



'Grieve Not Alone': Coping with the Loss of a Loved One



By Marie Fricker

You've lost your spouse, your partner, your soulmate, and what comes next is not for the weak of heart. The aching hollow in the core of your being, and the desperate desire to deny it all happened are natural aftermaths of losing someone you cherish. The sleepless nights, loneliness, desperation, and inconceivable sorrow seem like they will last forever, that nothing

will make your world whole or happy again.

Friends tell you, "Time heals all," but you find that impossible to believe in the weeks and months following the death of your loved one. There are, however, ways to cope with your loss, including staying physically and socially active and seeking professional help if you need it.

Susan Drevitch Kelly, a professional life coach, created "Grieve Not Alone," a support group for people who are seeking solace and healing after the profound loss of a spouse, partner, or sibling. The 10-14 members of the group (from various South Shore towns) meet on the first and third Thursday of the month in the Humarock Room of the Scituate Senior Center. After each session, they are assigned "healwork," instead of homework, and asked to set aside some portion of each day to self-care and healing.

"I ask them to journal their feelings and to make a note of at least one thing that made them feel good or smile and share it with the group," said Drevitch Kelly, who is a grief survivor herself. "In the beginning, everyone is in a desperate state of mind, and just getting out of bed, getting dressed and being with others is a huge first step. But when they meet these people in their own area who are going through the same emotions, they feel less alone."

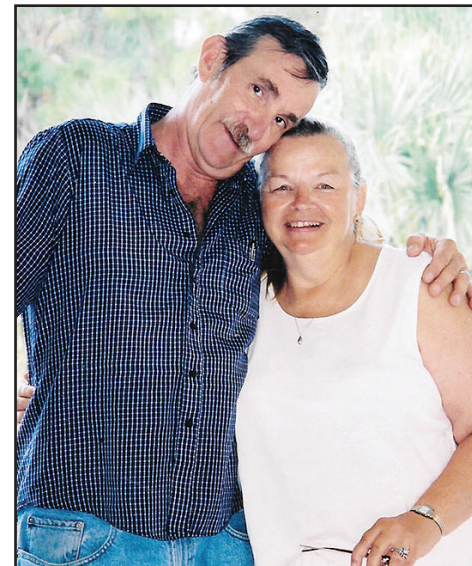
Due to the pandemic, Drevitch Kelly launched her first Grieve Not Alone program on Zoom in November of 2020. Her second series was held in person at the Scituate Senior Center beginning in November of 2021. It was scheduled to end in May, but, at the request of her members, who wanted to stay together, she agreed to hold the group once a month over the summer. A third 16-session program will launch on September 22 and run through May 2023.

"You are welcome to register and join the program at any time," said Drevitch Kelly. "It's not like I'm teaching a yoga class where I would tell someone that the course is full and you'll have to wait until the fall. The people who need this group are raw and hurting, and they need the support now. I would never turn anyone away."

Drevitch Kelly, who holds a master's degree from Harvard University in biological sciences, devised the structure and content for Grieve Not Alone, and she is the volunteer facilitator of every session. The program deals with the specific stages of grief, as defined by psychiatrist Elisabeth



Friends Tom Foye (l.) and Joe Chinzi both lost their wives to cancer in May, 2022. (At right): Widower Victor Paglierani, seen with his late wife Vivian, is a 5-year "grief survivor."



Kubler-Ross – denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance, as well as a sixth stage added by Kubler-Ross' protégé, David Kessler – finding meaning and purpose, which is the mission of Drevitch Kelly's group.

James Miller, author of *Seasons of Grief and Healing, a Guide for Those Who Mourn*, describes the stages of bereavement in a different way. He alludes to four "seasons" of grief, beginning with the darkest days of fall and winter, followed by the rebirth of spring and the grace of summer.

Each person experiences the profound loss of a loved one in a unique way, and there are no specific "seasons" or "stages" that automatically fall into place, according to Drevitch-Kelly.

For Tom Foye, 67, of Hull, who lost his wife to pancreatic cancer in May, the pain is still acute, and he is planning to join the Grieve Not Alone sup-

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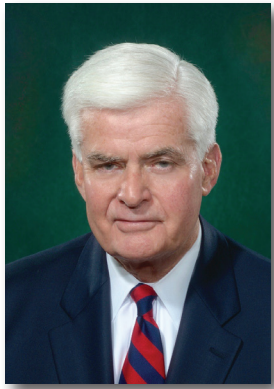
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HOME EQUITY WEALTH MANAGEMENT

Financial advisors use reverse mortgages to bolster income and financial plans

Reverse mortgages now recognized as a financial planning resource that can increase and extend financial security for older homeowners.



By George Downey

BRAINTREE — Simply stated, reverse mortgages enable older homeowners the ability to convert a portion of home equity to cash or a credit line under unique terms that facilitate aging in place.

Originally designed for lower income households in 1989, which it still serves, the program has undergone significant improvements over the years. In addition to numerous enhancements and consumer protections, the program has expanded to serve more affluent homeowners. In so doing, it has emerged to become a basic financial planning tool that incorporates home equity into the financial planning process.

Now may be an ideal time to integrate a reverse mortgage into a retirement income plan as home prices have reached all-time highs, and the prospects for economic stability are increasingly questionable.

In fact, economic decline may be underway. Runaway inflation, skyrocketing interest rates, and supply chain disruptions are among the numerous causes creating turmoil in the U.S. and international financial markets. The severity and longevity are unknown, but financial experts

agree it will be significant and long lasting.

The problem is especially critical for people in or approaching retirement as they depend on savings and retirement income to survive. Since the beginning of 2022, unprecedented increases in fuel and living costs, along with financial market declines, are depleting retirement savings at alarming rates.

The duration of financial market declines and recovery is unknown. What is known, however, is that seniors do not have time on their side to recover losses. Their priority now is to protect what they have, reduce risk, and maximize the utilization of all resources available.

Home equity – A resource to protect savings and increase financial security.

For the great majority, the home is their largest asset, but can't be used until it is sold or borrowed on. For those who wish to age-in-place and not sell, borrowing is the only option. Fortunately, home prices have risen to record levels in the past two years. Unfortunately, rising interest rates and more restrictive borrowing requirements have made traditional mortgage and credit line financing more challenging and less suitable. A better solution may be a reverse mortgage.

Reverse Mortgage – A unique resource that converts illiquid home equity to cash or credit.

Older homeowners (60 and older in Mas-



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sachusetts) may be eligible to refinance to a reverse mortgage that defers all payment obligations permanently. No repayment is required until the homeowner sells or no longer resides in the property. Depending on individual circumstances, all existing liens are paid off eliminating current payment obligations. Further, additional funds or a line of credit will be made available for any surplus.

The HUD/FHA insured Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) reverse mortgage is the dominant program nationally, accounting for over 95 percent of all reverse mortgage programs. HECM property value limits are currently \$970,200. Higher valued properties, and larger loan amounts, may be better served by new proprietary or jumbo programs.

