

Care Partner Connections

Providing resource information to encourage and support Care Partners in our community.

Keep Your Brain Young with Music

Music can be medicine for your mind, with benefits from memory improvement to stress relief. Learn what Johns Hopkins experts are discovering—and how you can put it to use.

Learn an Instrument

When 13 older adults took piano lessons, their attention, memory and problem-solving abilities improved, along with their moods and quality of life. You don't have to become a pro, just take a few lessons. If you want to firm up your body, head to the gym. If you want to exercise your brain, listen to music.

"There are few things that stimulate the brain the way music does," says one Johns Hopkins Otolaryngologist. "If you want to keep your brain engaged throughout the aging process, listening to or playing music is a great tool. It provides a total brain workout."

Research has shown that listening to music can reduce anxiety, blood pressure, and pain as well as improve sleep quality, mood, mental alertness, and memory.

The Brain-Music Connection

Experts are trying to understand how our brains can hear and play music. A stereo system puts out vibrations that travel through the air and somehow get inside the ear canal. These vibrations tickle the eardrum and are transmitted into an electrical signal that travels through the auditory nerve to the brain stem, where it is reassembled into something we perceive as music.

Johns Hopkins researchers have had dozens of jazz performers and rappers improvise music while lying down inside an fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) machine to watch and see which areas of their brains light up.

"Music is structural, mathematical and architectural. It's based on relationships between one note and the next. You may not be aware of it, but your brain has to do a lot of computing to make sense of it," notes one Otolaryngologist.

Everyday Brain Boosts from Music

The power of music isn't limited to interesting research. Try these methods of bringing more music—and brain benefits—into your life.

- **Jump-start your creativity.**

Listen to what your kids or grandkids listen to, experts suggest. Often we continue to listen to the same songs and genre of music that we did during our teens and 20s, and we generally avoid hearing anything that's not from that era.

New music challenges the brain in a way that old music doesn't. It might not feel pleasurable at first, but that unfamiliarity forces the brain to struggle to understand the new sound.

- **Recall a memory from long ago.**

Reach for familiar music, especially if it stems from the same time period that you are trying to recall. Listening to the Beatles might bring you back to the first moment you laid eyes on your spouse, for instance.

- **Listen to your body.**

Pay attention to how you react to different forms of music, and pick the kind that works for you. What helps one person concentrate might be distracting to someone else, and what helps one person unwind might make another person jumpy.

- Any time of day, any time of year, La Crosse is full of exciting opportunities for learning, exploration and entertainment. For more information, visit: www.explorelacrosse.com/calendar/

Tips for Care Partners

UNDERSTANDING PARKINSON'S

BUILDING A CARE PARTNERSHIP

Sharing in your loved one's journey with Parkinson's disease (PD), means integrating the diagnosis together into your lives, adapting your routine and supporting him or her as the disease progresses — essentially, establishing a care *partnership*.

This can sometimes be challenging; from learning about the disease and how best to help your loved one, to remembering to also care for yourself. There are steps you can take to help adjust to your new role as a care partner while maintaining a healthy and supportive relationship with your loved one.

We asked caregivers in our community for their advice to provide a roadmap for filling this role.



HOW CAN I HELP MANAGE MY LOVED ONE'S CARE?

Become an integral part of your loved one's experience with Parkinson's by offering to help share the responsibilities associated with the disease including doctor appointments, therapy sessions, medication administration, household duties or any activity that's more difficult to perform because of Parkinson's disease. People with Parkinson's will desire different levels of assistance and some wish to maintain as much independence as possible. You won't know if a person wants help unless you ask but then respect their response. Communication about these issues is key to understanding how best to help your loved one.

