

CAREGIVER CHRONICLE

July/August 2018

Connections for Caregivers

Dedicated to the memory of Cheryl Robinson, M.S.W., L.C.S.W.

Time and Geography Made Hal Kosoy the Primary Caregiver

By David Greenberg

Morty and Rhoda Kosoy were living in their home in South Florida. They had one son, Howard, and his family living nearby; another son, Hal, living here in Gainesville and a daughter, Brenda in Atlanta.

But things were getting ready to change for this family.

Morty, who had been the primary caregiver for Rhoda, was starting to have his own health issues. As a result, the couple needed more and more help. The family in South Florida was doing all they could but they worked full time. Hal spent a lot of time traveling from Gainesville, and Brenda helped as much as possible from Atlanta.

Finally the decision was made that Morty and Rhoda needed assisted living. The question was where. The answer was obvious – Gainesville. Of all the children, Hal had the most availability. It also put them geographically in the perfect spot between all three children.

So the process began, and it all worked remarkably well.

Hal started looking for a place in Gainesville and quickly found three viable possibilities. A Realtor was contacted in South Florida, and their home was listed. Things moved into high gear though when the Realtor found a buyer in one day.

“Of the three possibilities

here, The Windsor met their needs the best,” said Hal. “And they had a new, nice-sized, one-bedroom apartment ready for them to move in.”

So Hal quickly returned to Gainesville, signed the necessary documents, bought furniture, and they all packed Rhoda and Morty for the move. Two weeks later a small caravan traveled from South Florida to Gainesville. A grandson, Joshua, and his fiancée, Rebecca, drove Morty’s car. Hal drove his father. Howard and his wife, Lynda, drove Rhoda. The family was met in Gainesville, by Andrew, another grandson. They all worked together to move Morty and Rhoda into their new home at The Windsor.

“To help get them settled, I spent the first two nights there with them,” said Hal, who says his part of the whole process could not have been done without the support of his husband, Angel.

“The people at The Windsor have just been wonderful,” he said. “We established a care plan, and they became acclimated to their new surroundings. They have adjusted very well, and they love it here. The staff – the people who clean and help them with



Rhoda, Hal and Morty Kosoy

their daily routines – has been outstanding.”

But it wasn’t as easy as it sounds.

For Hal, who is suddenly in the role of primary caregiver, life has changed dramatically. He helps with their daily needs and pays their bills. He also had to help them find new doctors and other medical support.

“It’s certainly a change in life. I now worry about that middle-of-the-night phone call,” he said of the issue common to all primary caregivers. “It’s now 24/7. I think about them all the time. I question whether I am doing enough.”

As for Morty and Rhoda, they love their new home, as they are creating new and lasting memories with their family and friends at The Windsor.

Savvy Caregiver Training

Savvy Caregiver Training is a multi-session training dedicated to people who care for family members and friends with dementias (like Alzheimer's). Our goal is to reduce caregiver stress by offering easy-to-understand information about progressive dementias, related medicines, and diagnostic tools. In the program we help caregivers build skills on relating to persons of dementia when they behave in ways that baffle, embarrass or irritate you and others.

Here is a sampling of our upcoming schedule. Choose whichever series works for your schedule and call Johnnie Jones at jonesj@agingresources.org or 352-692-5277 to register.

07/31/2018	Tuesdays	2:00 – 4:00 pm	Marion Senior Services, Ocala
08/02/2018	Thursdays	2:00 – 4:00 pm	St. Madeleine Church, High Springs

More dates of upcoming Savvy Caregiver Trainings can be found at our Web Page (<http://www.agingresources.org/savvy-caregiver-for-families>). Or, go to our Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/Savvy-Caregiver-Training-131134764247962>) for other information, tips and techniques about caregiving and dementia.



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From the Desk of Sam W. Boone, Jr.:

New Florida Law Strengthens Protection From Exploitation For Our Seniors

By Sam W. Boone, Jr.

Editor's Note: This is part of a series of columns that will be presented in this newsletter by Sam W. Boone, Jr., a local attorney whose primary practice areas include elder law, estate planning, probate and trust administration. It is hoped that the information will be valuable for caregivers and family members dealing with issues related to elder law.

Arguably the most difficult challenge for our senior population is exploitation. The most vulnerable members of our society are victimized by strangers, caregivers and family members at an estimated annual cost of \$37 billion.

As many as 5 million older Americans are victimized annually. Experts expect this number to continue to climb over the next several years. Part of the reason for the expected increase is simply the result of a growing number of seniors.

With Florida being the retirement mecca it has been for so long, a disproportionate number of those seniors end up here. So it's likely that here in Florida, we see more examples of senior exploitation than any other state in the country.

As many as 39 states, including Florida, have enacted legislation to protect our seniors from exploitation but much more needs to be done. Here in Florida, one of the largest retirement states in the country, new legislation was passed this year to fight senior exploitation.