Massachusetts – Jumbo Reverse Mortgages Now Available

The Massachusetts Division of Banks approved new proprietary (jumbo) reverse mortgages for Massachusetts homeowners. These programs enable loan amounts up to \$2,000,000 and provide terms substantially similar to the federally insured HECM.

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port group. “I feel like I am just ‘existing’ and not ‘living’ anymore,” said Foye, who is the owner and publisher of the *Hull Times* and the *South Shore Senior News*. “It’s the tough times I dwell on, the horrible, fast-moving final weeks of Patti’s life that haunt me because I could do nothing to help her.”



Susan Drevitch Kelly
of Scituate, founder of
“Grieve Not Alone.”

Joe Chinzi, 81, of Weymouth, who is a friend and business associate of Foye’s, also lost his wife Marion to cancer in May of 2022. Chinzi, publisher of the long-running *On Tray Magazine*, is coping privately with his grief.

“I don’t like to talk about my feelings, and I guess I hold them in too much,” he said. “I’m trying to push through it. I walk every day, and I still work full-time at my office in Braintree. I think it’s important to keep your mind busy. I’m devastated, but I’m a pretty strong person – can take a lot of beatings. Been in business almost 55 years – never was easy, and this isn’t easy either. It’s tough, real tough.”

A more experienced “grief survivor” in Foye’s circle of support is his neighbor, Victor Paglierani, 78, who lost his wife Vivian to brain cancer in 2017, just four weeks after her diagnosis.

“Viv and I had been together for 52 years, and I couldn’t even grasp the fact that she had died on me,” said Paglierani, a U.S. Army vet and former Quincy Shipyard engineer.

“She had many serious illnesses over the years but had always rallied. I thought she would beat this one too. But when a miracle didn’t come through, I went numb. I don’t even remember much about the first month after her death. I went to grief counseling and I met people there

– some who were behaving like I was, others not as bad. It gave me a better acceptance of the anger, depression, and anxiety that come with losing a loved one. I didn’t feel so alone.”

For Drevitch Kelly, dealing with the questions of her members – “Why me, why now, why did this happen? When will I feel better?” – is challenging. She doesn’t have the answers, but her goal is to help them understand their grief, validate their physical, emotional, and psychological state of mind, and guide them through a pathway of healing.

“No one can predict how long it will take you to recover from the death of a loved one,” she said. “Sometimes the healing begins so gradually that it almost goes unnoticed. One day you just realize that you have gone for an hour without thinking about the person you lost or you’ve driven to work without crying. They say that time heals all, and it truly does, but grief is not a linear process. It’s a big, tangled mess. What’s most important is to acknowledge your feelings, allow yourself to mourn, and be patient with the process.”

According to Drevitch Kelly, some of the people in her current group had “back-burnered” their grief when they first lost their loved one, and only recently decided to deal with their unfinished business. “It doesn’t matter how long it’s been since you suffered your loss,” she said. “It’s never too late to seek solace and to give it to others.”

For Victor Paglierani, tending the rose garden that his wife loved so much makes him feel closer to her, even after five years. “I’m not a church goer but I pray a lot,” he said. “I just can’t figure out what God’s intention was of keeping me going and taking away someone so dear to me. But I’m a very curious guy, and I know he must have something in store for me. I can’t wait to see what it is.”

For information about the Grieve Not Alone Support group and other resources for coping with the loss of a loved one, contact Susan Drevitch Kelly at 781-254-7133 or email susan@sdkelly.com. ∞



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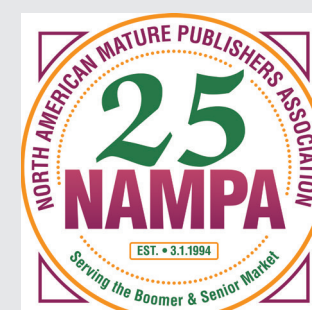
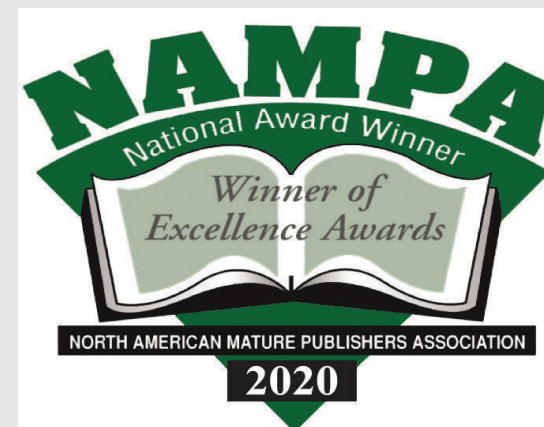
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The Publishers also host and produce a weekly talk radio program, *My Generation*, broadcast on 95.9 WATD-FM, aired Sundays from 7-8:00 PM, and can be streamed live at 959watd.com. Audio archives of each podcast can be found at SouthShoreSenior.com and on iTunes.

Mental Health America (mhanational.org) offers these strategies for coping with the loss of a loved one

- **Seek out caring people.** Find relatives and friends who can understand your feelings of loss. Join support groups with others who are experiencing similar losses.
- **Express your feelings.** Tell others how you are feeling; it will help you to work through the grieving process.
- **Take care of your health.** Maintain regular contact with your family physician and be sure to eat well and get plenty of rest. Be aware of the danger of developing a dependence on medication or alcohol to deal with your grief.
- **Accept that life is for the living.** It takes effort to begin to live again in the present and not dwell on the past.
- **Postpone major life changes.** Try to hold off on making any major changes, such as moving, remarrying, changing jobs or having another child. You should give yourself time to adjust to your loss.
- **Be patient.** It can take months or even years to absorb a major loss and accept your changed life.
- **Seek outside help when necessary.** If your grief seems like it is too much to bear, seek professional assistance to help work through your grief. It’s a sign of strength, not weakness, to seek help. ∞



Not Your Typical Beach Read



By Toni L. Eaton, RN, BSN, MS, President & CEO of Old Colony Hospice & Palliative Care

August: Hot sands. Summer waves. And beach reads. Time to grab the sunglasses and head to the shore with a good book.

I know the beach read is supposed to be, well, not serious, more on the light side. Everyone should definitely have a few of those to dive into this season. A little bit of mystery, romance, sci-fi, or comic relief – all good choices. This summer, though, you might also consider slipping a slightly different kind of book into

your beach bag, something that may sound a bit heavier but could make you feel a little lighter.

There's no doubt that it has been a rough couple of years, and many of us are still reeling from layers of loss and trying to right the balance in our lives. As we catch our collective breath, we're looking for ways to recover, heal, and tap into hope.

I asked our social work and spiritual care teams at Old Colony Hospice & Palliative Care and Dr. Ruth McLain Hospice Home for book recommendations that have inspired and helped them, their loved ones, and their patients. Here are some of their favorites. You won't find these on your typical beach read list, but they might offer comfort and emotional relaxation – the true mark of a good beach read.

