

NORTHSTAR SENIOR LIVING

# *Memory Care News*



## LIVE INTENTIONALLY

MEMORY CARE BY NORTHSTAR SENIOR LIVING

We curate a lifestyle of purpose. Creating a cadence that inspires residents to live out their potential, we thoughtfully design each day with residents' hobbies, interests, histories and unique abilities in mind. Inspiring residents to LIVE INTENTIONALLY isn't just a philosophy, it's what we do.

# *Exceptional Memory Care, one MCD at a time!*



## MEMORY CARE DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

CAMELIA RAMLO. ARBOR PALMS, ANAHEIM CA

I am Camelia Ramlo, Memory Care Director at Arbor Palms of Anaheim. I was born and raised in Romania in a wonderful family. I studied music all my life and got my BA in Music Pedagogy, dreaming that one day I would be a music teacher. After moving to the United States, I started working

in the activity department, becoming very passionate about making a difference in people's lives. I pursued this path -and exceling, eventually I was promoted to the Memory Care Director position. Working with seniors for over 13 years I have realized what a great tool our enrichment program through Sagely is; offering a variety and multitude of

creative ideas on how to be more efficient and engage more people in programming and activities. Leading the Memory Care Department can be challenging but so rewarding when you see that you can still make a difference in people's lives, no matter where they are in their dementia journey.



# THE DAY WITH THE MOST LIGHT IS THE DAY WE FIGHT



**THE LONGEST DAY**  
alzheimer's association

**FIGHT ALZHEIMER'S  
ON THE LONGEST DAY.®**

Join us at [alz.org/thelongestday](http://alz.org/thelongestday)



## NORTHSTAR SENIOR LIVING | THE LONGEST DAY - HELP FIGHT ALZHEIMER'S ON JUNE 20, 2021

We are thrilled to be teaming up with the Alzheimer's Association's and The Longest Day event this year. Advancing research and bringing awareness to this disease and the necessary support and care it truly takes is important to Northstar Senior Living. We are excited to host events and raise funds to fight Alzheimer's and dementia-related diseases, doing what we love on June 20th, The Longest Day.

**The Northstar team will not look back, slow down, or be still. Our resolve is strong, values firm; our goals are high, and the mission is clear.**

Programming teams are flexing their creative muscle by highlighting National Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness month in June, utilizing our **LOVE YOUR BRAIN** theme across Northstar to curate programs that educate, support and inspire others to learn about good brain health. Join the "10 ways to Love Your Brain" challenge as our teams work to bring awareness in their communities.

The top 3 highest fundraising teams across NSL will win a \$500 prize to purchase innovative programming supplies to elevate their community program!

### 10 WAYS TO LOVE YOUR BRAIN



**START NOW.** It's never too late or too early to incorporate healthy habits.



**BREAK A SWEAT** Engage in regular cardiovascular exercise that elevates heart rate and increases blood flow. Studies have found that physical activity reduces risk of cognitive decline.



**HIT THE BOOKS** Formal education will help reduce risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Take a class at a local college, community center or online.



**BUTT OUT** Smoking increases risk of cognitive decline. Quitting smoking can reduce risk to levels comparable to those who have not smoked.



**FOLLOW YOUR HEART** Risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke — obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes — negatively impact your cognitive health.



**HEADS UP!** Brain injury can raise risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Wear a seat belt and use a helmet when playing contact sports or riding a bike.



**FUEL UP RIGHT** Eat a balanced diet that is higher in vegetables and fruit to help reduce the risk of cognitive decline.



**CATCH SOME ZZZ'S** Not getting enough sleep may result in problems with memory and thinking.



**TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH** Some studies link depression with cognitive decline, so seek treatment if you have depression, anxiety or stress.



**BUDDY UP** Staying socially engaged may support brain health. Find ways to be part of your local community or share activities with friends and family.



**STUMP YOURSELF** Challenge your mind. Build a piece of furniture. Play games of strategy, like bridge.

Growing evidence indicates that people can reduce their risk of cognitive decline by adopting key lifestyle habits. When possible, combine these habits to achieve maximum benefit for the brain and body.



# Alzheimer's and Dementia

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

### UNDERSTANDING AND DEFINING BEHAVIORS

Because behaviors in individuals with dementia typically have an underlying or hidden meaning, part of our job as caregivers is to determine **who, why, where, when** and what it was that caused those behaviors to occur.

There are 4 key categories to assess when determining causes of behaviors. Engagement, Communication, Physical Health and Environment. Last issue we discussed engagement, we will focus on Environment in this issue.

### Environment

**Is there something going on in the environment that could be causing what you are seeing? Use a critical eye.**

Listed are some common responses of behaviors that can be caused by the environment a resident is in. Ask yourself who, what, why, when and where when trying to determine a cause of a behavior. How can we solve for some of these causes of behavior listed below?

