



Winter 2023

# CARE NEWS

Monthly Newsletter of Care in Midstream

## Keeping in touch

We are nearly halfway through 2023, and the last few months have been a roller coaster ride for many people. We encourage you to look for the proverbial silver linings in the clouds this winter, to spread kindness and joy wherever you go, to share smiles with those around you, to celebrate the small victories, and above all, to give hope to those who struggle to see the sun rays through the clouds.

South Africa celebrates Father's Day on the 18th of June. If you are blessed to have a father figure in your life, celebrate this special day with them. Life is fragile, and we don't know what tomorrow holds.

If you have a cold or flu, please limit contact with seniors who are very susceptible to infections during the colder months. Please wear a mask, wash your hands regularly, and visit the doctor if you have a fever or other persistent symptoms. Let's all do our best to stay healthy this winter.

Best regards,  
The Care in Midstream Team

**"Never underestimate the power of love, passion and persistence. Fueled by my love for my late husband and my daughter, life has taught me that even in the most challenging times, each of us holds the key to make change happen."**

- Linda Reinstein



**Senior citizens understand learning never stops.**

## Silent, Strong Dad

Karen K. Boyer

He never looks for praises.  
He's never one to boast.  
He just goes on quietly working  
For those he loves the most.  
His dreams are seldom spoken.  
His wants are very few,  
And most of the time his worries  
Will go unspoken, too.  
He's there...a firm foundation  
Through all our storms of life,  
A sturdy hand to hold onto  
In times of stress and strife.  
A true friend we can turn to  
When times are good or bad.  
One of our greatest blessings,  
The man that we call Dad.

The little things in life create the biggest smiles.

Be happy! Not because everything is good, but because you can see the good side of everything. You can be as happy as you allow yourself to be. Happiness is not by chance, but by choice. [idlehearts.com](http://idlehearts.com)

We would love to hear from you. If you have any feedback or news that you would like to share, please contact us at [marketing@careinmidstream.co.za](mailto:marketing@careinmidstream.co.za)

## Top Dogs

A visit from Top Dogs is always a special occasion at Care in Midstream. Our residents love interacting with the beautiful dogs as part of the animal assisted therapy visits.



## Mother's Day

Curro Thatchfield's choir entertained our residents with a special Mother's Day performance. Each resident also received a little gift. Our seniors loved interacting with the youngsters.



**Almerie Kirsten-Smith**

Passionate about people, plants and teeth!

"Compassion brings us to a stop, and for a moment we rise above ourselves."

– Mason Cooley

**Prime Dental SA** in partnership with Dr Anke Graupner, had the wonderful privilege to visit Care in Midstream today to assist the amazing staff in oral health education in aiding the elderly and the frail.

The work done at this beautiful facility by these caring people are beyond measure!

**#caringforourcommunity**

**Fittydent International Care in Midstream**

## Education and Training



♡  
SPREAD LOVE  
EVERYWHERE YOU GO  
LET NO ONE EVER COME  
TO YOU WITHOUT  
LEAVING HAPPIER

- MOTHER TERESA





# The Health Benefits of Laughter for Seniors

**As it turns out, laughter really might be the best medicine. When we laugh, our spirits are lifted, our hearts are happy, and we feel good. For seniors, laughing has an even more significant impact – it provides various age-related health benefits.**

## **Reduces Stress, Anxiety & Depression**

That good feeling we get when we laugh stays with us even after the laughter subsides. It relaxes the entire body, releasing physical muscle tension for up to 45 minutes. Laughing also increases our dopamine levels, which helps to reduce stress, anxiety and depression naturally.

## **Boosts the Immune System**

Laughter increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, such as T-cells and salivary immunoglobulin A, giving our ageing and often compromised immune systems an added boost. As a result, seniors get the combined benefit of improved resistance to disease and the ability to fight infections faster.

## **Eases Pain & Inflammation**

Laughter releases endorphins, natural feel-good substances that help us feel happy and have been proven to lessen the perception of physical pain for up to two hours. In addition, laughter reduces levels of the stress hormone cortisol, which minimises pain and inflammation throughout the body.

## **Improves Memory Function**

When the brain experiences high levels of stress and cortisol, it has difficulty healing itself and making room for new memories. Because laughter reduces stress, it can help improve memory function.

## **Lowers Blood Pressure**

Seniors face an increased risk of high blood pressure and heart attacks, but laughter can help prevent both. In addition, by improving blood circulation and oxygenation, laughing can positively affect seniors with high cholesterol or heart disease.

## **Provides a Workout**

Ever noticed your sides ache after a good laugh? While it may not seem like exercise, laughter provides a workout for your whole body, especially your abdominal muscles and diaphragm. In addition, for seniors with asthma, bronchitis or COPD, laughing can help improve respiratory health.



