

SPRING/SUMMER 2023

Family Matters

A MAGAZINE FOR SENIORS, CAREGIVERS & PROVIDERS



The reason of



TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is Aphasia?	3
Create a Nutrious Pantry	4
Flowers and Cupcakes	5
The Power of Now	6
Carol's Corner	7
2023 Awards	8



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As I was thinking about this letter, and all that we have been through in California over the recent months, it brought to mind the quote, “It’s always something.” Coined by the 1970’s Saturday Night Live character Roseanne Roseannadanna, (played by Gilda Radner), it reflected a matter-of-fact, pragmatic view of life. Roseanne would wrap up her weekly “news” reports saying, “It just goes to show you. It’s always something. If it’s not one thing, it’s another.” That may seem like an oblivious statement, but it’s actually quite accepting of life – even tenacious.

If you apply Roseanne’s philosophy to the past year in California, you can see that yes, it is always something - devastating storms, random violence, COVID, and rising costs. It would be easy to become depressed and discouraged. However, human beings are better and stronger than that. We are resilient and tenacious. Rather than giving in, we stand up, and find a way around the obstacles that life and Mother Nature seem so determined to place in our path.

Our caregivers subscribe to this philosophy as well. They have lived long enough to know full well that “it’s always something,” but they have also seen the innate strength that allows human beings to carry on. We provide care at home because we know it makes a difference and helps our clients feel positively about life. If your loved one needs support and companionship, give us a call, (888) 962-4836. We can bring companionship to their home.

Jacob Laffen
President, Co-Owner
Family Matters In-Home Care

What is Aphasia?

Does Your Loved One Have it?

3

Two million people in the United States have lost all or some of their ability to speak, read, and write – but not their intelligence and ability to understand others. They suffer from a disorder called Aphasia, yet 85% of Americans have no idea what aphasia is. Actor Bruce Willis's family announced early last year that he was diagnosed with the disorder, and the National Aphasia Association has launched an awareness campaign. It is hoped that these things can increase diagnosis so sufferers can receive appropriate treatment.

Aphasia is caused by brain injuries – most commonly stroke, but also head trauma, brain tumors, and infections. There are different types of aphasia. Each presents differently and can be helped by different types of speech therapy or communication support.



Broca's Aphasia: The person can only say three or four words at a time, has limited vocabulary and difficulty finding the words they want to use. However, they can understand speech.

Wenicke's Aphasia: Words pour out of the person's mouth but they are not coherent, neither are sentences. It also affects the ability to read and write.

Anomic Aphasia: The person cannot find the words to use, especially the correct noun or verb. They fill gaps with similar words, or use "stuff" or "thing". They can usually read but have difficulty finding the right words for writing.

Global Aphasia: This is the most severe form. People cannot speak many words, read or write, and sometimes don't understand speech. Usually, this type of aphasia occurs for a short time after brain injury or stroke, then moves into another type.

Primary Progressive Aphasia: This is a form of dementia. The aphasia is gradual and moves from a subtle to severe loss of abilities.

If your loved one suffers from aphasia, contact his/her primary care physician and ask for a referral to speech language pathology. You can also use the National Aphasia Association as a resource.

You can learn more at: <https://www.aphasia.org/>

Create a Nutritious Pantry

Do you remember your grandmother's pantry? If so, you may recall aromas of savory spices, shelves full of glass jars, and bags of powdery baking ingredients. It was a curious place that supplied a delicious kitchen in both thin and abundant times.

Pantries have made a comeback and you can make one of your own in a kitchen cupboard or small closet. It will give you the comfort of knowing you have the ingredients you need and the confidence of having food in the house should you become housebound. Take an inventory of what you have on hand, then add from this list, courtesy of Misfits Market Blog*.



Stable, non-perishable foods (good for weeks or months):

- Rice, dry pastas, cereals, dried and canned beans/legumes
- Canned tomatoes and pasta sauces
- Soy sauce, vinegar
- Nuts, nut butters, dried fruits
- Dried herbs/spices, stocks and broths, baking essentials like flour, sugar, baking soda/powder

Refrigerator staples:

- Eggs, butter, milk, juice
- Lemons and limes
- Parmesan cheese, shredded cheeses

Freezer staples:

- Frozen veggies and fruit
- Premade pizza dough
- Ground beef, boneless chicken, fish
- Sliced bread, homemade soups, sauces and broths

Countertop produce (can last for weeks/months without refrigeration):

- Potatoes
- Winter squash
- Apples
- Beets, garlic and onions

Jumping into Spring with Flowers and Cupcakes



Cupcakes are delicious, easy to make, and easy to eat. Frost them with bright colors and you have a happy spring treat for the family. While the cupcake papers are out for baking, why not make a spring craft as well? It's perfect for all members of the family and together they can make bright spring poster for the house or a gift.