The Book Of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World by Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Simply existing in the world today can be stressful. This book explores how we can seek and find joy in the midst of suffering and turmoil. Drawing on two of the world's greatest spiritual leaders, *The Book of Joy* is an invitation to strengthen our capacity for joy and giving.

The Book of Awakening: Having the Life You Want by Being Present to the Life You Have by Mark Nero. A book that gently nudges you to be

more aware and awake and present in your life. It is a summons to break out of the deadening state of emotional sleepwalking to reclaim aliveness and revel in the beauty of the world, despite the hardships it may bring.

Broken Open: How Difficult Times Can Make Us Grow by Elizabeth Lesser. An exploration of one of life's more difficult questions: how can we emerge from challenges and suffering stronger than before? With insight, humor, and common sense, this book explores the human relationship to life's changes and choices.

Resilient Grieving: How to Find Your Way Through a Devastating Loss (Finding Strength and Embracing Life After a Loss that Changes Everything) by Lucy Hone. Life after loss is a powerful time. This book begins with Hone's own tragedy, the death of her teenage daughter, and shows ways to harness the power of resilience to work through horrible loss and devastating changes. Combining personal stories and psychological research, the book presents an active approach to dealing with grief and difficult life shifts in a way that can help heal and enhance life.

The Heart and the Bottle by Oliver Jeffers. A lovely, tender children's book that will bring comfort to readers of any age. A young girl full of wonder suffers a great loss and puts her heart away in a bottle, where it can never be hurt again. She retreats into herself and stops noticing the stars and the sea and the world that had once delighted her. This is a book about loss, enduring love, and getting your heart back.

About the Author: Toni L. Eaton, RN, BSN, MS, is the President & CEO of Old Colony Hospice & Palliative Care of West Bridgewater, a dynamic non-profit hospice serving more than 55 communities south of Boston. OCH also runs the Dr. Ruth McLain Hospice Home in Braintree. A native and resident of the South Shore, Toni brings her compassion and experience as a nurse, veteran, and community leader to her insightful South Shore Senior News columns. Her leadership has been honored by several groups, including the South Shore Women's Business Network. She currently sits on the boards of the Hospice & Palliative Care Federation of Massachusetts and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization Regulatory Committee. For more information, call (781) 341-4145 or visit Old Colony Hospice & Palliative Care at www.oldcolonyhospice.org. ∞

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Easy Breezy! The Power of Your Breath

By Rita La Rosa Loud, B.S.



QUINCY – I recently read an article in ACSM's American College of Sports Medicine Journal that really struck home. It was about how breathing can effectively reduce stress. You see I

was diagnosed in 2018 with stage 3, lymphoma, also acute anemia, and endured 32 life-saving blood transfusions. It was an extremely worrisome and stressful time for me. In fact, during this period my blood pressure was significantly higher than normal. Yet, slow, controlled, breathing as well as light static stretching were what kept me calm, cool, and collected. Furthermore, all through my weekly blood draws, breathing deeply substantially lowered my overall blood pressure. I also practiced deep breathing techniques to help me sleep at night, and when anxiety set in without warning. Between you and me, controlling my breath worked every single time, especially to quell any negative thoughts and emotions that surfaced.

Before I share a common but very effective breathing technique, I would like to explore how and why our breath is so powerful.

The Fight or Flight Syndrome

When I was feeling anxious during my cancer tribulation, my heart throbbed and my breath accelerated, a reaction known as the fight or flight syndrome. The sympathetic nervous system, as stated by the American Cancer Institute, controls the endocrine glands, which ready and protect the body from potential injury. Hormones (adrenaline and cortisol) are then released into the blood stream causing escalations in blood pressure, heart rate, and breathing

accompanied by increases in blood sugar, high alertness, muscle tenseness, and body perspiration.

In opposition, the parasympathetic nervous system works when the body is at rest, and helps you to calm down, enabling it to conserve energy for future use. Thus, managing your breathing is central to de-escalating the negative effects the body naturally experiences due to the stress response.

The American Lung Association further explains when the diaphragm is not functioning optimally different muscles (neck, back, chest) take over the breathing process. In this case, the oxygen levels and reserves required for exercise and physical activities are reduced.

Hence, it behooves us to practice deep breathing daily as it:

- increases oxygen levels,
- returns the role of breathing to the diaphragm,
- lowers stress, and anxiety levels,
- reduces blood pressure, and heart rate, and
- normalizes other vital bodily functions

Breathing While Exercising

During the Covid 19 pandemic, many older adults turned to exercising, not only for fitness and health reasons, but for stress reduction purposes. However, I have observed, many seniors do not execute proper breathing techniques while exercising. Some shallow-breathe and others hold their breath, which is less effective for achieving an optimum workout.

At Quincy College Health & Fitness Center we encourage members of all ages to breathe throughout their exercise program. For example, when strength training on machines or using dumbbells, we cue and instruct participants to breathe out (exhale) when lifting their weights and breathe in (inhale) when lowering

their weights. Once having mastered the right breathing technique, not only is the training session more productive, but often participants express they feel less stressed and energized at the end of their workouts.

4-Count Breathing Technique

The 4-count breathing technique is one of many common methods used in stress management. It is the approach I used to help me to feel better, handle my stress levels, and manage my emotions during the most challenging time in my life. Alternating the ratio of inhalation to exhalation, that is, changing your breath rhythm, may help to calm down the parasympathetic nervous system (refer to explanation above). In just a few minutes with this brief exercise, you will immediately begin to relax, slow down your heart rate, lower your stress levels, feel better, and maybe even restore your capacity to think more clearly. Let's face it. Performing this breathing pattern can come in handy when dealing with any stressful situation. I even use it while driving when someone suddenly cuts me off or is tailgating.

It's simple to learn. Here's how it is done. First, dim the lights, or pull down the shades. Then shut off your television, computer, and iPhone. Basically, tune everything out. Next, find a comfortable chair and sit with your back supported and both feet on the ground. If you prefer, relax in a recliner or bed, head back and a pillow beneath your knees. Now, close your eyes and quiet your mind. Pay attention to the rhythm of your breath. After about one minute, you are ready to start the 4-count breathing sequence.

1. Inhale (breathe in) via your nose, while slowly counting to four (one ... two ... three ... four). Feel your lungs and belly fill with air, much like a balloon.
2. Now, hold your breath while slowly counting to four. Be sure to relax your jaw, neck, and shoulders while doing so.

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"THE WICKED SMART INVESTOR"

How to Save Money on Food



By Chris Hanson

HANOVER – I wasn't going to disturb Ma, as she was too deep in thought on a sunny Thursday afternoon studying the supermarket circulars; It's a weekly ritual for her, just like Sunday Mass. At the age of 92, she no longer does the grocery shopping but her money-saving expertise is still valuable as food prices are sky high! She makes the shopping lists, and my brother Tom goes to the store.

Maybe you have not heard of my Ma, but she's a somewhat prominent member of the South Shore Senior News community. She was roaring long before Helen Reddy sang that iconic '70s song. Born during the Great Depression, hard times educated her on feeding a family on a tight budget. And it was a good thing, because years later she found herself widowed with 13 kids to feed. Ma knows how to make a buck cry, do cartwheels, and dance a jig at the supermarket. There is no one better, so let me share a few of her tricks.

