



Mar Vista Community Council



AGING IN PLACE

Mar Vista Community Council

Monday, October 17th, 2016

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Windward School Boardroom 1030, Building C (by baseball diamond)

11350 Palms Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90066

[See campus map for room location and parking here](#)

Co-Chairs – Sherri Akers, Tatjana Luethi, Birgitta Kastenbaum

Co-Founders – Sherri Akers, Tatjana Luethi

Draft Minutes

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Attendees – Sherri Akers, Birgitta Kastenbaum, Mohamad Hassan, Marlena Ross, Hosneya Khattab, Mark Ambrose, Robin Dennis, Ann Boehmer, Nathan Horowitz, Mildred Simpson, Ed Gray, Christine Taylor, Carol Hahn, W. Gilbert Clark, Lorraine Wells, Lisa Weinstein, Aaron Baum, Debra Hochman, Jessica Deeb, Sarah Jacobus, Estee Bienstock, Solomon Moore

- **Called to order 6:05**
- **Brief Introductions**
- **September minutes approved**
- **Public comments and announcements:**
 - Upcoming older adults get together with Mike Bonin – details to follow
 - MVCC email server crashed, everyone has been input into the new Mailchimp account
 - Mar Vista Fall Festival will be October 22nd – we need volunteers.
<http://marvistafallfestival.blogspot.com/2016/10/call-for-volunteers.html>
 - Registration is now open for the 16th Annual Caregivers are: Learning More (C.A.L.M.) Conference. <http://fcscgero.org/16th-annual-caregivers-are-learning-more-calm-conference/>
 - Herb Wesson letter on regulating format for marijuana – info to follow re outreach meetings – see letter here - <http://nwsanpedro.org/2016/10/wesson-letter-on-marijuana-regulatory-framework/>
- **Recap - LA Purposeful Aging Workshop at Empower Congress of Neighborhoods and appointment of Sherri Akers on working group to represent CD11 for Purposeful Aging LA initiative. Will have guest presenter on this in February.**
- **New business –**

- Lisa Weinstein shared about the [Music Mends Minds](#) inter-generational band/choir comprised of seniors with neuro degenerative conditions (Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and Dementia in the early stages) and Windward students. The band gets together twice per week for rehearsals and they generally have two performances per year. The Holiday performance is scheduled for Dec 3. They meet on Mondays at the Brentwood Presbyterian Church and Wednesdays at Windward School from 2:30-4:00pm in the Music Room (400). Everyone is welcome to come check it out anytime. Feel free to contact her for more info - lweinstein@windwardschool.org

Guest presenter – Carol Hahn, MSN, RN “Tools to Support the Journey of a Loved One With Dementia”.

Carol is a Wellness and Fitness Nurse. In addition to her vast experience in nursing, Carol is also a Registered Yoga Teacher, Certified Personal Trainer, and a Certified Dementia Practitioner. Carol is the Education Consultant at [OPICA Adult Day Care Program & Counseling Center](#). OPICA has been serving adults challenged with memory loss and their families in the West Los Angeles area for more than 35 years. For more information – 310-478-0226 or <http://www.opica.org/>

“Tools to Support the Journey of a Loved One with Dementia”

Presentation objective is to be able to

- Define dementia
- List 3 ways to enhance communication with a person with dementia
- Discuss 4 ways to decrease challenging behaviors that often occur in a person with dementia

We experience *normal* sensory and other changes as we age –

- Eyesight changes
- Auditory reaction time increases
- Decreased sense of smell
- Reduction in touch sensation
- Personality - Basic personality remains the same
- Rigidity more related to physical and mental limitations
- Memory for past events is better than recall of more current information
- Basic intelligence remains same
- Learning - May demonstrate less readiness to learn, depend more on previous learning experiences rather than experimenting with new problem solving techniques

Normal brain aging – these maintain or get better –

- Intelligence
- Ability to learn
- Working memory
- Vocabulary
- Musical and artistic memory

Normal brain aging – *these maintain or get worse* –

- Processing & recalling information
- Finding the right word
- Visual & auditory perception
- Multi-tasking
- The physical processing of medications

Dementia is NOT a normal aging process

Typical *age* related changes –

- Miss a monthly payment
- Lose things from time to time
- Make a bad decision once in a while
- Sometimes forgetting a word
- Forget the day but remember it later

Possible causes of memory loss

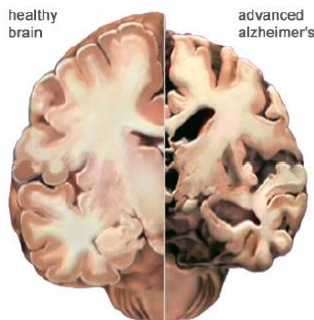
- Many factors can cause memory loss and some are reversible
- Some are more serious – it's important to get a full medical evaluation

Dementia is an umbrella term for conditions that cause loss of memory and other intellectual abilities serious enough to interfere with daily life. These are some of the conditions it covers

- There are reversible dementias (example – related to a UTI or medication)
- Alzheimer's disease – this represents 70% of all cases
- Vascular dementia
- Frontotemporal dementia
- Lewy body dementia

