

Eldercare Answers

February 2010



Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC, is the Founder and Executive Director of Eldercare Services and is a Fellow and President Elect of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers.

The month of love is upon us! Valentine's Day gets us thinking about the heart on many levels. February is the "Heart Healthy" month. However, the heart of love and the heart of health are different, but equally important. The heart of love keeps us wanting to be engaged in life, the heart of health keeps us alive!

It is my opinion that we need to be healthy in both in order to have meaningful lives. Falling in love is very exciting and can also change cognition and normal functioning. One may have his or her "head in the clouds" and can be forgetful, not wanting to eat or do other normal tasks, but want only to be with the other – almost obsessed. After that initial time, there comes a more comfortable love of being with someone who accepts you for all your shortcomings as well as your strengths. In this second stage of love, you get back to a more normal life rhythm and pattern with your partner to share the good and difficult times.

In some lives the love of the heart can be focused on a pet or a

Heart Health: What is most important to you?

passion such as a hobby. This type of love feels good but, I feel, can't replace the value of human to human love. I believe we were meant to be in a relationship. This relationship doesn't have to be a romantic relationship, but can be a good friendship. When we are not, we then move into a place of emptiness that can, and in fact will, affect our "heart health". As we age and lose partners, we still need to connect to family and/or friends in a way that we can truly say, "I love that person". Staying engaged and having an object of love is as important to our health as exercise or diet.

Heart health can be easy with discipline. This means maintaining a healthy weight, eating wisely, drinking alcohol in moderation and exercising as often as we can. It requires regular check ups for blood lipids, blood pressure, and heart rate. It also means keeping stress and anxiety to a minimum. This is a challenge in today's world, but learning to meditate, pray or just breathe when under stress will help you have a healthy heart. Some individuals have genetic cardiac conditions or had unhealthy life styles resulting in

cardiac dysfunction. The good news is, thanks to research and caring wise cardiologists, that with new medications and a change in life style, many individuals will still have normal life spans.

The bottom line to this is: Stay healthy, stay in love and if you have a genetic package that didn't give you the best "cardiac genes", you can still have some control over staying healthy with good medical care and the right attitude of staying engaged and positive. Love and laugh often!

Eldercare Services' Caregivers and Care Managers can provide companionship, support and creative activities and solutions to keep seniors engaged. For more information give us a call!

Heart Health

Check List

1. Stay engaged with hobbies and relationships.
2. Maintain a healthy weight and diet.
3. Exercise, get regular check ups and manage anxiety.
4. Consult a Care Manager for engaging companionship and activity plans.



How do you want your newsletter?

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter by email to conserve paper please send an email to Beryla@EldercareAnswers.com



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Eldercare Services has offices in Marin, Oakland, San Francisco and Walnut Creek, CA. Visit us on the web at <http://www.EldercareAnswers.com> for more information.

info@EldercareAnswers.com

For more information regarding classes and support groups, please call (925) 937-2018, (415) 469-8300 or email us at

Class Registration: Please call at least 3 days ahead

Thursday, April 22, 2010 from 10 AM to Noon

Families Dealing with Dementia

Friday, March 26, 2010 from 10 AM to Noon

Families Dealing with Dementia

Friday, March 12, 2010 from 9 AM to 1 PM

Caring For An Aging Family Member

Tuesday, February 9, 2010 from 6 to 8 PM

Dementia – Middle of the Road

Walnut Creek

Community Classes

Support Group Registration: Not required

Cost for Support Groups: None

605 A Cheney St., San Francisco, CA 94131
1st Tuesday of every month from 6 to 7:30 PM

1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595
2nd Thursday of every month from 7 to 8:30 PM

Caring for An Aging Family Member

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.

Support Groups