Make a Plan: This is exactly why Ma scrutinizes the supermarket circulars. She is planning next week's meals based upon the food on sale. For example, if ground beef, green peppers and pasta are on sale, she'll make American chop suey. The internet has a plethora of recipe sites, and you can search by ingredients.

Use all leftovers: Many people save entire meals, but you can also make

good use of individual components. If you serve baked potatoes and zucchini with roast beef one night, include the leftovers in breakfast or lunch the next day. Zucchini works well with scrambled eggs and potatoes make great home fries.

Shop at more than one store: I am partial to the Market Basket for the prices, but other stores offer good value on sale items. I can't tell you how many times Ma sent me to stores to purchase only the sale items. Study the circulars and ask for rainchecks if the store runs out of stock.

Limit takeout: When you're extremely pressed for time or just plain wiped out, takeout works great. It can also be a nice treat, but if you order takeout regularly your pocketbook will cry foul. Always have a list of easy to make meals handy to reduce the temptation of ordering pizza or fish and chips.

Consider buying generic brands: Not all store brands are created equal. Some are comparable to the national brands and others...well. Determine which store brand you can use without sacrificing taste and quality. One other thing, sometimes the national brand and the store brand are made by the same company, but no store will advertise this "secret."


The reduced rack: Day old bread and frosted treats in the bakery are just fine. When the Patriots lost playoffs games the reduced rack provided the silver lining. I bought the Foxboro-esque decorated cakes, tossed them in the freezer and used them for future Sunday dinners. Other racks may offer discontinued items at bargain prices.

Other suggestions include shopping by the unit price, eating frozen vegetables, looking for manager's specials.

As you can see, saving money on food requires a fair amount of work. There is no way of sugar-coating this, but your short- and long-term financial security depends on cutting costs and saving money. The more you practice these habits it will become second nature.

In closing, please consider donating to your local food pantry if you're able. The need is so great. Ma always found money for charity, and she insisted on giving quality food to those less fortunate than us. I believe helping others surrounds you in good karma and somehow, somewhere, you will be rewarded for your benevolence.

About the Author: Chris Hanson is the author of *The Wicked Smart Investor* blog and a Certified Financial Planner^(TM) at Cardea Capital Advisors in Hanover. He earned his BBA at the Isenberg School of Management University of Massachusetts and an MBA at Babson College's F. W. Olin Graduate School of Business. He may be reached at (978) 888 - 5395 and you can read his blog at wickedsmartinvestor.blogspot.com. ∞




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4 Benefits of Bringing in Home Health Care Providers Post-Covid

By Maria Burke, RN
Owner - Celtic Angels Home Health Care

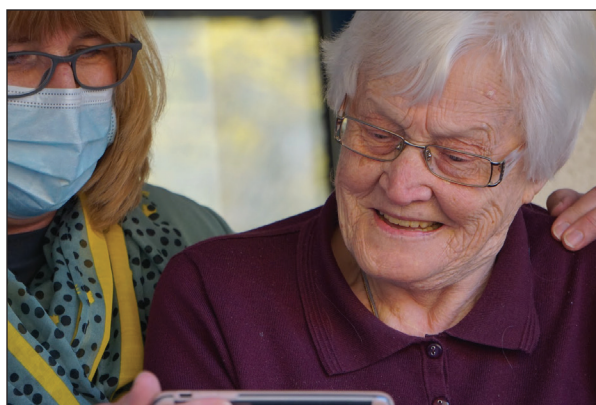


Many families have put off bringing in home health care out of concern that their loved one might be exposed to COVID-19. Others have already had COVID-19 and now face long-term complications that require assistance. If you find yourself in either of these situations, it's time to consider taking advantage of home health care. Here are four benefits of bringing in home health post-COVID.

1. Home Health Care Is Safe

We understand the worries about exposing a high-risk loved one to COVID-19, and that was especially true at the beginning of the COVID pandemic, when we were just beginning to understand the disease and didn't have many tools to prevent its transmission. Thankfully, a lot of progress has been made since that time.

With widespread access to vaccines, personal protective equipment, and new treatments, you can feel more comfortable bringing in home health care workers such as CNAs and HHAs. Here at Celtic Angels Home Health Care, we continue to take precautions to help our patients avoid contracting COVID-19. That means you can get the help you need without worrying about placing your loved one at risk. Call 781-331-0062 for information on our current COVID-19 protocols.



2. Home Health Care Can Help You Recover

If you or a loved one has already had COVID-19, there's a good chance you continue to have lingering effects. In fact, 20% of adults under 65 who have had COVID experience a medical condition linked to COVID-19, and that number rises to 25% for adults over 65.

For many people, recovery doesn't end after your isolation period is up. And particularly if you had a severe case of COVID or have other medical conditions, you can continue to be affected for months or years to come. Symptoms like fatigue, breathing problems, dizziness, pain, and heart problems can make daily activities difficult or impossible to do on your own. In-Home health care can assist you with everything from meals and transportation to skilled nursing care. Learn more about the services we offer at Celticangelsinc.com.

3. Home Health Care Allows Caregivers to Return to Work

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many people shifted to remote work. That meant family members who were acting as caregivers were home all day with their loved ones and could

respond to their needs while working. Unfortunately, for many people, that time has come to an end.

As more and more companies require workers to return to the office, family member caregivers are faced with the decision to take a financial loss in order to stay home with their loved one, place their loved one in a nursing home, or find someone else to take care of their loved one while they work. That's where home health care workers come in. Bringing in a Certified Nursing Assistant and/or a Home Health Aide allows you to return to work knowing your loved one is receiving quality care in your absence. And best of all, your loved one can continue to enjoy the comforts of their own home or residence.

4. Home Health Care Workers Combat Loneliness

Seniors have been especially vulnerable to isolation and loneliness since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. While it was necessary to keep our senior loved ones safe, cutting back on social contacts means many seniors have struggled with loneliness, and extra burdens have been placed on caregivers.

Although it is still prudent to take precautions against contracting COVID-19, we need to respond to the need for socialization, too. Bringing in home health workers can help. For example, CNAs and HHAs can provide companionship, play games, take seniors on outings, or provide transportation to visit friends, all while giving family members a much-needed break.

Would you like to learn more about how in-home health care can help you or your senior loved one? Visit Celticangelsinc.com.



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Celtic Angels Home Health Care

Hi. I'm Milo. The Celtic Angels Mascot.



***Our clients seem to love us
but don't take my word for it.
Read this:***

Dear Maria,

Your CNA Kelly has been coming to see me for well over a year now. She has been doing everything for me including cleaning, cooking, grocery shopping, and taking me to my many doctor's appointments.

Kelly is a kind and caring person and I look forward to her coming on Tuesdays. My children are also happy that I have Kelly here to take care of me. It gives them such peace of mind to know if anything goes wrong with me, she will be there to take care of me and let them know.

