

## *Selling Mom's "Home"... or is it just a "House"?*

"Wow, I love this home; I had my 6th birthday party here with all the kids from my first grade class", "The tooth fairy found her way to me in this house many times", "My husband proposed to me under the Christmas tree in the living room." Houses are the "homes" of many shared memories.

I was interviewed recently for an NPR (National Public Radio) story on the issue of selling an aging parent's or grandparent's home. The interview focused on how to do it, when to do it, should you do it, what to do with the proceeds (if the parent is still alive) as well as the emotional toll it takes on parents and adult children. In the process of the interview, I began to think about "House vs. Home."

If you are selling a house – it is a "thing". If you are selling a home it becomes much more – it often feels like you are selling the family history. "Home" is a noun like house is but it is packed with all sorts of emotional memories, good and, sometimes, not so good.

I heard a story from a client that her neighbor moved her mom to assisted living and could not bring herself to sell or even rent the home for 7 years. The home sat vacant. This can be a challenge because grief is also involved in this process.

Often, due to compromised



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

cognition from a progressive illness like Alzheimer's, the home is no longer a safe environment. If families don't have the resources for 24/7 care in the home, it becomes necessary to move Mom. I recommend you first to talk with a Geriatric Care Manager, to see if there are resources and/or other options to consider before making this challenging decision.

It's important to make decisions based on knowing the pros and cons of all the choices and benefits available to ourselves or our parents. It also helps to have a conversation long before it is necessary with a question like, "Mom, if you couldn't live in this house for any reason, what would you like us to do with it?"

If you have siblings, you might want to have a family meeting to discuss the options of how you can best meet the needs of your parent. After you have come to this decision, it is always good to meet with your Elder Law Attorney, Certified Financial Planner and Accountant to rule out tax issues and potential

problems in qualifying for entitlements before the sale takes place.

For parents with cognitive impairments, you want to be sure you have the legal authority to sell a home. Depending on the wording of a trust document, you just might have some tasks to do before listing that "home" which has now become a house for sale.

The biggest mistake families make is trying to make this decision without expert advice. One hour with a Professional Geriatric Care Manager could save you thousands of dollars, not to mention time and energy. And you'll know that you have looked at the possibilities that a professional in this field will know about. Even if you think you have dotted all those "i's" and crossed the "t's", making this move can be filled with emotional grief and a good counselor will help you make the choices you need based on values, needs and reality.

Give us a call for a copy of a short checklist on "Selling Mom's Home".

**For a copy of the checklist on "Selling Mom's Home," please email [Info@EldercareAnswers.com](mailto:Info@EldercareAnswers.com) or call Lindsay Freeman, Client Services Intake Coordinator, at (866) 760-1808.**



Eldercare Services works with Seniors and their families in Walnut Creek, Alameda County, San Francisco, Marin County and the Tri-Valley, CA.

Visit us on the web at [www.EldercareAnswers.com](http://www.EldercareAnswers.com) for more information.

## Community Classes

### Walnut Creek

### What You Wanted to Know About Dementia But Were Afraid to Ask

3rd Friday of every month from 10 AM to Noon

1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595

Cost for Classes: None

### Class Registration:

Please call at least 3 days ahead

For more information regarding classes and support groups, visit us at [www.EldercareAnswers.com](http://www.EldercareAnswers.com) or call (925) 937-2018 or email us at [Info@EldercareAnswers.com](mailto: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

More Info: (925) 937-2018 or (415) 469-8300



Eldercare  
Services  
Advocacy, Care, and Education

**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](mailto:Info@EldercareAnswers.com).**