for sharing your gift of art with us! ■



TGP Special Events & Activities

Families and Friends are always welcome to join us for our Highlighted Events!

January 2: Cake Painting with Rose

January 8: Preschool Visit

January 11: Music with Tom Luke

January 18: Preschool Visit

January 23:

- Music with Wyman Drake
- Preschool Visit

January 24: Music with Ryan Kautzer

GETTING OLD IS COOL

*Old People are cool, there isn't a doubt
 Having lived enough years to figure things out.
 There's been enough time to know real from fake,
 With so much learned from every mistake.
 A look in the mirror shows all that has changed-
 Once youthful features have been rearranged.
 But what's inside is what matters more.
 That doesn't change-one's heart, one's core.
 Being old's the number of years one has turned,
 With each year a blessing most carefully earned.
 Being older is cool in so many ways,
 So, celebrate each and every one of your days.*