Sincerely, Susan C.

www.celticangelsinc.com

About the Author:
Maria Burke, RN, is owner and founder of Celtic Angels Home Health Care. Maria Burke was born in Middleton, County Cork, Ireland. She is the eldest of six and immigrated to the United States in 1988 to pursue a nursing degree to become a registered nurse. She served as a visiting nurse and from there, launched her own home health care company. Celtic Angels has two offices; Weymouth and Needham and provides a full array of the highest quality in-home health care services with certified and skilled CNAs, HHAs, and RNs. ∞



ASK THE HIPPIE

The journey that caregivers are on when caring for someone with Alzheimer's/dementia is full of mystery, self-doubt, and loneliness. This column offers a chance to reach out, seek new ideas, and by reading about the experiences of others, learn that you are never alone.

Appetite Therapy That Makes 'SENSE'

By Phyllis DeLaricheliere, MS

WEYMOUTH – Nutrition is very important in maintaining healthy bodies, mind and spirit. It is especially important for those battling a disease such as Alzheimer's. With dementia/Alzheimer's, a lack of an appetite can be common in many cases. Therefore, that makes mealtime even more important as patients need nutrition to keep their bodies and brains in shape to endure this journey. A lack of nutrition can lead to weakness, loss of muscle strength, weight loss, and a state of lethargy. Common sense tells us that without the proper diet and exercise we are even more challenged to fight viruses and infections. It's the fuel the body needs to battle.

So why with so many, dementia/Alzheimer's patients do we see this happening? Depression could be one reason. When people are depressed, which can be present with dementia, a lack of appetite follows. They might not be able to understand how to eat the food or perhaps they dislike the temperature or texture. Maybe they physically cannot eat what is given to them or are in dental pain. Did a medication change affect their appetite? And finally, their lack of patience to sit for any length of time, or to even focus on the meal will affect their ability to eat.

I don't need to tell you that this can also lead to frustration for the caregiver, who may look at mealtime for a chance to get a break, enjoy a meal with their loved one and feel like they are doing something right by keeping him or her fed.

What can we do? Some simple things are: increasing physical activity; this will always assist in stimulating an appetite. Make sure they are seeing their dentist and physician to eliminate any unnecessary discomfort. Mealtime should have no time limit. If they won't finish because they have run out of patience/attention, give them encouragement and more time to come back to the table. Reheat the food and leave it out, and see if they come back. Perhaps make the meal mobile. Instead of chicken on the plate, put it in a lettuce wrap or a pita with colorful veggies. Mashed potatoes work great on top of an ice cream cone. If they want to take a walk, why not make their meal to go?

But the BIG AHA moment here that I strongly encourage you to try is to use their senses. Have you ever heard the phrase we eat with our eyes first, our nose second and our mouth is the conduit that uses tastebuds to bring the experience of food full circle?

With the continued loss of memory, the brain relies more on our senses to explore the world. This starts back at birth, when your right brain (aka "the Hippie") is wired to explore the world through touch, taste, and smell. The brain has this learned behavior and has not lost it with dementia.

SMELL: The olfactory receptors of your brain (also known as the odorant receptors) detect smell and trigger impulses in your nerves that will transmit info to the brain. On many occasions, this information will also access our long-term memory and perhaps a "smell" will bring back an archived memory. So, what does this have to do with food?

What if we cooked with a little more spice? Spice, by the way, does not have to relate to "heat" or "spicy tasting," but adds flavor for the brain to enjoy. Let your loved ones smell spices before they eat. Put it in their hand and let them look at it, touch it and smell it. Food that smells good, stimulates the urge to eat.

TASTE: As we grow older our taste buds change as well; they "dampen," which is why sugar and salt are sought after because they penetrate those taste buds. So, if they want dessert first you know why. And it's ok. Reminder, their Hippie side of their brain is actively engaged so, of course, they want cake before breakfast. Wouldn't you?

SIGHT: Make the food colorful and use colorful plates. White bland chicken, with mashed potatoes and cauliflower on a white plate is not only difficult for patients to recognize but is not very appetizing. Challenge yourself to make the plate colorful with food. What a treat it will be for both of you! Finally, if you can have them get involved with the preparation of the meal it gives them a sense of pride. They might eat along the way while prepping, and all the textures, activity and smells will stimulate their appetite. It's a WIN WIN!

Bon Appetit.

About the Author: Phyllis DeLaricheliere MS, author/columnist/lecturer/consultant is on a mission to help others understand compassionately the journey of Alzheimer's/dementia. She is a welcomed educator for nursing programs and other clinical settings as well as a vibrant guest speaker to those caring for someone with Alzheimer's and allows them to feel supported and to see the disease from another side. **WEBSITE:** www.askthehippie.com to learn more. ∞



OCES Honors Volunteers

More than 150 volunteers recently attended Old Colony Elder Services (OCES) Annual Volunteer Appreciation and Awards Ceremony held at Indian Pond Country Club in Kingston. Eight volunteers received special awards, including (pictured l. to r.) William Raymond of Middleboro, G. Mike Pauley of Brockton, and John Durnan of Duxbury.

Raymond received a "Lifetime Achievement Award" for completing more than 4,000 volunteer hours transporting seniors to their medical appointments. Pauley and Durnan were presented with the "Make a Difference Award" for delivering meals and providing other services to assist those in need in their community.

Also honored at the ceremony for were: Joseph Tyler of Halifax, Steve Sundell of Easton, Fred Ciliberto of Hanover, and John Ruthkowski of Duxbury.



"We truly appreciate all of our volunteers for their dedication to helping others and making the world a better place," said Armino Rocha, OCES' Volunteer Manager.

Volunteering for OCES

With the help of Nutrition Program volunteers, OCES serves 1,800 meals each weekday as part of its MOW Program. Money Management Program (MMP) volunteers assist older

adults and individuals with disabilities with bill paying, reconciling bank statements, balancing checkbooks, and in special cases, negotiating debt with creditors. Volunteers also serve on the OCES Board of Directors, MMP and RSVP Community Advisory councils and contribute with many other important efforts.

To learn more about becoming an OCES volunteer contact Armino Rocha at 508-584-1561 x355 or visit ocesma.org. ∞

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Continued from page 6

3. Next, slowly exhale (breathe out) via your mouth (purse your lips and blow) to a count of four. Feel your lungs and belly empty as the air leaves your body. Imagine the balloon flattened.

4. Finally, hold your breath again for a count of four.

You completed the first part of this 4-step sequence. Just repeat it three more times and enjoy!

We can all benefit from the positive effects of simply breathing deeply, particularly when we experience stressful situations or highly anxious moments.

Quincy College Community Health & Fitness Center

Consider our Quincy College Health and Fitness Center's highly supervised resistance training, aerobic exercise, and stretching program. Perhaps take advantage of a complimentary training session with a professionally certified instructor. We are located at Presidents Place, 1250 Hancock Street directly across from the Quincy T Station. Take the North Tower elevator down one level. When the doors open,

our fitness center is right there. Free one and two-hour parking is available on Hancock, Coddington, and Washington Streets, and a parking garage is also available next to our building for a nominal fee. For more details, call Rita at 617.405.9878.

