

## Dementia Care, Compassionate Communication

by Stephanie Koop, RN, CWC Nurse Case Manager

Techniques for building a relationship with a person living with dementia (PLWD) were offered by Charleen Phelps, RN of Positive Approach to Care (PAC) in a program discussing dementia care partnering. The day-long event offered at no cost to the public by Citizens Who Care was held at Davis Community Church on September 7 and attended by 75 caregivers and professionals. PAC was founded by dementia and Alzheimer's care ex-

important part of care partnering. To support this centerpiece of the PAC training, it is important to accept and practice working with our loved ones as partners instead of for our loved ones as caregivers. As a result, the outcome of any care partner interaction, whether it is going to the doctor's office, taking a bath, getting dressed, or just having a conversation, becomes secondary to the relationship between PLWD and their care partners. Some of the essential qualities of the care partnering relationship include patience, consideration, flexibility, and remaining calm and non-judgmental.

Although it may not be overtly apparent to the casual observer that PLWD are injured, our loved ones are struggling with disease and coping in ways that make sense to them. All people, whether or not they have an illness, experience the same emotions even though they may express them in a different way. If we know that a PLWD is yelling due to an over stimulating environment, then it is easier to accept unexpected behaviors. It is our job to be detectives and try to figure out the meaning behind our loved ones responses and what their unmet needs may be (could they be hungry, bored, or in pain?)

"People living with dementia are doing the best (job that) they can" states Teepa Snow. Therefore, to affect the outcome of our interactions with PLWD, we must look at our own behaviors and be willing to modify our responses and interactions by embracing creativity and loving understanding. Some ideas for altering outcomes might include not arguing with your loved one about inconsequential facts or details and instead either dropping the conversation/issue or trying a new way to approach the problem. You can stop wanting to be right all the time. And remember that if it's not a safety issue, it's probably not essential for the PLWD to have all the facts or details. Remaining calm and using simple verbal and non-verbal communication to get a point across is another good plan. Your raised voice and upset countenance may cause the PLWD to become agitated.

Another point Charleen made was that PLWD may not be able to initiate some tasks or even tell you that they can't initiate a task (even though they may want to perform the action). So, simply putting a toothbrush in a person's hand and initiating the brushing action could be enough of a reminder for the person to be able to finish the task. Every PLWD is different and each person's journey is different. An activity that works



pert Teepa Snow. This presentation was made possible by a generous grant from the Biberstein Social Action Fund.

Only by first acknowledging the physiological brain changes that distinguish dementia are loved ones ready to begin the process of understanding the PLWD. These include increased primal responses such as fright, flight, or fight and diminished executive capacity for impulse control, and decision making. Alzheimer's brains have changes in the hippocampus where learning and memory are affected. Visual and language changes may also significantly impact the ability to see and communicate.

The dementia training emphasized that the relationship between the PLWD and their care partners is the most

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CWC ANNUAL DONOR DRIVE  
Thank you for being a Citizen Who Cares!  
A contribution envelope is enclosed.

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Citizens Who Care proudly presents its 28th Annual Benefit Concert

# DECADES of Song & Dance



Great Hits from  
Great Times!



Tickets \$27  
(Students/children \$17)

Purchase online: [www.dmtc.org](http://www.dmtc.org)

Friday, February 2 - 7 pm  
Saturday, February 3 - 2 pm

Davis Musical Theatre Company  
Jean Henderson Performing Arts Center  
607 Pena Drive, Davis, CA

## Ticket Order Form for the CWC 2018 Concert

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please send check payable to: **Citizens Who Care**,  
409 Lincoln Ave., Woodland, CA 95695

*All tickets are reserved. \*If you have limited mobility please request a seat(s) for easier access.  
\*\*If you require wheelchair seating please indicate on form. Wheelchair seating is very limited.*

**Mail order tickets will be held for pick up at the DMTC box office.**

TICKET PRICE: \$27/\$17 Student	Quantity & Seating Preference				TOTAL
	Regular	Student	*Ltd. Mobility	*W/C	
<b>Friday, Feb. 2, 7 PM</b>					\$
<b>Saturday, Feb. 3, 2 PM</b>					\$
Additional Donation to CWC					\$
Total Enclosed					\$

### DEMENTIA TRAINING (FROM PAGE 1)

for you one day may or not work on another day with your loved one. Keep a diary of things that work for you and use your creativity to come up with other solutions to the problems you need to solve.

