



May 2011

Being in the “Moment” - Dementia’s Lesson

Our minds are always multi-tasking even when we think we are focusing on the task at hand. Unless we become very conscious of our thinking and are trained in or practice meditation, it is very hard to truly be in the “moment”.

Having been the Director of the first San Francisco / East Bay respite program for those with Alzheimer’s dementia in the mid 1980’s, I learned something that I had not thought of for some time - being in the moment can be freeing and enlightening. Those clients with dementia didn’t have a past or a future; they were truly in the moment and could relish all the enrichment I could pack in those three to four hours. Their families would tell me that they didn’t remember what we did but they would come home singing or just with calmness that they didn’t have on the days they didn’t come to the center. What a gift those participants gave me – the true power of “NOW”.

A few years later Eckhart Tolle wrote a book called, “The Power of Now” and I recall that reading it was a struggle for me. I had to re-read many of this profound teacher’s wisdom to get the true power of the “moment”, similar to what was so simply conveyed to me by the participants with dementia in my program.

I bought my mother an Amaryllis for Christmas; she didn’t start to



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water and watch its amazing growth until after her stroke and move to Assisted Living. One day while I was at work – busy in a very important meeting - Mom called and interrupted me to tell me she now had eight blooms and they were stunning. She had nothing else to share and no real needs, she just wanted to share with me the “moment”. I could not help smiling all day thinking about her enjoying the beauty around her not burdened with all the “have to do’s” or “want to do’s” of life.

What I have noticed with Mom since her stroke is that when I am driving her anywhere she is focused on the hills, the horses, the trees and their blossoms and she is just so much more connected to the world around her in that “moment” of time. Tomorrow she won’t remember those horses with blankets on them as they munched on the lush hillside. But, what she seems to have is an incredible peace. Could we all learn from her and those participants of mine from so many years ago? Could we just focus for 10 minutes a day on the moment and the beauty that

surrounds us? Could we not allow our busy minds to distract us from the real peace that can sometimes only be found in being still and focusing on nature?

Many of you might participate in the practice of Yoga or other forms of meditation or prayer – but the key is to quiet your mind and focus on your breath or a word. As we move through spring, Earth Day, Passover and Easter, we just might add one more ritual to our lives with “10 minutes of Now” every day!

As Professional Geriatric Care Managers, it is our goal to enhance the quality of life and we strive to write into every plan of care opportunities for our clients to be in the “moment” and to give everyone in the family peace of mind.



Mom’s Amaryllis

Eldercare Services provides Counseling, Support Groups, Home Care, and Care Management to aid Family Caregivers. If you or someone you know could benefit from self-care, give us a call at (866) 760-1808 or email us at Info@EldercareAnswers.com.

Eldercare Services works with Seniors and their families in Walnut Creek, Alameda County, San Francisco and the Tri-Valley, CA. Visit us on the web at <http://www.EldercareAnswers.com> for more information.

Community Classes

Walnut Creek

Families Dealing with Dementia

3rd Friday of every month from 10 AM to Noon

1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595

Class Registration: Please call at least 3 days ahead

For more information regarding classes and support groups, visit us at www.EldercareAnswers.com or call (925) 937-2018, (415) 469-8300 or email us at info@EldercareAnswers.com

Support Groups

When concerns for aging family members are part of every day life, or when they interfere with work, your health or other relationships, you need to join a support group.

Caring for An Aging Family Member

2nd Thursday of every month from 7 to 8:30 PM

1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595

1st Tuesday of every month from 6 to 7:30 PM

605 A Chenery St., San Francisco, CA 94131

Cost for Support Groups: None

Support Group Registration: Not required



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Services*
Advocacy, Care, and Education

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