A new Florida Statute, drafted and advocated for by the Florida Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and the Elder Law Section of the Florida Bar gives families and others who become aware of financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult the ability to obtain an immediate court injunction action to stop this as soon as they become aware of the exploitation.

The statute covers a wide range of conduct that could be defined as exploitation. Simply put, if an elderly person is dependent upon someone, relying on them for advice or care, or if they serve

in any other fiduciary role for a person suffering from the infirmities of aging, and they take money or property from them through deception or intimidation, they have committed an act of elder abuse. The statute includes relatives as well as caregivers and strangers. That means a son, daughter or other relative who takes money from their parents by lying or using influence, has broken the law.

So if you are a friend of someone you believe



is being exploited, it's important to take action and take it quickly. In fact, Florida law requires you to report exploitation of a vulnerable adult to the Department of Children and Families if you believe it is happening. The

DCF hotline number is 1-800-962-2873.

This law is a vital step in protecting our seniors. This summer, if you travel to visit family, it is a good time to make sure all the family legal and medical documents are in order. It may also be a good time to take stock of the family situation to help make sure the older members of your family are protected from exploitation.

Sam W. Boone, Jr. is a Gainesville-based attorney practicing elder law and estate planning. He is past-president of the Academy of Florida Elder Law Attorneys and is accredited by the Veterans Administration. To learn more about elder-law issues, go online to [www. http://boonelaw.com](http://boonelaw.com), or call (352) 374-8308.

When is it time.....

By Leilani Doty, PhD

Are you are wondering, when is it time for me to....

- Tell my doctor I am having problems with memory?
- Tell the rest of my family and neighbors that I have Alzheimer's disease?
- Talk to Dad about not driving anymore?
- Ask my sisters for help taking care of Mom, who now lives with me?
- Join a support group and ask others who know what I am going through for some tips and understanding?
- Find someone to watch and keep my partner company, so that I can get out of the house for a few hours by myself?
- Look for a day care program where my loved one could do activities, have fun and be safe?
- Start thinking about moving Mom to an assisted care facility or memory care unit?

These questions are just some examples of what people wonder about when they experience changes in memory or thinking functions in themselves, loved ones or friends. The short answer to the questions is: The time is probably now or very soon.

In general, earlier is better than later or too late. For example, talking to your physician about memory problems may uncover some fixable health

issues, such as low thyroid or Vitamin B12 levels; in these cases an early fix may return healthy memory function.

If there are safety issues such as scrapes, near misses or a recent accident with driving the car, motorboat or lawn mower, the time may be now. If the caregiver/care partner of someone with Alzheimer's or a related memory disorder is feeling tired, worn out, worried about such questions, such as asking for help, finding a group of people who will listen and provide support, or finding a good care facility, it is the time to take steps in that direction and to gather information (Contact the free 24/7 Alzheimer's Association Helpline 1-800-272-3900 or www.alz.org).

In short, when you notice a change in memory, thinking, or other abilities in yourself or your husband, partner, adult child, neighbor, walking companion, colleague at work, etc., then it is time to say something or take steps to do something about it. Earlier is better than later.

Leilani Doty, PhD, Associate Director of Programs, Central & North Florida Chapter, Alzheimer's Association, Ledoty@alz.org; 1-800-272-3900 (24/7 free helpline; www.alz.org)

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Tips for Staying Hydrated Brought to you by The Windsor of Gainesville

Dehydration occurs when the body doesn't have enough water to carry out its normal functions. Water keeps our body moving! The need to stay hydrated as we age is critical – and hydration can be simple.

What does dehydration do to our bodies?

Early stages of dehydration can include thirst, dry mouth, dry skin, headaches, sleepiness and cramping.

When dehydration becomes severe, it can advance into conditions including:

- Muscle cramps
- Low blood pressure
- Rapid breathing
- Confusion
- Delirium

One Surprising Effect of Dehydration

Many people are not aware that dehydration can actually increase the risk of falls in seniors. Falls are the leading cause of hospitalization in adults over the age of 65. Dehydration affects overall balance, vision and joint health. Staying hydrated and eating a balanced diet can help keep your brain and body healthy.

How can you prevent dehydration?

First and most simply, drink water every day. If you aren't used to drinking water regularly, increase your daily intake gradually. Keep a water bottle full and handy all day. Minimize alcohol, sodium and caffeine intake. Fruits and vegetables like watermelon, tomatoes and cucumber contain water and can help you stay hydrated.

July Tip:

Want to pep up your plain water? Simply find some fresh fruits, vegetables or herbs you like, add them to a bottle or pitcher of water and fill it with water and ice. Let the water sit for a few hours to allow the flavors to infuse. Try these simple add-ins for a delicious and refreshing treat. Get Creative!

- Watermelon and Mint
- Lemon and Pineapple
- Orange and Cilantro
- Strawberry and Basil
- Kiwi and Watermelon

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Scientists Have Discovered the Secret to Living a Long, Healthy, Fulfilling Life

By Ruth Brunner

Researchers call it connectedness. In other words, those who spend time with family and friends and have personal connections with people every day are more likely to live longer, stay healthier and be happier. And it also helps people stay independent, remain mentally sharp and reduce the risk of health issues such as Alzheimer's.