About the Author: Rita La Rosa Loud holds a B.S. in Exercise Physiology with additional education in Sports Medicine and Athletic Training. She is NASM Certified and has been actively involved in the fitness industry for over 35 years. She is also an author and writes fitness-related articles for various publications. Currently, she is a fitness researcher and directs the COVID compliant, Community Health & Fitness Center at Quincy College. She can be reached at 617-405-5978 and is available for speaking engagements. ∞

Home Equity...

Continued from page 3

Massachusetts Condominiums – New Developments

Until recently, reverse mortgage financing was only available to MA condominium projects that were fully approved by the Federal Housing Authority (FHA). As a result, only 8 percent of all MA condominium projects have

been approved, leaving 92 percent ineligible. Recently, two significant changes occurred expanding and simplifying reverse mortgage financing for MA condominium owners.

1. FHA Single Unit Approval. This process enables HECM reverse mortgage financing with simplified and limited FHA approval required – eliminates the complications of FHA full project approval.
2. New proprietary (jumbo) reverse mortgages. The MA Division of Banks approved these programs in February, 2020. Now, reverse mortgage loan amounts up to \$2,000,000 are enabled for homes and condominiums without the previous requirement of FHA project approval.

Reverse Mortgage Benefits/Obligations

- No monthly payment obligations – prepayments are permitted without penalty but not required. Monthly charges are deferred and accrue.
- Credit line growth – the undrawn balance of the credit line grows (compounding monthly) at the same rate charged on funds borrowed.
- No maturity date – repayment not required until no borrower resides in the property.
- Non-Recourse loan – neither borrowers nor heirs incur personal liability. Repayment of loan balance can never exceed the property value at the time of repayment. If loan balance exceeds property value at time of repayment, the lender, borrower(s), and heirs are not responsible for the deficiency as they are protected by FHA insurance.
- Access to funds and loan terms are guaranteed – cannot be frozen or cancelled as long as borrower obligations are maintained.
- Borrower obligations (to keep loan in good standing) are limited to:
 - Keeping real estate taxes, liability insurance, and property charges current
 - Providing basic home maintenance
 - Living in the property as primary residence

TO LEARN MORE

Get the facts and determine if, or how, the various options to utilize housing wealth may enhance your individual needs and circumstances. For more information, visit the National Reverse Mortgage Lenders Association (NRMLA) website www.ReverseMortgage.org, or contact Harbor Mortgage Solutions, Inc. for a private consultation.

About the Author: George Downey (NMLS 10239) is a Certified Reverse Mortgage Professional (CRMP) and the founder of Harbor Mortgage Solutions, Inc., Braintree, MA, a mortgage broker licensed in Massachusetts (MB 2846), Rhode Island (20041821LB), NMLS #2846. Questions and comments are welcome. Mr. Downey can be reached at (781) 843-5553, or email: GDowney@HarborMortgage.com ∞

Should reverse mortgages be included in financial planning? Why?

Considering reverse mortgages in financial planning might increase and extend retirement security.

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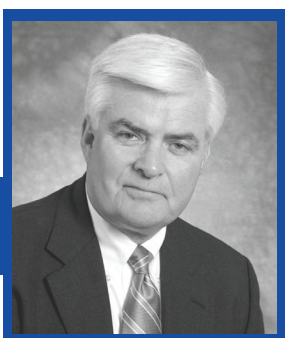
- Increase near and long term cash flow.
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Art Matters! A History of Romanesque & Gothic Medieval Art



By Janet Cornacchio,
President, Scituate Arts Association

In my last column, we completed a look at the “Ancient & Classical” eras of Western Art. Now, on to the next major stage in Western history – the Medieval Era or Middle Ages. First, let’s look at the Early Medieval Period Art (476-1000) and Byzantine Art next time, both of which evolved from the art of the Roman Empire when it split into the Eastern and Western Empires as it devolved. As previously mentioned, the collapse of the Empire, the splintering into smaller nation states, and the changes it wrought in how art was conceived will be the focus of the next few columns.

The Roman Empire swallowed a massive amount of territory, much more than Alexander’s short-lived empire. At its height, Roman rule extended to all the lands around the Mediterranean Basin, including the Iberian and Balkan Peninsulas; the lands of two of the early cradles of civilizations found along the Tigris & Euphrates Rivers and the Nile (Mesopotamia & Egypt); the land of Carthage and beyond across Northern Africa; plus England into part of Scotland; and on the European continent as far North as most of Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark.

The Romans ruled these lands for almost 400 years with a system of roads that allowed for relatively fast messenger communication and troop movements, but as the emperors lost power, so did the Empire’s reach to the provinces. The various peoples who inhabited the provinces were only partially assimilated into the culture of Imperial Rome, mix in the advent of Christianity as the state religion after the Emperor Constantine’s conversion with the waves of migrating Central Asian tribes (the Huns, etc.) arriving in Europe, and the scene was set for the formation of what was to become today’s European nations. These nations formed along the lines where various ethnic peoples settled and forged new cultural identities.

The modern term for this period of time, once referred to as the Dark Ages, now recognizes what was occurring throughout Europe: the “Migration Period.” From about 300-700, the Germanic and Eastern European peoples including the Huns, Goths, Vandals, and Franks, among others were moving across the European continent, settling in territory that was once part of the Roman Empire. Some of the recognized ethnic or regional art styles include those of the Anglo-Saxons in Great Britain, the Visigoths on the Italian and Iberian peninsulas, the Norse peoples of Scandinavia and that of the Franks and Merovingians whose reign expanded across modern France, southern Germany and the Netherlands. As was previously mentioned, as Imperial Rome failed, its art lost the assurance and classic proportions of the Empire’s height. In the early years of Christianity as the state religion, there was opposition to monumental religious sculpture, no doubt in reaction to pagan images of the myths of the gods, altars for sacrifices, etc., although traditional portrait busts and sarcophagi were accepted and did continue. The period’s architecture – religious, public and private – was replaced by larger structures, so little remains to study from this era and few significant artworks produced from wood, leather, and other natural materials survived into the modern eras.

Medieval art was not purely aesthetic, but also a symbol that could proclaim one’s status, education, identity, and culture. As such, they were executed in valuable materials and these works became the main sculptural traditions (as far as is known) of the various ethnic groups of the Migration period. A fusion of the Mediterranean Christian and native pagan traditions appears utilizing animal and geometric motifs derived from classical art. Most artwork was small, portable and decorative – jewelry, religious chalices for communion and weaponry, quite often. Human figures are rare with no attempt at realism.