Ask your loved one if you can attend doctor's visits. Care partners play a major role on the team of people treating Parkinson's. You offer an outside view of how your loved one has been doing in the interim since the last visit. You may also recognize new symptoms or subtle changes that the person experiencing Parkinson's doesn't. For example, your loved one's mood or behaviors may have changed and he or she may be more withdrawn. These could be signs of depression, which is a clinical symptom of PD and is treatable with medication. A person with Parkinson's might otherwise dismiss this as a reaction to the diagnosis of PD or not even mention it to the doctor. You may also have noticed that your loved one's speech has become softer or more monotone. This may impact your ability to communicate and therefore your relationship. Speech therapists can prescribe exercises to improve voice control.

You and your loved one can decide together on management options offered and with two sets of ears tuning in, you can both be clear on the treatment plan.

As a caregiver, keeping track of all the details associated with medical care can be overwhelming. Here are some tips to help:

- **Stay organized** with a calendar that you can take on doctor visits. Note doctor and therapy appointments, start and stop dates of medicines, and any side effects you notice.
- **Keep a list** of all doctors' phone numbers and addresses in case of an emergency. Keep a separate and updated list of all prescription medications, their dosages and instructions and prescribing provider. Note allergies or medication intolerances as well.
- **Familiarize yourself** with the terms of your loved one's medical insurance. Know what services, including prescription medication coverage and therapy session benefits, are included. Talk with your physician about the long-term needs of your loved one, and make sure his or her current medical plan will meet those needs. Engage the services of a social worker if you need help navigating these issues.
- **Know your rights** in terms of disability coverage, family leave and elder rights. If possible, consult a movement disorder specialist, a neurologist specially trained in Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders. Before appointments, prepare a list of your questions for the doctor.

Particularly in the early days after diagnosis, your list may include questions on:

- long-term prognosis
- symptoms you need to be aware of — both motor and non-motor
- how existing medical conditions may affect the health of your loved one
- medicine protocol
- non-medical treatments
- clinical studies that need you or your loved one with Parkinson's

You do not need special medical training to help with any but the most advanced stages of the disease. Most caregivers are primarily called on to aid with daily tasks that may become difficult or impossible for someone with Parkinson's, and to provide ongoing emotional support. One exception: if Parkinson's causes trouble swallowing and therefore increases the risk of choking, knowing the Heimlich maneuver can be life-saving.

HOW WILL PARKINSON'S AFFECT MY RELATIONSHIP?

Parkinson's disease can place stress on a marriage or relationship. The fatigue and motor difficulties of the disease can cause changes in your partner's appearance and influence their contribution to household chores. Cognitive and mood changes may make it hard to initiate and follow through on everyday tasks, which can be frustrating for both of you.

Effective communication is vital for the long-term health of your marriage. As with any other important development that affects the lives of two people who are close, Parkinson's disease should be discussed openly and honestly. Do not consider your own concerns as a caregiver less important.

If your loved one chooses not to reveal his or her diagnosis right away, you may feel uncomfortable being less than truthful in response to questions from others. There is no simple answer of how best to support your partner in this situation. Discuss your concerns with your partner but also listen to their reasoning. Consider the implications of sharing a diagnosis on your social interactions and your loved one's career.

If you feel comfortable doing so, visit a counselor or therapist together or individually to work through the many changes and emotions you are experiencing and to learn how you can preserve and grow your relationship.

HOW CAN I CARE FOR MYSELF?

Caring for a person with a chronic illness full-time can be overwhelming. Put together a list of friends and family members whom you trust and can call upon to relieve you for a few hours or in case of an emergency. Consider seeking outside, professional help for in-home assistance if you can afford it.

Don't forget your own interests and your life outside of Parkinson's disease. Schedule regular social activities and time for yourself. Go out with friends, enjoy a physical activity independently or take classes that interest you. For Parkinson's patients who require constant care, check out local programs that will take care of them on a temporary basis (sometimes called "respite care"). This will allow you the time to seek the support and rest that you need.

Caregivers may react to Parkinson's diagnosis with denial, fear or anger. Seeing your loved one change, particularly if mood or behavior are altered, can be hard to not take personally. Talking openly about what you are experiencing, and clearly communicating on a day-to-day basis, are critical for both the Parkinson's patient and the caregiver.