- It is loud or noisy in the room
- The room is cluttered or messy
- The room is unfamiliar, it does not provide proper

cueing.

- The room is too cold or too hot.
- The resident doesn't understand the purpose of the room (why am I here?)
- The area lacks sensory stimulation or engagement (the resident has become bored.)
- The group size or number of people in the room is distracting or overwhelming for the resident.

**How can we adjust as caregivers to better support behaviors caused by environmental factors?**

- Move the resident to a more quiet space to do small group programming
- Communicate, help the resident feel at ease in the area
- Provide gentle, physical touch (hold the resident's hand) to reassure the resident
- Adjust the room's temperature, get the resident a sweater or remove a sweater
- Provide the resident with a familiar object, picture or letter
- Adjust the room to better suit the residents with dementia by defining spaces and uncluttering your environment

**Having dementia is very stressful and exhausting.** All the problems of dementia, including agitation, sleeplessness, wandering and aggression, are made worse by stress. Stress can be reduced with environmental changes. Each person with dementia is different, so work at finding solutions that suit the individual. Remember to draw on all the senses and avoid overstimulation.

**Good lighting is particularly important for people with dementia** as it can help them make sense of their environment. Make the best use possible of natural daylight.

**Of all the senses, hearing is the one that has the most significant impact on people with dementia** in terms of quality of life. Noise that is acceptable to care staff may be distressing and disorientating for a person with dementia. We can reduce noise levels by careful design, using noise absorbing materials, and the thoughtful use of decor and furnishings.

We can improve communication with people with dementia by being more attentive to the impact of noise during the day and night.



# HAPPINESS IS AN INSIDE JOB



## MEMORY CARE ENGAGEMENT

embracing a new philosophy, embracing  
**LIVE INTENTIONALLY.**

### COOKING CLUB, INWOOD CROSSING MEMORY CARE NEIGHBORHOOD

When I first took the position over memory care, cooking club was a scary idea for me! I was worried about what my residents would be able to do without hurting themselves. I was terrified of them using real knives, or any kind of kitchen appliances, even just a blender. **Over the past year I have realized that my residents have so many skills that they were not getting to use anymore, and a huge one of them was cooking!** Cooking club has become one of our most popular activities!

At first, **I was doing everything for them and did not even realize it.** Our recipes were always things that did not involve and real cutting or cooking. If something needed to be chopped, I passed out plastic knives. I soon realized that that was not a true cooking club! We now have an electric skillet, blender, chopping boards, and even a hand crank blender bowl that my residents have lovingly named the lawnmower blender, because you must pull the handle like an old school lawnmower.

We have made all kinds of cookies from scratch, pancakes, mac and cheese, and this week even a white chocolate strawberry cheesecake. **I now see cooking club as a chance for my residents to teach me things and show me the possibilities.** I love seeing how proud they are to show off the finished recipe and share the yummy things they create with their fellow residents!

We have meetings to decide as a group which recipes we would like to try. We watch cooking videos on YouTube to find what new things we want to master next. The residents are so excited to show off their skills each week!! **-Lauren Bray, MCC**





## COOKING AS A THERAPEUTIC ACTIVITY

PHOTOS COURTESY OF INWOOD CROSSING

For older adults with dementia in residential settings, the opportunity to cook or enjoy homemade foods is often limited. However, our **LIVE INTENTIONALLY** life enrichment program provides opportunities weekly for residents to engage in and participate in cooking clubs! Cooking programs have the potential to calm, increase appetite, and entice people to a social gathering, and relieve some of the stress related to living in group settings. These programs provide familiar sensory stimulation with smells, textures, and taste. They also provide cognitive and physical stimulation.

Up to now, there has been little or no research on the behavioral effects of cooking groups for older adults with dementia, although the components of a cooking program do have well documented support. There is strong evidence that individuals who are deprived of environmental stimuli or activity are at an increased risk for disturbing behaviors. Sensory stimulation interventions have been found to reduce passive behaviors, provide constructive engagement and pleasure, and lessen behavioral problems. Reminiscence-based sensory motor stimulation using cooking is used successfully in clinical practice as a behavioral alternative to medication or restraint in long-term care clients.

(Psychosocial Benefits of Cooking Interventions: A Systematic Review) Cooking provides the opportunity to take pride in oneself and perform past roles. Providing individuals with dementia cooking opportunities increases socialization as preparing and eating foods is the most social of all activities of daily living (ADLs) and is the glue of our social system. One of Northstar's Live Intentionally Memory Care values are **"We will not limit our residents because of our own fears."** When conducting programs for our residents who experience cognitive decline, remember: **"There is dignity in taking risks."**