The archaeological evidence from this period is limited. What remains consists mainly of small portable and non-perishable objects recovered



Pictured clockwise from the left... Sutton Hoo helmet, Suffolk, 6th to 7th cen. Original find & reconstruction by Royal Armouries for British Museum; Anglo-Saxon silver sceat, Kent, c. 720. Diamed head, holding cross; reverse, wolf-headed snake; Viking carved wood and metal prow from the Oseberg ship, ca. 800, Norway; Parts of a Norwegian wooden doorway, 12th century; Silver monster on a chape, Scottish or Anglo-Saxon, St Ninian's Isle Treasure, c. 800? A Chape was a protective fitting at the bottom of a scabbard or sheath for a sword or dagger. Good blades had a leather scabbard and the metal fittings on the ends served as protective decorations. They could either be a U shape, as here to cover the edge, or a more complete shape to fully cover the end; Golden Chalice from the Treasure of Gourdon, Merovingian aka Frankish, 5-6th cen. Found in Gordon, Loire Valley 1845.

from burial sites. One of the most famous examples, the 6th-century burial treasure at Sutton Hoo, a burial ship found in Suffolk, England, includes a variety of highly decorated weapons and functional elements – shoulder clasps (no buttons or zippers, remember) and buckles, among others. Most well known is a helmet which has been replicated by the Royal Armouries for the British Museum. Several new art forms appeared during the Migration: illuminated manuscript and coins whose style is derived from that of the Roman Provinces and Byzantium. Coinage profiles indicated the sculptor’s unfamiliarity with the most basic portrait skills.

Meanwhile, a similar process was going on in Byzantium where Eastern Christianity held sway. The power shift in the Near East with the rise of Islam beginning in the 6th century was another factor in the art and life of the Early Medieval world. An understanding of the dynamics of history is an important factor in art’s evolution with sculpture and architecture, as always, being the most lasting and readily apparent expression of a culture’s artistic values and vision. A Chape was a protective fitting at the bottom of a scabbard or sheath for a sword or dagger. Good blades had a leather scabbard and the metal fittings on the ends served as protective decorations. They could either be a U shape, as here to cover the edge, or a more complete shape to fully cover the end.

About the Author: Janet Cornacchio is an artist member of Front Street Art Gallery, President of Scituate Arts Association, and a Realtor. You can contact her at jcornacch@aol.com ∞

Elder Law Myth Busters

By Elizabeth A. Caruso, Esq

Myth or Fact? I have a Will so my family is all set and won't have to go through probate.

This is a MYTH.

In Massachusetts, if you have a Will, also known as a Last Will and Testament, that distributes all your assets, you are guaranteeing that your family will have to go through the probate process. This is because a Will only tells the Probate Court how you want your assets to be distributed, but it does not give anyone the power to actually distribute them. That power is granted by permission from the Probate Court.

In your Will you can name a Personal Representative, formerly called an Executor or Executrix. This is the person who would be in charge of administering your estate. After you pass away, your Personal Representative petitions (or seeks permission) the Probate Court to have the authority to gain access and collect your assets and distribute them out to your beneficiaries as you have dictated in your Will. This process of seeking permission from the court can be quite time consuming. If you have real estate in your Will, you are potentially adding the necessity of additional court permission, which adds even more time. Your Personal Representative will also need additional specific permission in order to distribute the assets to your beneficiaries.

An important concept to keep in mind when doing your estate planning is that your Will only controls what is in your name alone when you

pass away. This means that if you own real estate, bank accounts, or the like, jointly with a spouse, child, sibling, etc., those jointly held assets are going to automatically pass to the other person(s) after you pass away. Additionally, if you have beneficiary designations on bank accounts, retirement accounts, life insurance, annuities, etc., those assets will pass to the named beneficiaries automatically by contract.

Having assets in a trust can also transfer your assets to your beneficiaries without the need of Probate Court interference. Trusts are an alternative way to own property that cannot, or you do not want to, be held jointly or a beneficiary cannot be added to. It is very popular for people to transfer their real estate into a trust to avoid potential extra Probate Court scrutiny and cost. There are several different types of trusts, and an elder law attorney can explain these differences and help you choose what type of trust would work best for your situation and estate planning goals. For many people, transferring property to a Trust does not change their day-to-day lives in any way, but comes with the added benefit of knowing that your loved ones will not have to go through a lengthy probate process to receive your assets after you pass away.

About the Author: Elizabeth A. Caruso, Esq. is an attorney at Legacy Legal Planning, LLC, in Norwell, Massachusetts. She has been practicing estate planning, probate, and elder law on the South Shore for over a decade. If this article has sparked questions for you, please feel free to reach out via phone 781-971-5900 or email elizabeth@legacylegalplanning.com to schedule a time to discuss your unique situation. ∞

Falls Prevention



By Nicole Long,
MSW, LICSW

Did you know? Every year, one in four older adults in the U.S. has a fall, according to the National Council on Aging (NCOA). Falls pose a significant risk for older adults as they can potentially reduce overall mobility as well as one's ability to maintain independence.

Understanding the factors that can lead to falling and learning how to prevent falls can help reduce risk. Chronic health conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, arthritis, dementia and Parkinson's, as well as medications that may cause dizziness or drowsiness, are factors that can increase fall risk. Other factors include vision or vestibular changes and a new or worsening health condition.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries in those who are 65 and older.

Below are a few myths about falls:

Myth: I'm unsteady and worried that physical activities will increase my risk of falling. One of the best preventative measures is exercise as it improves balance and increases strength and flexibility. There are countless exercise programs designed specifically for older adults which are often offered at senior centers or fitness centers. Not sure which type of exercise would be appropriate for you? Talk with your health care

provider about starting an exercise program that will help you build strength and improve your balance to reduce your fall risk.

Myth: My eyesight isn't as good as it used to be, but I won't fall as long as I walk slowly and pay attention to where I'm going. Older adults with visual impairments are twice as likely to fall.

Age-related vision changes can make it more difficult to see obstacles in the way. Have your vision checked annually and keep your eyeglasses up-to-date. Also, be aware of "trip hazards" in the home. For example, throw rugs can cause you to slip and fall. Small furniture such as footstools, shoes and other items left on the floor can cause you to trip. Poor lighting can be a hazard. Make your living environment safer by putting items away and improving lighting.

Myth: My doctor advised me to use a cane, but I don't think it's really necessary. Being advised to use a walking aid means you may already have an increased risk of falling. And, unfortunately, those who have fallen once are more likely to fall again. Did you know that according to the CDC, over 95 percent of hip fractures are caused by falling? But falls can be prevented. Older adults who use a cane or a walker to help them get around (and use them safely as instructed by their physician or physical therapist) are better able to maintain their mobility and independence.

Myth: I only take one medication, so I'm not really at risk of falling.

Some prescriptions, as well as over-the-counter medications, may cause side effects such as lightheadedness or drowsiness. Some medications may lead to balance issues. Know that any medication may increase your risk of falling. It is very important to discuss any medications and concerns with your physician.

Falls are not a normal sign of aging. Falls

Prevention Awareness Week, the national campaign to raise awareness about preventing falls and reducing fall risk, is September 18-24, 2022. Attend workshops or events to learn more about the steps you can take to help ensure that you and your family members, friends, and neighbors know how to prevent falls.

