



# The Family Caregiver

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Newsletter of the Lewis-Mason-Thurston Family Caregiver Support Program

Summer 2020

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Happy summer!

Wishing you the best in this era of COVID, an era with many rules, fears, loss of control, and challenges for all of us. During this time there have also been non-COVID illnesses, deaths, and life tragedies complicated by the pandemic.

With so many challenges, we hardly wish to bring up more. But we do have a few cautions. Many of our life skills, including caregiving skills, depend on “rehearsal” and repetition. Skills such as helping your spouse into an automobile or driving to a medical appointment are dependent on repetition.

Most of us have been driving for decades, but it is a perishable skill. If you have ventured out in the past months, perhaps you noticed some drivers who seem to have lost their “defensive driving” skills and are less attentive to others on the road.

As you may increase your driving in the near future, be mindful that your physical reflexes have not been tested as much, due to driving less often, and reduced engagement in other activities which help support our driving skills.

You may find things on the road which have changed. While we have been at home, road construction has continued. You may encounter a new roundabout or construction site, when taking your care receiver to the next medical appointment.

Also those great planning skills that help you get to medical appointments on time, may need some brushing up. We may have to add back the ‘get out the door’ time for our next in-office medical appointment. We might be out of practice after Facetime medical appointments or attending church services on the web.

Perhaps the saddest adjustment is when and how to resume shaking hands, giving hugs or greeting an old friend closer than 6 feet. It may be an awkward reentry to warm greetings – though we suspect many of you will not need much practice before it feels comfortable again.

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**“Keep your face always toward the sunshine-and shadows will fall behind you”**

*Walt Whitman*

# Memory

Your memory is often an indicator of the health of information retrieval and information rehearsal. Being home and not rehearsing the names of acquaintances at church or your favorite barista can be effected. Below are some reminders of maintaining and improving your memory.

**Exercise every day.** If possible, walk and talk with a partner. Mental, physical and social stimulation is very important. If a partner is not available, exercise alone. Physical activity is very helpful in boosting your brain power.

**Vary your daily routine.** Try to do activities that are different from the typical. Go to lunch with someone you haven't seen for several years. Take a different way home from the store, go to the 'old neighborhood,' change your routine in some significant way, e.g. take out the garbage before you eat breakfast, take a bath in the evening rather than in the morning, etc.

**Work to reduce stress.** Read, walk, and avoid stressful people or topics. Their problems are not your problems. Express your affection, and wish them well. Don't encourage them to burden you with their problems.

**Stimulate your brain.** Watch TV that helps you learn new information. For example, watch channels such as Discovery, C-Span, Science, PBS, or Spanish speaking stations. Listen to music that is different from what you commonly enjoy. Pick a topic and surf the net.

**Develop your creativity.** Write a memoirs, diary, paint, and sort through your photos and make albums for family members. Take a class in gardening, painting, computers, language, etc.

**Eat a balanced diet.** Eat the rainbow of fruits and vegetables.

**Keep a good calendar and daily notes.** Write things down! Have a calendar that is large enough to write several notes on each date. Keep a notebook of daily ideas, things to remember, things to do, people to call, etc. Rehearse the things you want to remember. If you don't, you'll forget it!

The suggestions above are excerpts from an essay by University of Idaho professor emeritus Dr. A. Lee Parks which appeared in our summer 2010 newsletter.

## Alzheimer's Association South Sound Chapter July 30 10AM to 11:30

Laura Valliancourt Self Care for Caregivers

Mary Grace Becker Momentia

<https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/register/bcsgyeja>

alzheimer's association

Dementia Caregiving & COVID-19

July Webinar Series

Caring for People With Dementia in Long-Term Care Facilities During COVID-19 | Barb Lewis, LPN

July 1, 2020 | 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. PDT

Window visits, Skype meetings and phone calls: having a loved one in a long-term care facility has changed drastically in the wake of COVID-19. Learn how to navigate your loved one's care remotely and what to expect from long-term care facilities. | REGISTER

COVID-19 Guidance and Tips for Dementia Caregivers | Anita Chopra, MD

July 8, 2020 | 10:30-11:30 a.m. PDT

How do I explain COVID-19 to my loved one with dementia? How do I keep them safe, healthy, and at home during the pandemic? Dr. Anita Chopra will address these questions and many more. | REGISTER

Handy Self-Care Tips for the Busy Dementia Caregiver | Maggie Christofferson, BASW & April Scott MS, MPA

July 13, 2020 | 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. PDT

Many dementia caregivers are in desperate need of self-care and struggle to make time for it. We have all heard mainstream self-care tips like getting a massage or facial but most caregivers do not have that kind of time. Join us as we present useful and practical tips for how to take care of yourself. | REGISTER

Falls and Memory Loss | Victoria Panzer PhD

July 23, 2020 | 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. PDT

People living with memory loss and dementia have a higher risk of falling — which can often cause injury and complications, and could eventually lead to placement in a nursing facility. Dr. Panzer will discuss fall risk and prevention for people living with dementia. | REGISTER

Long-Term Care Planning During COVID 19: What You Need to Know | Lisa Mayfield

July 30, 2020 | 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. PDT

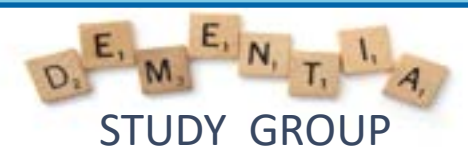
How do I know when it's time to place my loved one in long-term care? What are some safety practices I can take when visiting my loved one? Join us as Lisa Mayfield of Aging Wisdom explores how COVID-19 has impacted our questions about long-term care. | REGISTER

Register today!

1.800.272.3900 or [alzwa.org/covidcare](http://alzwa.org/covidcare)

You will be the first to know when we resume!!

"Come with questions, leave with answers."



In SHELTON:	Second Wednesday of the month from 1-3 PM	(360) 427-2226 x102
In CHEHALIS:	Second Thursday of the month from 1-3 PM	(360) 748-2524 x102
In OLYMPIA:	Third Thursday of the month from 1-3 PM	(360) 664-3162 x102



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## FAMILY CAREGIVER SPECIALISTS

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### *Thurston County*

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Brittany Begley-Dennis, MSW - Ext 167

### *Lewis County*

1651 S. Market Blvd., Chehalis, WA 98532  
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Joan Vance, MSW - Ext 210  
Kathy Howard - Ext 149

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*For an online copy of this newsletter please visit our website at [www.LMTAAA.org](http://www.LMTAAA.org)*

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