According to a study from Harvard Medical School, "Connectedness is as much a protective factor – probably more – than lowering your blood pressure, losing weight, quitting smoking, or wearing your seat belt."

That is why Windsor of Gainesville is so passionate about what we do. We want people to be able to stay as independent and active as they can, but without the responsibilities of a house. They benefit by having the time to do the things they want and having a friendly, fun atmosphere full of

other active people.

Many people don't want to move out of their house and live somewhere else. We want to stay at home because we want to be independent. But ironically, the longer we stay, the more our own house can become a burden. And worse, living alone or having limited opportunity for connectedness day after day can drain your energy, bring on ill health and even shorten your life.

Windsor of Gainesville is more than a place to live; it is a lifestyle. It is a community of people who want to have a more active social life.

Ruth Brunner is the Sales Director for The Windsor of Gainesville. She has worked in the senior care market for the past decade and currently serves on the Board of Directors for ElderCare of Alachua County.

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10 Locations Throughout Florida!

Caregiver Support Groups

Al'z Place
3rd Thursday of the month at 9am
Open to all caregivers
1610 NW 23rd Ave., Gainesville
Contact Nancy at 352-265-9200

Alzheimer's Association
Caregiver Support Group
2nd Thursday of each month - 1:30 p.m.
Edward Jones conference room,
220 North Main Street, Suite 2, Chiefland
Contact Kathryn at 352-493-4949

Cancer Center at NFRMC
Breast Cancer Support Group
2nd Tuesday of the month - 6pm - 7:30 pm
Call Susie at 352-213-5890

Community Cancer Center
Living With Cancer Supports
www.cccnf.com for more information

Community Cancer Center
Lake City Support Group
2nd Wednesday every month 11am - 1pm
4520 W.US Hwy. 90, Lake City, FL 32055 For more information call 386-755-0601

Community Coalition for Older Adults
Second Friday of the month, Senior Recreation Center,
5701 NW 34 St.
Contact Shirley Bloodworth at
sgblood@bellsouth.net
for information.

Haven Hospice
Bereavement Supports
Call 692-5123 for more information

Hospice of Marion County
Transitions Caregiver Support Group
Usually the 2nd Tuesday of each month 11am - 1 pm
The Elliott Center, 3231 SW 34th Ave. Ocala
Call for information 352-854-5200

Hospice of the Nature Coast
Wings Community Education Center
Grief Support Group- High Springs
Call 386-454-1338 for more information

Lake Area Caregiver Support Group
4th Tuesday of the month from 1-2:00pm
Trinity Episcopal Church
204 SR 26, Melrose, FL 32666
Call 352-475-3792 for more information

Park Meadows Health and Rehab Center
3250 SW 41 Pl, GV
Call the Alz Helpline at 1-800-272-3900 for more information

Senior Healthcare Center at Springhill
3rd Tuesday of the month- 2:30-4:00pm
3720 NW 83rd Street, Gainesville, FL 32606
Contact Flory at 336-3050

NF Mind Matters Stroke Support Group
4th Thursday of the month from 1-2 pm
South Tower, 4th floor Conference Room-NFRMC
Call 1-800-611-6913 for more information

The Village
(for Village residents only)
2nd Thursday of the month from 1:30-3 pm
8000 NW 27th Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32606
Call 872-5332 for more information

United Church of Gainesville
1624 NW 5th Ave, GV
3rd Tuesday of the month from 7-8pm
Open to caregivers of persons with dementia
Contact Lynda at 352-219-3023

VA Caregiver Support
Mon-Fri- 8am- 11pm, Sat. 10:30-6pm
Call 1-855-260-3274

Useful Resources

Seniors vs. Crime: www.seniorsvscrime.com
Alzheimer's Association – www.alz.org/cnfl/index.asp
Doggie Styles: Mobile Pet Grooming – www.doggiestyles.org
Elder Affairs – www.elderaffairs.state.fl.us/index.php
Elder Helpline – 1-800-963-5337, options@agingresources.org
Elder Options – Savvy Caregiver Classes –
www.agingresources.org
Florida Silver Alert – www.floridasilveralert.com
SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders)
www.floridashine.org
Driving – www.independencedrive.phhp.ufl.edu
Medicare – www.medicare.org
State of Florida – www.myflorida.com
National Institute on Aging (free publications) – www.nig.nih.gov
United Way – Alachua, Bradford & Putnam counties –
www.unitedwaycnfl.org
National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Management
– www.caremanager.org
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – www.va.gov

New Support Group for Kidney Cancer

First meeting: Sunday, July 15 2-5pm
Location: Home By Choice
5310 NW 8th Ave #2
Open to the public for people and
families living with and/or affected by
kidney cancer.

Please contact Elise at 352-682-1665 or
emrob87@gmail.com for RSVP, ques-
tions, comments and ideas.