

# COMMUNICATION CONNECTION

Enhancing the quality of life of the older adult and supporting their friends, families and caregivers.

**Kathryn Kilpatrick**

[www.connectionsincommunication.com](http://www.connectionsincommunication.com)

[www.memoryfitnessmatters.com](http://www.memoryfitnessmatters.com)

SPRING 2006

Volume 2, Issue 2

*Kind words can be  
short and easy to speak  
but their echoes  
are truly endless.*

**Mother Teresa**



## **When Your Help May Be Needed**

*Couple with recent  
hospitalizations caring  
for each other and no  
relatives nearby.*

*Child coming home from  
college to recuperate  
after an accident.*

*Parent with young  
children who cannot  
drive for several weeks  
and needs someone to  
transport them to  
various activities.*

*A man caring for his  
wife with memory  
problems needs  
assistance preparing  
meals that require  
mechanical soft  
textures due to  
swallowing problems.*



**Check website for  
additional  
caregiving tips**

[Links to check:](#)

**Columns & Newsletters  
especially newsletter  
Summer 2005**

## **Caregiver Stress and Its Impact on Memory**

When a caregiver is on overload, multitasking, not eating or sleeping well, worried, depressed, or grieving, the chances for recalling information can be significantly impacted. In times such as this, it is essential that modifications are made in the way information is presented. Stress reduces the ability to pay attention and focus but some of the tips below are a place to start. During my many years as a speech and language pathologist providing home health care, a complaint voiced by many caregivers was that they were worried they were developing a serious memory problem. Some ideas on how you can help....

### **Tips for the healthcare professional**

1. Make sure you have the attention of the caregiver and/or the patient.
2. Slow down the rate of your presentation of the information.
3. Reduce the complexity of the information. Try not to jump from topic to topic.
4. Verify that they have heard or understood what you have said.
5. Put the information in writing or consider recording it so they can listen to it later and pass the exact words along to other caregivers and family members.

### **Tips for the caregiver**

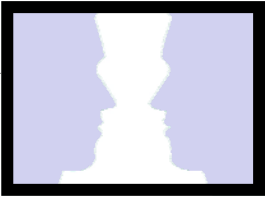
1. Ask for information to be repeated when you do not understand it or your attention was elsewhere.
2. When the information is new or complex, request that it be written down for you so you can refer to it again as needed.
3. Verify the information you heard to be sure it is correct.
4. Consider taking a friend along or a tape recorder so that you have a way to review the information as needed.
5. Taking care of yourself should become a priority as well.

## **SPRING NEWSLETTER 2006**

**COMMUNICATION CONNECTION**  
[www.connectionsincommunication.com](http://www.connectionsincommunication.com)  
and  
**MEMORY FITNESS MATTERS**  
[www.memoryfitnessmatters.com](http://www.memoryfitnessmatters.com)

**Check websites for training programs, products, articles, resources, previous newsletters, activity and communication strategies, interviews and much more. Thanks for all that each of you do to enhance the quality of life of older adults.**





# COMMUNICATION CONNECTION

Enhancing the quality of life of the older adult and supporting their friends, families and caregivers.

## TIPS FROM BECAUSE YOU CARE

What to do when you do not know what to do...

### New Programs

- Memory Fitness: Paying Attention Matters
- Maximizing your Memory in the Workplace
- Memory Fitness: Humor Matters!
- Caregiver Stress and its Impact on Memory
- Successful Aging: Attitude Matters
- Life Planning and Retirement: Baby Boomers Here They Come!

**The human existence is not one meant to be a sole traveler. We are designed to support and care for one another. Service to others means bring aid, sharing knowledge and providing a positive addition to someone else's life**

MARLO MORGAN

Caregivers or individuals trying to handle a difficult situation on their own often do not think they need help, or are so overwhelmed they do not know where to begin to ask for it. Caregivers may not feel comfortable asking, are too proud to show their needs and perhaps do not like a lot of people coming in and out of their home.

Here are a few suggestions that may be useful:

### LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT

#### Support

Caregivers can never receive too many cards, letters or other forms of encouragement. Consistent and gentle reminders from caring friends and family members can bring a sense of calm and peace. You could...

- Call frequently to see if there is anything they need.
- Periodically leave an uplifting, supportive message on their answering machine.
- Take the caregiver out to eat (if they ask for a rain check, make sure you follow up).

Selections from pages 18 and 19

#### Additional tips if you are providing personal assistance

1. Make sure you have the necessary details before you get started.
2. Keep them informed but do not overwhelm them with complex details.
3. Get the necessary permission to obtain information and always respect their privacy.
4. Check with them as you proceed through the various stages to make sure you are on the right track.

Hundreds and hundreds of things to do!

### Because You Care

What to do when you do not know what to do

By Kathryn Kilpatrick and Joanna Chernauskas

Details and sample pages at website [www.connectionsincommunication.com](http://www.connectionsincommunication.com)

\$12 plus \$5 postage and handling

To order: email

[kathy@connectionsincommunication.com](mailto:kathy@connectionsincommunication.com)

QUANTITY DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE  
EXCELLENT FUNDRAISER IDEA!

### PERSONAL ASSISTANT Donating your expertise

When a family is dealing with life-changing situations, unfamiliar issues that have to be handled often arise. All the medical and insurance details coupled with daily caregiving can be overwhelming. If they have minimal knowledge in those areas it becomes difficult to know where to even begin.

- Go with them to a medical /legal appointment as an objective third party to take notes or for moral support.
- Locate and make a list of pertinent local or online support groups.

Selections from pages 48 and 49