



**Eldercare  
Services**

EXPERTISE MATTERS

Accredited by The Joint Commission



# March 2015

## NEWSLETTER

### ABOUT OUR FOUNDER

Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC, is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She became a Professional Care Manager in 1984. Linda founded Eldercare Services, a full-service care management and home care company that now employs over 200 caring people. Eldercare Services has been providing Bay Area families with care management, home care services, advocacy, counseling, support groups and education since 1989.

*"May you gather the tools you need to have the last journey unfold as directed by you and not others."*

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



## Planning for the End of Life: Who Would Want to Do That?

There is a lot of planning around birth and the welcoming of new little people into our world... but the other end of the life equation is little talked about. "Why?" we ask. Well, it isn't fun to think about not being part of the life we love and the lives of those who have touched our souls with joy and laughter and may continue to do so. Then there is the fact that death is just not talked about much in our society, as it isn't in many other cultures as well.

Whatever your belief is in the afterlife, it still means planning for the journey before you get to whatever your belief is. If you plan to sit on a cloud and laugh at the bad golfers, or to be surrounded by the saints, or just see your earthly body being recycled in the elements – you still need to do some thinking before that day comes.

"What thinking?" you ask. If you talk to any Estate or Elder Law attorney, he or she will tell you that a lot can happen between the active life you now enjoy and your final departure. That is why these key professionals are part of our planning team for the whole of life and the "after life" even though few would refer to themselves as spiritual leaders.

**Seven questions you need to ponder** and take action on – because death doesn't come swiftly in most cases – it is a process that can take years, depending on the diagnosis and your DNA.

1. We need to plan for disability - 50% of us over 80 need help with two of the activities of daily living. *Who will help us? What will it cost to cover my care needs? What are my options along this path? Does someone know what I want? Do you want to stay in your home or move to retirement living?*
2. *What if I develop a dementia, such as Alzheimer's disease? (50% of those over 85 do have dementia.) Who will oversee my care? Did I write down my wishes if this happens to me? Does my decision maker really know what is important to me? For me, I need a big yard and pets!*
3. *If you have strong convictions to wanting every medical intervention available or not wanting any extra ordinary measures (spell out what extra ordinary means to you), do you have the right medical and legal tools to carry out your wishes based on your values?*

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4. Do all of your legal tools, Trusts, Advanced Directives, Durable Power of Attorney for Health and Finances still reflect your "today" values? These instruments can be changed – we change our minds and that is fine. Just remember to review your legal documents once a year.

5. Have you completed a POLST form (Physicians Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment)? This form allows you, with the advice of your doctor, to choose the type of medical interventions that support your values and ensure they are respected in a life or death crisis. We are happy at any time to have you pick up a packet with POLST information and forms in our office.

6. Have you had a discussion with your family and/or decision makers about your wishes? Do they know they can use a Professional Care Manager to help them with the decision making process and help them with the grief and stress that can come with making hard decisions?

7. Have you discussed where you want to be buried or cremated and what that will entail? Do they know your religious preference and that the process and timing of a burial are often dictated by a religious practice? Have you prepaid for burial – who knows where the paperwork is?

This is a serious subject that is often overlooked. But, I promise you, if you do this planning now – it frees you from an underlying worry; and it is quite a blessing to those who have to attend to details years from now – especially when they are feeling the pain of loss.

**"Be Prepared" is the Boy Scout motto. They say the two things we can't avoid are taxes and death... and some avoid taxes, but no one has avoided death.**

The Licensed Mental Health Professionals and Professional Care Managers of Eldercare Services are here for you when you are struggling with these issues. We understand that it is a hard conversation to have with ourselves, let alone with your adult children. We also have a wonderful Home Care Team who is sensitive to the needs of those nearing the end of life.

We can be the hands-on care, so you can be the emotional giver of love when a loved one is nearing the end of this journey we call life. Call us – we are here with heart and soul, 24/7.



### Dementia Road Map: From Diagnosis to Family Care

**THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2015**  
**5:30 PM – 7:00 PM**

- What is dementia? Where is it diagnosed?
- Understanding the progression
- What does a Family need to do to prepare for the journey?
- Protecting Dignity and Reducing Stress in all family members

No Fee. Advanced registration required.

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

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)

### Dementia: Families at a Crossroad between Safety & Respect

**THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2015**  
**5:30 PM – 7:00 PM**

- Tools on how to have conversations about needs when denial is present
- Giving you permission to "stretch the truth" for dignity, safety & self-esteem
- Understanding the different types of dementia

No Fee. Advanced registration required.

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