Above image from: iheartcraftythings.com

Materials:

- Spring colored cupcake papers
- Green marker
- Colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue

Instructions:

1. Select 3 cupcake papers and cut them half-way down the sides. Space the cuts $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart, or $\frac{1}{4}$ inch apart, depending upon what you want the cupcake paper flower to look like.
2. Flatten the cupcake paper until it looks like a flower.
3. Glue the cupcake papers on a piece of paper in rows (see image).
4. Use the marker to draw stems and leaves under the cupcake paper flowers, or use strips of construction paper (see image).

**TADA! You have a spring
flower poster.**

THE POWER OF NOW –

and a Loving Touch for Dementia Patients

Trying to communicate with a loved one through the haze of dementia can be frustrating and filled with sadness and a sense of loss. The disease impacts the hippocampus, the part of the brain that creates short term memories. Consequently, dementia patients may not be able to converse about today's events, but they can remember their childhood home in painstaking detail – and it may become their daily reality. To enjoy moments with a dementia patient is to join them in the reality of their present day.

As painful as that may be, you can enjoy moments with your loved one by “joining” him or her where they are in the time continuum. If they are “living” in the old neighborhood, join them in that space and talk about the people who lived there. If they are “working” in the career they had most of their lives, join them and talk about the things they did in their job.



Dementia will rob your loved one of many things, but not his or her ability to feel your love and affection.

It's also important to recognize that although dementia may rob a dementia patient's ability to label a loved one as “daughter”, “spouse”, “son”, etc., it does not steal the ability to recognize the person as someone s/he loves.

The absence of labels does not mean the absence of love and affection and the dementia patient will feel that long after the loved one has left to go home.

That is why human touch matters so much. It is a powerful sensation, and one that conveys love, compassion, and friendship. Like babies who are not nurtured experience failure to thrive, a dementia patient who is deprived of a loving touch will begin to fail as well.

Dementia will rob your loved one of many things, but not his or her ability to feel your love and affection. Showering them with it will make all the difference in their happiness and contentment.



Carol's Corner

Family Matter's founder Carol Pardue-Spears stays in close touch with our caregivers and clients to make sure everyone is well cared for. Here, she answers some of the most frequent questions our clients ask.



Q:

My parent watches news constantly and becomes increasingly agitated by it. How can I change this?

Unfortunately, the 24-hour news cycle offers the opportunity to watch a steady stream of news, leading to increased anxiety, worry, and even depression. It may take a while and it may not be without conflict, but you can successfully reduce the length of time they sit in front of the television.

Keep in mind the goal is not to eliminate watching the news altogether, but to reduce the total amount of time your parent is watching it.

Some of the steps you can take include:

1. Divert your parent's attention to more positive pursuits like participating in favorite outdoor activities.

If the season isn't ready yet, involve them in planning the outdoor activities, like flowers for a garden, a day trip to a park, the beach, the ocean, or the mountains

Find the location, check the website together, map the route, look for restaurants for lunch, secure the date on the calendar

2. Involve your parent in looking for local arts, theater in the park, comedy, music and plan dates to attend.

If your parent doesn't engage in these suggestions, sit down and have a conversation with him/her about what you observe and the adverse effect the news is having on them. Suggest they watch specific shows during the day, but not a 12-hour stream of news.

- List the shows and the times they are broadcast.
- Discuss what they can do when the shows are not on.

Engaging your parent in change is always the most successful approach, and the one that results in the least resistance.



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WE ARE SO PROUD TO ANNOUNCE WE RECEIVED THE
HIGHEST NATIONAL RANKING BY CAREGIVERS, EMPLOYEES
AND CLIENTS FOR IN-HOME CARE FOR THE 6TH YEAR.



PROVIDER –

*Family Matters has a
proven record of care as
rated by our clients.*



EMPLOYER –

*Based on employee
satisfaction ratings
collected from phone
interviews.*



LEADER –

*The highest honor a
homecare provider can
earn – top 15% of
all Home Care Pulse
providers.*