



Stress relief and mindfulness: Techniques for caregivers



Caregivers, health-care providers and people living with dementia continue to tell us that this is an incredibly stressful time. If you are feeling this way, you are not alone. Health Canada recently estimated that due to the pandemic, roughly 11 million Canadians will experience high levels of stress in family and work settings.

The impact of stress

Stress is not merely experienced in our minds. When someone is stressed, their brain releases a stress hormone called cortisol which causes a physical reaction throughout the body. Their heartbeat speeds up, their breath quickens and their muscles tense. Visit our webpage on reducing caregiver stress to read the 10 warning signs of stress and the caregiver stress checklist: alzbc.org/caregiverstress.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is simply paying attention to the experience of the present moment through our senses without judgement. We all possess this ability, but it becomes easier with practice.

Studies have found engaging in mindfulness meditation can reduce stress, decrease rumination, boost focus and lower emotional reactivity. You can follow along to guided meditations on websites such as Insight Timer, Smiling Mind or Headspace, or take a course in mindfulness-based stress reduction, such as palousemindfulness.com.

Gratitude

Humans are thought to remember negative events more strongly than positive or neutral news. The good news is the brain continues to rewire itself, known neuroplasticity. We can use this to our advantage by focusing more intently on positive experiences.

Try this 10-minute journaling activity

Once or twice a week, try writing a list of up to five things you feel grateful for. The goal is to savour the positive emotions you feel from remembering it. The physical act of writing helps to cement it in your mind, and it helps to be specific as possible. You may wish to look for the small wins or silver linings if it's a particularly difficult time.

People feeling extreme stress may wish to seek extra support beyond what's shared here, such as speaking to a trusted friend or calling our First Link® Dementia Helpline, available Monday to Friday.

- **English:** 1-800-936-6033 (9 a.m. to 8 p.m.)
- **Cantonese and Mandarin:** 1-833-674-5007 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.)
- **Punjabi:** 1-833-674-5003 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.)

Upcoming online events

Dementia Friends

We all have a role to play in making our community dementia friendly. Learn about dementia and how you can help people living with dementia feel included and supported. This session is presented with Minoru Centre for Active Living.

Monday, January 25, 2021

1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Registration:

Phone: 604-276-4300

Email seniors@richmond.ca

Online: www.richmond.ca/register



Dementia Lab 2021: Supporting ability

Emily Carr University is hosting the international Dementia Lab conference from January 18 to 28, 2021. As part of this conference, the Alzheimer Society of B.C. is co-hosting an online workshop on dementia-friendly research on Monday, January 25. If you are a caregiver or person living with dementia interested in research, visit alzbc.org/DementiaLab or contact research@alzheimercbc.org to learn more or register for the workshop.

January is Alzheimer's Awareness Month. Let's change the future.

This January, we encourage organizations and people throughout B.C. – and across the entire country – to learn more about dementia and its stark impact on Canadians. To learn more, visit alzbc.org/future.

As part of Alzheimer's Awareness Month, join us on **Wednesday, January 27 from 2 to 3 p.m.** for the upcoming webinar, "Raise your voice: Dementia and long-term care in the time of COVID-19." Hear advocates and experts discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people living with dementia in long-term care. ASL and closed captioning will be available. For more information, visit alzbc.org/webinars.

Join us for a virtual Breakfast to Remember

Join the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s *Breakfast to Remember* to help change the future for people affected by dementia. Hear from keynote speaker, astronaut Col. Chris Hadfield and help raise funds for vital programs and services, as well as enable research during the live province-wide breakfast on March 4!

Each ticket also comes with access to our exclusive research event, featuring a discussion with leaders in dementia research. Learn more at: www.BreakfastToRemember.ca

Heads Up: An Introduction to Brain Health

It's never too soon or too late to make changes that will maintain or improve your brain health. Learn strategies and set goals. This session is presented with Minoru Centre for Active Living.