Support groups offer the opportunity to share experiences and information with empathetic ears. There are groups for Parkinson's patients and their loved ones to attend together and separate groups just for caregivers. Keep in mind that each group has a different character and you may have to try several before finding a right fit. If there are no support groups in your area that you like, consider starting your own. Online forums can also be a source of support.

Remember that Parkinson's disease and its course are different for everyone. How you and your loved one navigate the disease is dependent on your individual relationship and personalities. Over time you will be able to come to an agreement on what constitutes the most effective, supportive and beneficial care partnership for you both.

Source: <https://www.michaeljfox.org/understanding-parkinsons/supporting-caregiving.php>

This content has been reviewed by Rachel Dolhun, MD, the Foundation's on-staff movement disorder specialist.

Tips for Care Partners

Seven Types of Self-Care Activities for Coping with Stress

Try these simple self-care activities to cope with stress.

When we're stressed, self-care is often the first thing to go. Why is this?

- Our brains go into fight-or-flight mode and our perspective narrows. We don't see we have options—options for coping with stress and making ourselves feel better.
- We're so busy trying to solve problems that we're stuck in "doing mode"—trying to get more and more done—when switching to "being mode" may be just the break we need.
- We may not have a "go to" list of self-care activities. Self-care has to become a habit, so that when we're dealing with stress, we remember that, "Hey, I need to take care of myself in this situation." And, you need a variety of activities to try—if one doesn't work, you can switch to another.

Fortunately, there are several pathways to self-care, and none of them need be difficult or take a lot of planning:

SENSORY

When you feel stressed and need a calm mind, try focusing on the sensations around you—sights, smells, sounds, tastes, touch... This will help you focus on the present moment, giving you a break from your worries.

- Breathe in fresh air.
- Snuggle under a cozy blanket.
- Listen to running water.
- Sit outdoors by a fire-pit, watching the flames and listening to the night sounds.
- Take a hot shower or a warm bath.
- Get a massage.
- Cuddle with a pet.
- Pay attention to your breathing.
- Burn a scented candle.
- Wiggle your bare feet in overgrown grass.
- Stare up at the sky.
- Lie down where the afternoon sun streams in a window.
- Listen to music.

PLEASURE

A great way to take care of yourself when you're coping with stress is to engage in a pleasurable activity. Try one of these ideas.

- Take yourself out to eat.
- Be a tourist in your own city.
- Garden.
- Watch a movie.
- Make art. Do a craft project.
- Journal.
- Walk your dogs.
- Go for a photo walk.

MENTAL/MASTERY

You can also give yourself a boost by doing a task that you've been avoiding or challenging your brain in a novel way.

- Clean out a junk drawer or a closet.
- Take action (one small step) on something you've been avoiding.
- Try a new activity.
- Drive to a new place.
- Make a list.
- Immerse yourself in a crossword puzzle.
- Do a word search.
- Read something on a topic you wouldn't normally.

SPIRITUAL

Getting in touch with your values—what really matters—is a sure way to cope with stress and foster a calm mind. Activities that people define as spiritual are very personal. Here are a few ideas:

- Attend church.
- Read poetry or inspiring quotes.
- Light a candle.
- Meditate.
- Write in a journal.
- Spend time in nature.
- Pray.
- List five things you're grateful for.

EMOTIONAL

Dealing with our emotions can be challenging when we're coping with stress. We tend to label emotions as "good" or "bad," but this isn't helpful. Instead:

- Accept your feelings. They're all ok. Really.
- Write your feelings down. Here's a list of feeling words.
- Cry when you need to.
- Laugh when you can. (Try laughter yoga.)
- Practice self-compassion.

