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# Newsletter

THIS MONTH

February 2019

## Love Is Not Always Easy!

February is the month of love. I am going to give you some tips to keep love the focus throughout your entire life and not let the challenges of aging get in the way, keeping in mind that love is the most important factor in the lives of millions of people everywhere. When I ask new clients what gives their life meaning and value, it is usually the love of a family member or partner. I think that love is important to keep at the center of any challenges that life might put in your way. Think of older couples making the hard decision to sell their home of fifty years and move into a retirement community. It means that they have to discard many of the treasures that they have collected, all with meaning and memories. However, if you keep the focus on “what do we need now?” and “what is most important?”, the letting go will be just a little easier.

You committed to love in “sickness and in health” many years ago, not thinking that that “sickness” didn’t just mean a sore throat or a broken leg. In the aging process, it can become total dependency, brought on by a progressive illness like Parkinson’s or Alzheimer’s disease to one or both partners. Or maybe the burdens of living with diabetes or pulmonary illnesses for you or your partner have taken over as a central theme to your daily living.

The goal is not to let that aging or health-related diagnosis get in the way of your relationship. The goal then becomes making sure that there is always a priority for joy and fun, balancing joy with the extra care time it takes to manage some of these age-related challenges.

I recently met with a couple who had just moved into an assisted living community. They were talking about how to arrange the furniture and the supportive medical equipment. What was most important was not how the room looked, but where they could have their two easy chairs side by side, so they could hold hands while watching television – that is love.

### About our Founder



Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She has been practicing professional care management (now

called aging life care) since 1984. Linda founded Eldercare Services, a full-service care management and home care company in 1989, which now employs over 200 caring people. Eldercare Services has been providing Bay Area families with care management, home care services (caregiving), advocacy, counseling, support groups and education for 30 years.

## MONTHLY AFFIRMATION

“I express and receive love every day of my life”

CONTINUED ➔

## Tips for keeping love in your day:

- ▶ Start and end every day with “I love you!”
- ▶ Sexual activity and touch are important to human health; it improves the immune system, reduces the risk of prostate cancer, contributes to better cardiac health, and more. If medication or functional ability is an issue for you, talk to your medical or mental health providers for ideas. Those deprived of physical touch are often more sickly. ([www.verywellhealth.com/sex-aging-and-longevity-2223894](http://www.verywellhealth.com/sex-aging-and-longevity-2223894))
- ▶ If you have to provide care for your partner, find time every day for just “you time”; a walk with a friend, time alone in the garden, go to a movie, play a round of golf, go for a swim, etc. Never give up all that you enjoy just because your love pulls you to care 24/7. If you do, you will not have the joy or energy to give your partner what is needed and your own health will suffer. Unfortunately, it is often the well spouse/partner who is the first to pass away because of this problem. Join a support group to keep yourself in check. We offer a group once a month; it is free and might be just what you need so you can “self-care” without guilt.
- ▶ If the “stuff” in your life prevents you from getting the level of support you need, or the social interaction that actually attributes to good health, it might be time to bring in a professional counselor/care manager to work with the two of you in making a challenging decision to move to supportive living. That would mean moving with what you value most for the best quality of life, letting go of the “stuff” and focusing on the important aspects of the here and now.

This journey we call life is a roller coaster with joys and challenges, but of all our experiences, the gift of love is most precious and needs to be nurtured and never taken for granted. Happy Valentine’s Day!

### Caring for an Aging Family Member

**2nd THURSDAY of EVERY MONTH**  
**6:00 PM – 7:30 PM**

Addressing the fears of Alzheimer’s disease & other issues associated with aging.

No Fee and No Registration Required.



## Upcoming Events

### Caregiver Survival 101: Caring For Someone With Dementia - Reducing Your Stress

Feb 13<sup>th</sup> 5:30pm – 7:00pm

Riding the roller coaster of dementia care? If the emotional ups, downs, & loop-di-loops are making your head spin, our Caregiver Survival series is for you!

- ▶ The major challenges of dementia care
- ▶ Responses and reactions to reduce your stress
- ▶ Self-care activities and mini-support group
- ▶ Resources for coaching and support

Advanced registration required. No fee.

Class intended for family caregivers or those dealing with the challenges of aging. <https://eldercareanswers.com/registration-4/>

### Hearing Better

Feb 15<sup>th</sup> 2:00pm – 3:30pm

**Presented by:** Mark Sanford, M.S., CCC-A

Understanding the way you live, your personal hearing needs, and the better-hearing goals you have for yourself helps craft a more personalized and comprehensive hearing solution.

- ▶ Learn about the signs of hearing loss and how to protect your hearing.
- ▶ Even mild hearing loss can seriously disrupt how we interact and connect with others.
- ▶ Hearing your best means having the right technology that can help you better communicate. Find out about new advances in technology.

Advanced registration required. No fee.  
<https://eldercareanswers.com/registration-5/>

### Location of Events:

Eldercare Services, 1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595