## How Can Seniors Laugh More?

As children, laughter is part of our daily lives, but we find fewer opportunities to laugh as we age. While this can be attributed to the additional pressures of life for seniors, it may also be related to isolation. Since laughter is contagious and often associated with togetherness and community, seniors who live alone or cannot get out and socialise, may be laughter deficient. If you care for a loved one who may be missing that levity in their life, tell them a funny story or share a joke, or watch a humour-filled TV show or movie with them.

*“Life is worth living as long as there's a laugh in it.” - Lucy Maud Montgomery*

Care in Midstream provides the following services:

Assisted Living | Frail Care | Dementia & Alzheimer's Care | End of Life & Palliative Care  
Short Term Care | Home-based Nursing Services



# Helping Family and Friends Understand Alzheimer's Disease

**When you learn that someone has Alzheimer's disease, you may wonder when and how to tell your family and friends. By sharing what is happening, family and friends can help support you and the person with Alzheimer's disease.**

There's no single right way to tell others about Alzheimer's disease. When the time seems right, be honest with family, friends, and others. Use this as a chance to educate them about Alzheimer's.

You can:

- Tell friends and family about Alzheimer's disease and how it affects memory, thinking, and behaviour.
- Share articles, websites, and other information about the disease.
- Tell them what they can do to help, such as calling the person with Alzheimer's disease, providing meals, or helping with home repairs or safety modifications.

## Tips for communicating:

You can help family and friends understand how to interact with a person with Alzheimer's disease:

- Help family and friends realize what the person can do and how much they can understand.
- Give suggestions about how to start talking with the person. For example, make eye contact and say, "Hello, George, I'm John. We used to work together."
- Help them avoid correcting the person with Alzheimer's if they make a mistake or forget something. Instead, ask family and friends to respond to the feelings expressed or talk about something different.
- Help family and friends plan fun activities with the person, such as family reunions or visiting old friends.

Video calls can be a great way to connect, too. Viewing a photo album together can help if the person is bored or confused and needs to be distracted. Family and friends could also create a care package or make a photo album or video to send to the person.

## Remind family and friends to:

- Call or video chat at times of day when the person with Alzheimer's is at their best.
- Be calm and quiet. Don't use a loud voice or talk to the person as if they were a child.
- Respect the person's personal space, and don't get too close.
- Encourage a two-way conversation for as long as possible. Be patient when someone has trouble finding the right words or putting feelings into words. You can help them but try not to speak for them.
- Try not to take it personally if the person does not remember you, is unkind or gets angry. They are acting out of confusion.



## When Out in Public with Someone with Alzheimer's

You can carry a card that explains why the person with Alzheimer's might say or do odd things. For example, the card could read, "My family member has Alzheimer's disease. They might say or do unexpected things. Thank you for being so understanding." The card allows you to let others know about the person's Alzheimer's disease without the person hearing you. It also means you don't have to keep explaining things.

# An Ageing Father and Your Emotional Well-Being



**When you browse your bookstore or search the Web, you will find extensive information about how to assist your ageing father. But, you will unlikely find help for the myriad of feelings you will experience as your dad ages.**

## **Initial reactions may include:**

**Fear** - When you first realise that your dad is becoming less functional, you will likely experience fear. If you have thought of your dad as capable and strong, it is frightening to anticipate a role reversal - one where you now care for him.

**Grief** - As your dad ages, he will no longer be quite the robust man you once knew. This change will trigger the same grieving process that accompanies other life transitions. Further, you will probably grieve each major change in your dad's functioning over time.

**Ongoing feelings** - Three factors influence the quality and intensity of your emotional reaction as your dad continues to age:

- your typical reaction to change and loss
- your relationship with your dad
- your level of direct involvement in your dad's life

If you usually react well to change, you will likely handle your dad's decline relatively well. However, your degree of involvement with your dad will uniquely impact your feelings.

## **Specific emotions you are likely to experience:**

**Sadness** - Almost everyone feels sad as they watch their previously healthy parent decline.

**Anger and frustration** - No matter how much you love your dad, it is normal to feel impatient and angry about the changes that ageing triggers. If you are personally involved in his care, you may feel particularly frustrated with the way his needs interfere with your life.

**Guilt** - You also are likely to feel guilty as your parent ages. Your remorse may be in response to the anger and frustration discussed above. You may also feel guilty if you live far away from your dad, or, due to other life demands, are unable to spend sufficient time with him.

## **Coping with intense motions:**

**Accept that these reactions are normal** - The feelings will be less troublesome if you don't fight them.

**Control what you can and let go of the rest** - You can't change what your ageing dad is experiencing. What you can do is provide help and support.

**Don't take on more than you can handle** - Consider your commitments to your work and to other family members when deciding how much of your dad's care to take on. Overextending yourself will leave you stressed and will put a strain on your other relationships. Worst of all, you may take your frustration out on your parent, causing intense guilt.