PHYSICAL

Coping with stress by engaging the body is great because you can bypass a lot of unhelpful mental chatter. It's hard to feel stressed when you're doing one of these self-care activities:

- Try yoga.
- Go for a walk or a run.
- Dance.
- Stretch.
- Go for a bike ride.
- Don't skip sleep to get things done.
- Take a nap.

SOCIAL

Connecting with others is an important part of self-care. This can mean activities such as:

- Go on a lunch date with a good friend.
- Calling a friend on the phone.
- Participating in a book club.
- Joining a support group.
- It can also mean remembering that others go through similar experiences and difficulties as we do. We're not alone.

Simply acknowledging that we're all part of this human experience can lessen isolation and lead to a calm mind. That's the best self-care strategy I know.

By, Barbara Markway Ph.D. | Psychology Today
Blog: Shyness is Nice
www.psychologytoday.com



Laughing is, and will always be, the best form of therapy.

Resources & Support

Area Support Groups

Support Group for Persons with Dementia and Care Partners

When: 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the Month from 3pm to 4pm

Where: Village on Cass, 225 South 24th Street, La Crosse

Contacts: Chris Brown and Terry Fleming at 608-392-9505



Support Group for Persons with Younger/Early Onset Dementia and Care Partners

This support group is for persons under the age of 65, living with a new diagnosis of Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), Alzheimer's or other related dementia and their Care Partner (spouse, partner, parent, son, daughter, friend, other relative).

When: 4th Thursday of the Month from 5:30pm to 7pm (Social time from 5:30pm to 6pm)

Where: First Lutheran Church, 410 Main Street, Onalaska, WI 54650

Contact: Amy Brezinka, ADRC Caregiver Coach Program Coordinator at 608-789-8575

Family Support Group—Alzheimer's/Dementia

When: 2nd Wednesday of the month from 5:30pm-7pm

Where: Bluffview Memory Care, 2101 Bluffview Court, Holmen

Contact: Bluffview Memory Care Management Team at 608-526-5864 for more details

Caregiver Support Group

When: *Last* Wednesday of the month at 1:15pm

Where: Hillview Health Care Center—Sunshine Room

3501 Park Lane Drive, La Crosse

Contact: Nikki Weisenberger at 608-789-4867 for more details

Caregiver Support Group

When: 2nd Thursday of the month at 1pm

Where: Lakeview Health Center, 902 E Garland Street, West Salem

Contact: Paul Kaiser SW 608-786-1400 ext 40131

Parkinson's Support Group

When: 4th Tuesday of each month from 2pm-4pm

Where: Gundersen Health System

Contact: Julie Holzworth at 608-775-2789

Great Rivers 2-1-1 ~ For more information about area support groups dial 2-1-1

Make time for yourself. You are important!

Younger/Early-Onset Dementia Education



Younger/Early-Onset Dementia Series

Younger-onset (also known as early-onset) Alzheimer's affects people younger than age 65. Many people with early onset are in their 40s and 50s.

This six month series is designed for persons living with the diagnoses of Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), Younger/Early-Onset Alzheimer's or other related dementia and their Care Partner (spouse, partner, son, daughter, parent, friend or other relative) and for those concerned about memory loss.

When: Second Thursdays through August 2016

Time: 1pm to 2:30pm

Where: Gundersen Health System - Onalaska Clinic

Women's Health Resource Center (WHRC), level 4 (August)

Education Center, level 1 (June, July)

3111 Gundersen Drive | Onalaska, WI 54650

Series Topics by Date:

- July 14th— Self-Care & Movement | Amy Brezinka, Caregiver Coach Program
& Linda Larson, Gundersen Health System
- August 11th - Financial Concerns: Planning for the Future
Dustin Cunningham, Trust Point Inc.
&
- Advance Care Planning: Respecting Choices
Danielle Rathke DNP, RN, Gundersen Health System

No RSVP or Registration is required for this Dementia Series.

