



**Eldercare  
Services**

EXPERTISE MATTERS

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# November 2014

## NEWSLETTER

### ABOUT OUR FOUNDER

Linda is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She has been a Professional Care Manager since 1984 and in 1989, she founded Eldercare Services in Walnut Creek, California. Now a full-service care management company that employs highly-skilled Professional Certified Care Managers and over 250 employees. Eldercare Services has been providing San Francisco Bay Area families with Care Management, Home Care Service, advocacy, counseling, support groups and education for over 25 years.

*Linda Fodrini-Johnson*  
MA, MFT, CMC  
Founder &  
Executive Director



## Turning Resistance into Cooperation

As the holidays approach and our aging family members come to town or we go for our visits, I would like to offer a few tips on communication to help turn resistance into cooperation.

I'm sure the title caught your eye as you were thinking of your teenage child, your spouse or maybe an aging family member with dementia.

As you thought of your aging family member, your second thought may have been, "That can't be done!" I want to remind you of the ways you found by trial and error to get your toddler to cooperate – including giving them acceptable choices. This is one of my Eight Steps to Avoiding Resistance with an Aging Family Member; read on for more.

1. For best results with a loved one with dementia, offer choices, but not too many. With a toddler you asked, "Do you want to wear your yellow or blue jacket?" But not, "Do you want to wear a jacket?" With an elder who might have a dementia, you could ask, "Would you like apple juice or water?" Do not ask if he or she wants a drink (especially when hydration is an issue).
2. The key to cooperation is how you communicate. I try to be respectful and not "bossy." The family member who comes across as bossy is often met with resistance and sometimes anger. We must remember to speak clearly and slowly and not be in a hurry. Leave yourself plenty of time to get the task accomplished. If your request increases agitation, leave and come back later. However, we need to be aware that individuals with a dementia might have trouble understanding language or finding the right words. When this happens, visual cues may help.
3. The best time to introduce the event for which you need cooperation is when someone is in a good mood. Use creative ways to entice and add the action you believe is needed. When you want Mom to brush her teeth, and she resists– it might be the time to bring flowers or a new picture into the bathroom and tell her you want her opinion on it. While there, you put the toothpaste on the brush and say, "While we're in here, let's brush our teeth, so we don't have to do it later."

Those with dementias often resist any new social situation. Even those who are socially appropriate in a new setting may fear they will make a mistake or not remember someone they should. They avoid this by just declining invitations. Fear of failure keeps many individuals from going to classes or senior center activities. In actuality, the day care programs designed for those with special needs or dementia have creative programming and techniques to prevent individuals feeling like they failed.

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If you want a person to attend a day care program – taking them to the program could be introduced as a “new place for lunch”. You can also go and enjoy the day. Often, the first experience will only last two to four hours. Most of the time, if you ask if they want to go, the answer will be “no.” However, after four to six visits, they become comfortable with the predictable, non-frustrating program and come to “enjoy the moment,” giving family caregivers a well-deserved break. It is all in the approach. Sometimes, providing what the person needs or wants – help with their memory or help recovering from a stroke – makes them more willing to go.

Occasionally, resistance happens because we are asking too much of the individual, and we need to back away from things they could do a few weeks ago and find replacements for those activities.

One area I found that overwhelms many individuals is when they are served full plates of food or given a tray with multiple dishes and many utensils. This results in confusion and refusal to eat causing great concern to the family or retirement community. So, to get cooperation for those who start to resist eating – serve small portions, one at a time, and give only the utensil that is needed to eat that food.

**As you can see from the examples in this newsletter, creativity, respecting dignity and not asking individuals to do what they can no longer do produces ease and cooperation. If you would like a complete list of the Eight Steps to Avoiding Resistance with an Aging Family Member, please call our Client Services Representative, Lindsay Freeman, at (925) 937-2018 or email her at [LindsayF@EldercareAnswers.com](mailto:LindsayF@EldercareAnswers.com).**

If all your creative approaches fail, ask an in-law to try for cooperation. Research shows that in-laws have much more influence in getting cooperation than adult children. Also, we professionals can get a “yes” from a parent where you have been getting resistance – just because we are not the “child”!

Professional Care Managers help families find creative ways to get cooperation. If you’re stuck with a resistance, give us a call and/or attend one of our classes to help you gain some new tools to ease your path as a family caregiver.



### **Caring for an Aging Family Member – Monthly Support Group**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2014**

**5:30 PM – 7:15 PM**

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

No Fee. Advanced registration required.

*Class intended for family caregivers or those dealing with the challenges of aging.*

### **Free Memory Screenings - National Memory Screening Day**

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2014**

**10:00 AM – 2:00 PM**

#### **Concerned About Memory Problems?**

Free, confidential memory screening with qualified professionals.

*No Fee. Advanced registration required.*

Location:

### **ELDERCARE SERVICES**

1808 Tice Valley Blvd.

Walnut Creek, CA 94596

To register for classes, call:

**866.760.1808**

or email:

**[info@eldercareanswers.com](mailto:info@eldercareanswers.com)**