Changes in the brain with Alzheimer's –

Brain Changes with Alzheimer's



10 warning signs of dementia

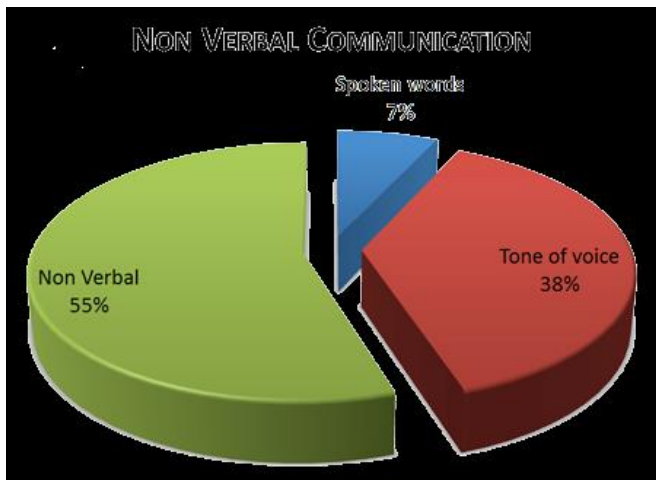
- Memory changes that disrupt daily life
- Challenges in planning or solving problems
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, work or leisure
- Confusion with time or place
- Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships
- New problems with words in speaking or writing
- Misplacing things and losing ability to retrace steps
- Decreased or poor judgment
- Withdrawal from work or social activities
- Changes in mood and personality

Basic communication - only occurs if the receiver understands exact information or idea that sender intended to transmit

Normal age changes that may interfere with communication –

- Loss of hearing or sight greatly impacts ability to communicate
- Especially affects intake of information
- Affects communication whether or not we have dementia

7% of a message comes from what we say – the rest comes from our body language – pitch, tone, facial expressions, eye contact and gestures.



Changes in the brain change how people communicate. Here are some communications in people with dementia –

- Rate of communication change is unpredictable
- Loss varies from one person to another
- Loss can vary from one day to the next
- Challenging for persons with dementia to understand others/express themselves clearly
- Communication difficulties can be very stressful
- Self-esteem may suffer. May withdraw

Tips for successful communication with someone who has dementia –

- Ability to communicate may decline, but feelings and emotions do not
- May be challenging, but decreased verbal communication does not mean decreased awareness
- Behaviors are a way of communicating
- Assess for unmet needs and behavioral changes

DON'T

- Reason
- Argue
- Confront
- Remind them they forget
- Question recent memory
- Take it personally

DO

- Give short, one sentence explanations
- Allow plenty of time for person to understand
- Repeat instructions or sentences the same way
- Avoid insistence. Try again later
- Agree with them or distract them to different subject or activity
- Live in their world



Non-verbal communication tips

- Approach the person from the front
- Establish and maintain eye contact when speaking
- Speak at eye level when possible
- Watch your own mood
- Use gentle touch to calm or reassure
- Speak slowly and distinctly
-



Types of challenging behaviors – We need to figure out what is wrong or what is needed, based on the way the person is acting and thinking

Repetitive Behaviors

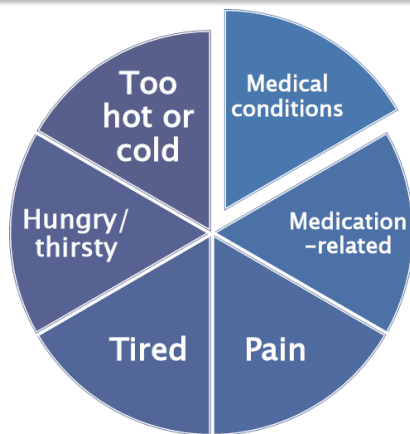
- Depression
- Wandering
- Agitation and Anxiety
- Aggressive Behaviors
- Paranoia, Hallucinations, Delusions
- Sleep Problems

Understand the Causes/Triggers

What is **causing** this behavior?



Understand Health/Physical Triggers



Understand the effect of the environment

- Change in environment and/or routine
- Clutter/crowding
- Noise
- Temperature
- Distractions
- Lighting
- Unfamiliar

Emotional memory - Not all memory is created equal

- Emotional events are better recalled than neutral events
- Negative events > Positive events > Neutral events
- Don't confront the person – may seem negative
- Try to make interactions positive ones

“Those with dementia are still people
and they still have stories and they
still have character and they are
all individuals and they are all unique.
And they just need to be interacted
with on a human level.”

- Carey Mulligan

alzheimers.net

Carol Hahn, MSN, RN, CPT, RYT, CDP
Wellness and Fitness Nurse
CarolHahnRN@earthlink.net

310-612-9

Additional points made in discussion –

The term dementia has negative connotations that can feel hurtful to the person who has it.

The importance of creating a dementia friendly community will be part of the work in Purposeful Aging LA.

Repetitive questions or stories – assess if it is really a problem – can you use a diversion to distract them? Can you find a way to change your own attitude so it is less bothersome?

Old Business – none covered

- Future guest presentations – room 1030 in Building C (by the baseball diamond) will be our ongoing location.
 - a. **November – NOTE THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD WEDNESDAY 11/16 DUE TO SPECIAL EVENT AT WINDWARD.** “The Gift of a Downsized Home.” Guest presenter Robin Gurse Dennis of *Got Clutter?* guides you in how to have “the downsizing conversation” with your favorite senior. Robin addresses the impact on family members faced with years of physical possessions, suggests ways to prepare for the conversation, and provides an action plan you can personalize for your specific needs.
 - b. **December** – Mandi Carpenter – When is Assisted Living a good choice? How do you assess them?
 - c. **January** - Emilia Crotty with LA Walks - Safe Routes for Seniors program and campaign, part of the Vision Zero Alliance ([Facebook](#) and [website](#)).

- d. **February** – Adriana Mendoza – AARP Livable Cities
- e. **Film screening and panel discussion?** We could use Windward 2nd floor CTL room which can fit about 130 people comfortably. Attendees prefer this be planned as separate event, not in place of monthly speaker meeting

- **Public comments - none**
- **Meeting adjourned at 7:40**

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