For more information contact:

Shayna Schertz, Wellness Education Specialist at 608-775-3885 or
Amy Brezinka, Caregiver Coach Program Coordinator at 608-785-5700

Sponsored by,



"Summertime is always the best of what might be." -Charles Bowden

WELLNESS FEST 2016

Saturday, July 30, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., La Crosse Center



Meet Chef Tiffany Derry, Bravo TV's "Top Chef"

Season 7 fan favorite and finalist on "Top Chef All-Stars".

Cooking demonstration at 10:30 a.m. Experience Chef Tiffany prepare tasty, healthy dishes. Come early to receive your complimentary ticket for samples, available in limited quantities.

A fun and informative healthy-living event, featuring activities for all ages:

- Health information and displays
- Free children's ID cards provided by the La Crosse Sheriff's Department
- Shop at area vendor booths and learn about local services
- Salsa tasting by Chip Magnet
- Food samples, demonstrations and activities
- Bring a non-perishable food item to help local food pantries
- Free youth bike helmets (while supplies last)

Free admission!

Gundersenhealth.org/Wellnessfest
(608) 775-4717

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*"Learning is about living
and as such is lifelong."*

Quote from Contemporary Theories of Learning: Learning Theories ... in their own words
Photo: Alexander Wank, Photo: Alexander Wank, Photo: Alexander Wank, Photo: Alexander Wank, Photo: Alexander Wank

Bente Elkjaer



Successful Aging Program

The **Successful Aging Program** offers monthly educational sessions to give you the opportunity to socialize and learn something new. From cooking for one or two, to Alzheimer's updates, the topics are designed with you in mind.

Sessions take place on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Refreshments are available at no charge from 2 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. and sessions start at 2:30 p.m. and go until 3:30 p.m.

Cost: No Charge

Location: Marycrest Auditorium, 2nd floor of the Mayo Clinic Hospital Building,
700 West Avenue South, La Crosse

Events are free of charge and anyone is welcome to attend. For more information or to be added to the mailing list please call **Elder Services at 608-392-9505**.

Effective Communication Tips

Alzheimer's disease and other related dementias affects many parts of your brain. Because of this, you may need to explore new ways to communicate with people.

You may experience some of the following changes:

- Problems finding the right words or losing your train of thought
- Repeating words, stories or questions
- Getting words confused or out of order
- Problems understanding what someone is saying to you
- Problems with spelling or writing

Communication is more than talking and listening. Communication is a way of letting people know what you are thinking, feeling or wanting.

Communication is an important part of your relationships with family and friends. If words and sentences become difficult for you, you will want to explore new ways to communicate. Be open and honest with your family and friends about how the disease is affecting you.

Find new ways to communicate:

- Slow down, take your time and don't worry about small facts or details
- Find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed or distracted
- Tell people when you are having difficulty speaking or understanding
- Come back to it later
- Try describing the person, place or thing if you cannot recall a name
- If you use a notebook as a memory aid, carry it with you and refer to it as needed to help you communicate.

It may help to know that:

- The changes you are experiencing are because of the disease
- You will have good days and bad days
- The disease affects each person differently and symptoms will vary
- Trying different ideas will help you find comfortable ways to cope
- Some suggestions may work for you and others may not
- **You are not alone** —over 5 million Americans have Alzheimer's
- People who understand what you are going through can help you and your family

For more information, visit the Alzheimer's Association Training & Education Center at <http://training.alz.org/>

Dementia Education & Memory Cafes

Greater Wisconsin Alzheimer's Association Family & Consumer Education Programs Calendar | July — September 2016

24/7 helpline | 1-800-272-3900

Care consultation is available 24/7 from a master's-level clinician with interpretation in 140 different languages.