Falls Prevention Workshops

Are you an older adult looking for local fall prevention programs or exercise programs? Check with your senior center or Council on Aging. Old Colony Elder Services (OCES), the nonprofit agency serving older adults and individuals with disabilities throughout Plymouth County and surrounding towns, operates a Healthy Living Program with "A Matter of Balance" workshops. A Matter of Balance is an evidence-based program that emphasizes practical strategies to control, manage and avoid falls.

For more information about fall prevention or to learn more about A Matter of Balance workshops, contact OCES' Healthy Living Program at 508-584-1561 or visit www.ocesma.org.

About the Author: Nicole Long is the Chief Executive Officer of Old Colony Elder Services (OCES). Founded in 1974, OCES is a private, non-profit organization proudly serving greater Plymouth County and surrounding communities. OCES is designated as one of 25 Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs) in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. OCES' mission is to support the independence and dignity of older adults and individuals with disabilities by providing essential information and services that promote healthy and safe living. The agency offers a number of programs to serve older adults, individuals with disabilities, their families and caregivers. For more information call 508-584-1561 or visit www.ocesma.org ∞

The Downsizing Dilemma for Artists

By Natalie Ahern, Owner, All the Right Moves



Recently I was taking a walk with my very arthritic and deaf dog when I ran into a neighbor. We started chatting about downsizing (what else??). She is an artist and mentioned to me how difficult it will be when she needs to move to downsize her collection of paintings. For some

unknown reason, many of my clients are artists. Their mediums are as varied as their personalities but all struggle with how to part with their creations. I have worked with professional and amateur quilters, photographers, painters and sculptors. Here are some things I have learned.

- Create a space in your new home for your creative mind to continue its magic. Most of my

clients have been lucky enough to have a second bedroom or den where they can set up their potter's wheel, quilting tables, easels and palettes. However, I worked with one client who turned a walk-in closet into his photography studio. It was wonderful! Another client did not have an extra room to create her painting studio, but used her "dining room" space and blocked it off with tall Asian screens. Take into account sunlight, artificial light, flooring (for paint or clay spatters).

- Just like any bit of memorabilia, you can't take it all. Choose the pieces that mean the most to you and take pictures of the rest.

- Use your creative powers to think out of the box when it comes to displaying your work. We have utilized tops of kitchen cabinets for sculptures and smaller paintings. We have created incredible gallery walls filled with photos and drawings. Filling one wall in a room with art and leaving the other walls with minimal art is stunning. I also love utilizing bookshelves by mixing creative works with books.

- Despite your best efforts, you will probably

find you still need to dispose of some of your creations. Take photos of your work and ask local thrift/consignment shops if they are interested in any of your pieces. Ask family members and friends if there are any favorites they might like; any remaining pieces that are framed can be donated to charities such as Savers, Wellspring, or Boomerang. You could even post on social media for free artwork. Gifting or donating your art is a way to spread the joy of creativity!

I have been fortunate to work with so many artists over the years. Know that just because you are downsizing, you will continue to create and inspire those around you with new pieces or the beautiful works you have already made.

About the Author: *Natalie Ahern, founder and principal of All the Right Moves Boston, has extensive experience in project management, home decorating, and floor planning in homes on and around Boston's South Shore. Whether a client is downsizing, relocating, or aging in place, Natalie manages it all. She is a member of the National Association of Senior Move Managers. You can reach her at 781-724-1681 or visit alltherightmovesboston.com for more information. ∞*

OCES & Staff Honored with Community Awards

BROCKTON, PLYMOUTH AND WEYMOUTH, MA – In a virtual Awards Ceremony held on June 8, 2022, Community Services of Greater Brockton honored Old Colony Elder Services (OCES) with the "COVID-19 Agency Hero Award" and OCES staff member Jordan Stocker, a South Weymouth resident, was presented with the "Excellence In Human Services Award."

With offices in Brockton and Plymouth, MA, OCES is a non-profit agency serving older adults and individuals with disabilities throughout a service area of 23 communities.

COVID-19 Agency Hero Award

Community Services of Greater Brockton recognized OCES with the COVID-19 Agency Hero Award. This special award, given solely in 2022, recognized OCES for their outstanding service as an agency that personified the spirit of service, courage, justice, and commitment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even though the agency's daily operations changed significantly, OCES continued to provide all their pre-pandemic services. They also expanded programs and services to meet the new and changing needs of the community. Essentially, OCES remained open and delivered services throughout the pandemic. With primarily office-based onsite staff prior to COVID-19, OCES converted to a remote workforce within 24 hours.

OCES introduced several new initiatives to address the increasing number of older adults facing food insecurities, including the "Grocery Bag" project and "Grab & Go" Meals. Delivery needs were met by more than 780 dedicated staff



Alisa DeLage, OCES' Chief Programs Officer and Jordan Stocker, OCES' Options Counselor

and volunteers. OCES also provided the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to keep consumers, families, and staff safe.

OCES took a leadership role in COVID-19 vaccination education; scheduling vaccination appointments for home-bound older adults and individuals with disabilities; and coordinated transportation for individuals to get to and from vaccine appointments.

"We are incredibly proud that our agency has been recognized with Community Services of Greater Brockton's COVID-19 Agency Hero Award," said Nicole Long, CEO of OCES. "I would like to thank our extraordinary staff members and volunteers for their heroic efforts, which ensured we were able to respond to the needs of the community and continue to fulfill our mission during an extremely difficult time for all."

The Excellence In Human Services Award

Jordan Stocker, Options Counselor at OCES, received Community Services of Greater Brockton's Excellence In Human Services Award. This award is given to an outstanding employee or volunteer at a Human Services Agency who has:

at least two years of work experience in Human Services; works directly with clients at least fifty percent of their time; and has been outstanding in community service and collaboration. Stocker, who joined OCES in 2019, was nominated for this award for his commitment to consumers in the Greater Brockton community, along with his commitment to the OCES Team.

Stocker is dedicated to assisting older adults and individuals with disabilities, and ensuring they are able to access and understand the resources that may be available to them. There is an increased need for assistance as more face housing instability, behavioral health issues, and financial concerns, including being able to afford vital medications. Stocker has been asked to join several community groups to collaborate, determine ways to assist those in need, and provide input on concerning issues. He is focused on best serving those who are in need so they may live safely and independently within the community.

According to Alisa DeLage, Chief Programs Officer at OCES, "Even in a moment when he was being recognized for his work, Jordan took the opportunity to highlight the need for affordable housing. Jordan always makes the individuals he serves the priority. We are honored to have Jordan as part of our team and are proud he has received this well-deserved award!"

To learn more about services and resources provided by OCES, visit <https://www.ocesma.org>

About Community Services of Greater Brockton. Each year, the nonprofit organization Community Services of Greater Brockton holds their Annual Meeting and Community Awards Ceremony. The awards are granted to recipients in the Greater Brockton community in many different categories. For more information, visit their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/communityservicesofgreaterbrockton/> ∞



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