The PAC program and videos reveal that dementia is much more than loss. Teepa Snow uses the analogy of different gemstones to represent the different levels and characteristics of dementia. For diamond level, people prefer rituals and routines, enjoy the familiar, resist change, have a limited perspective, may be territorial, repeat themselves, and may be able to cover their mistakes in social settings. The amber level folks are people who are caught in time. They focus and react to sensations, live in the mo-

ment, have trouble understanding or expressing their needs, find it difficult to connect with others, may resist help or assistance, and cannot delay desires. When we are able to recognize and accept the qualities of the PLWD, only then are we able to best relate to them and meet their needs. More information about the other gemstone levels can be found on Teepa's website [www.teepasnow.com](http://www.teepasnow.com) or look up her free videos on YouTube.

Other resources include: The Alzheimer's Foundation - [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org); Family Caregiving Alliance--<https://www.caregiver.org>; Del Oro Caregiver Resource Center -[www.deloro.org](http://www.deloro.org) - a local organization that provides practical information as well as money for caregivers trying to make ends meet; UCLA dementia program has caregiver training videos and Alzheimer caregiver education webinars at <https://dementia.uclahealth.org/caregiver-education>.



*Dear Friends and Supporters,*

*As we come to the end of another year, we remember those in our lives we have lost this year and those that will need our increasing care and support in the months and years to come. We ask that you remain engaged with us; your support has enabled CWC to serve the needs of caregivers of elderly residents of Yolo County for nearly 40 years.*

*This year the CWC Board of Directors determined in a strategic planning meeting to change the organization's name to better reflect our commitment to our ever-growing population of dependent older adults and their family caregivers. To better reflect our core mission, Citizens Who Care will be changing its name to Yolo Respite in early 2018. Furthermore, in a time of diminishing financial resources for non-profits, the board is actively seeking ways to partner with like-minded non-profits to cost effectively provide an inclusive continuum of services to the elderly and their families.*

*Specifically one of our key objectives in 2018 is to raise funds to support a six-day-a-week Adult Day Care Center in Yolo County. (CWC has been providing a similar program two Saturdays a month at the Davis Senior Center for more than 20 years.) Unlike Adult Day Health Care programs, this Adult Day Care Center will provide flexible respite for caregivers of family members not in need of a high level of health intervention but who would benefit from social interaction, organized activities, and daily assistance in a supervised and stimulating setting, as caregivers receive needed respite or the opportunity to continue work and other family commitments.*

*Over the years many of you have generously donated to make these no cost services available to our communities. Today CWC is serving more of those in need of our program services than at any other time in its history. Each month more than 200 individuals are touched weekly by CWC volunteer outreach through our In-Home Respite and Friendly Visiting, Convalescent Hospital Visiting, CWC Saturday Club (providing five hours of weekend respite to caregivers) and Senior Peer Counseling programs.*

*The need for our services does not go away, On the contrary, as life expectancy rises more folk look to CWC. We are fortunate to raise one-third of the funds we need through our annual fundraising ticketed and sponsored events, and another one-third through competitive grants of various kinds. The remainder comes from individual giving and that is the reason for this letter. We need your help in two ways:*

*First, of course, we want to ask you to write a check to CWC in as generous an amount as you are comfortable with.. Your \$1,000 donation provides a family with six months of participation in the CWC Saturday Club program or 60 hours of social activity and weekend respite for caregivers. Every \$100 provides a caregiver with two hours of in-home respite for 10 weeks; \$500 a full year. Any amount is appreciated. A return envelope is included with this mailing for your convenience.*

*Second, if you have one or two hours of time a week to volunteer for one of our programs, please contact the CWC office or go to the CWC website. All program services are delivered to those in need by people like you. This is a rewarding opportunity to give back and make a difference.*

*Thank you for joining us in giving to help make possible these important services for our frail elderly and their caregivers.*

*With gratitude,  
The CWC Board of Directors*

**CWC Wishes You  
Happy Holidays!**

***Return Service Requested***

**WINTER 2017**

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**TIME VALUE - PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY**

***Citizens Who Care's Mission:***  
*To improve quality of life for older adults  
and their caregivers.*

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