Name of Program	Start Date	Start Time	End Time	Location	Room	Address	City
The Basics: Memory Loss, Dementia & Alzheimer's Disease	7/12/16	10:00 AM	11:30 AM	Cabin Coffee 	Meeting Room	401 Jay Street	La Crosse
Know the 10 Signs: Early Detection Matters	7/12/16	1:00 PM	2:30 PM	Cabin Coffee 	Meeting Room	401 Jay Street	La Crosse
Dementia: Effective Communication Strategies	8/23/16	10:00 AM	12:00 PM	Black River Beach Neighborhood Center	Maplewood Room	1433 Rose St	La Crosse
Dementia: Understanding & Responding to Behaviors	8/23/16	1:00 PM	3:00 PM	Black River Beach Neighborhood Center	Maplewood Room	1433 Rose St	La Crosse
Dementia: Caregiver Stress	9/20/16	10:00 AM	11:30 AM	Myrick Park Center	La Crosse Room	789 Myrick Park Drive	La Crosse
Healthy Living for Your Brain & Body	9/20/16	1:00 PM	2:30 PM	Myrick Park Center	La Crosse Room	789 Myrick Park Drive	La Crosse

These programs made possible through a collaboration of efforts by:



New Lunch Bunch Memory Café in Sparta!

When: Fourth Thursday of each Month

Time: 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Location: Jakes Northwood
1132 Angelo Road
Sparta, WI



Topics: Art, music, health and wellness topics will be featured at each café. Details will be announced on monthly invites.

Lunch & beverage provided at a suggested donation of \$4 per person.

If you would like more information, or to be added to our mailing list, contact:
Laura 608-269-8691. **RSVP by the Tuesday prior to the event.**

Lunch Bunch Memory Café | La Crosse

The **Lunch Bunch Memory Café** is a place to meet with others diagnosed with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), Alzheimer's/ dementia and their care partner in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Once a month, this group offers a chance for everyone to have some fun and share a positive experience in a supportive environment. It's a place to talk with others who may be on a very similar journey and to learn, "*You are not alone*".

When: This group meets the last Tuesday of every month

New Extended Time: 11:00am—1:00pm

Location: Black River Beach Neighborhood Center
1433 Rose Street
La Crosse, WI 54603



Lunch & Beverage provided at a suggested donation of \$4 per person

Topics: Art, music, health and wellness topics will be featured at each café. Details will be announced on monthly invites.

Upcoming Dates:

July 26, 2016—"The Art of Communication" by Paul Kaiser

August 30, 2016— Photography with Owen Johnson

September 27, 2016—Oktoberfest Music

RSVP is encouraged. If you would like more information, or to be added to our mailing list, please contact: Amy Brezinka at 608.789.8575 or abrezinka@lacrossecounty.org

Travelled Roads Memory Café | West Salem

When: 2nd Friday of each month

Time: 10am—11:30am

Location: Hazel Brown Leicht Memorial Library
Study Room
201 Neshonoc Rd | West Salem, WI



Coffee & bakery items provided at a suggested donation of \$1 per person.

The **Travelled Roads Memory Café** is a place to meet with others diagnosed with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), Alzheimer's/ dementia and their care partner in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Once a month, this group offers a chance for everyone to have some fun and share a positive experience in a supportive environment. It's a place to talk with others who may be on a very similar journey and to learn, "*You are not alone*".

Topics: Art, music, health and wellness topics will be featured at each café.

Resources: Community resource information will be available each month. The Caregiver Coach will be available to answer questions and visit with Care Partners during the café.

Upcoming Dates:

July 8, 2016

August 12, 2016

RSVP is encouraged. If you would like more information, or to be added to our mailing list, contact Amy Brezinka at 608.789.8575 or abrezinka@lacrossecounty.org

Practice HAPPY Thinking Everyday!



**Aging & Disability Resource Center
of Western Wisconsin**
Health & Human Services Building
300 4th Street North
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601-3228

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Care Partner Connections

July/August 2016



Aging & Disability Resource Center of Western Wisconsin

Amy Brezinka, Program Coordinator

Caregiver Coach Program

608.785.5700

abrezinka@lacrossecounty.org

Website: <http://www.adrcww.org/>

**Caregiver Coach Program &
Lunch Bunch Memory Café Sponsors:**