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

11 a.m. to noon

Registration:

Phone: 604-276-4300

Email seniors@richmond.ca

Online: www.richmond.ca/register



Learn about dementia from anywhere in our live weekly webinars

Have your dementia questions and concerns answered by our specialist staff at our free dementia education webinars, now available weekly. Receive tips, learn strategies and share experiences with other participants. All you need is a computer, tablet or phone!

To register for our upcoming webinars or watch recorded videos from previous webinars, visit our website at alzbc.org/webinars.



Learn about dementia from anywhere by participating in our live webinars

Webinar	Date
Coping with change Explore change and loss and the uncertainty of the dementia experience.	Wednesday, January 13 2 – 3 p.m.
Research ready: Technology in dementia research during COVID-19 with Dr. Lillian Hung Dr. Lillian Hung, professor of Nursing at UBC and Clinical Scientist at Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute, discusses the latest research on technology and dementia and how research has adapted to the pandemic.	Wednesday, January 20 2 – 3 p.m.
Raise your voice: Dementia and long-term care in the time of COVID-19 Join us for a conversation between advocates and experts on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in people living with dementia in long-term care.	Wednesday, January 27 2 – 3 p.m.
What is dementia? Learn how dementia affects the individual's brain and behaviour, as well as the disease's impact on family.	Wednesday, February 3 2 – 3 p.m.
Family dynamics in dementia caregiving featuring Jodie McDonald, MSW Join registered social worker and psychotherapist Jodie McDonald to learn strategies for managing difficult conversations and navigating boundaries with other family members in your role as a dementia caregiver.	Wednesday, February 10 2 – 3 p.m.
Deciphering research headlines Join us to increase your research literacy. Learn how to go beyond news headlines and evaluate if a source is credible. This webinar will also cover our most frequently asked questions about dementia research.	Wednesday, February 17 2 – 3 p.m.

Webinar	Date
Focus on behaviour: Bathing and hygiene Learn how dementia affects bathing and hygiene and explore strategies for managing these changes.	Wednesday, February 24 2 – 3 p.m.
Focus on behaviour: Dressing Learn how dementia affects dressing and explore strategies for managing these changes.	Wednesday, March 3 2 – 3 p.m.
Planning ahead: Do it now! (with Emily Clough) Join Emily Clough, partner at Clark Wilson LLP and strong voice for clients facing incapacity issues and learn how to begin legal, health care and financial planning now, before dementia affects the ability to communicate.	Wednesday, March 10 2 – 3 p.m.
Considering the transition to long-term care Factors to consider when thinking of a move into long-term care and ways to ease the transition.	Wednesday, March 17 2 – 3 p.m.
Building caregiver resiliency: Staying healthy Strategies to positively manage caregiver stress and improve your caregiving skills. For caregivers.	Wednesday, March 24 2 – 3 p.m.
Lived experience webinar Hear from people living with dementia as they share the impact of dementia on their lives.	Wednesday, March 31 2 – 3 p.m.

Cantonese webinars

Our "Dementia friends" video series is now available in Cantonese! Learn how you can build a community that is supportive of people living with dementia:

alzbc.org/2Jk5MNU.

For more information and support in Cantonese, visit alzbc.org/Chinese. If you have further questions about Alzheimer's disease or other dementias, call the free, confidential First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-833-674-5007 (Cantonese and Mandarin) or 1-800-936-6033 (English).



Connect with other caregivers by phone through our tele-support groups



In response to COVID-19 and the temporary suspension of in-person support groups, the Alzheimer Society of B.C. will be offering regional and provincial telephone support groups for caregivers. Please see information below regarding the groups available to you and information regarding how to register.

For information or to register:

- Contact the First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033 or
- Email info.helpline@alzheimerbc.org
- For programs in Cantonese, contact Sharon Tong at 604-687-8299 or stong@alzheimerbc.org

Please note that the schedule is subject to change due to holidays or other conflicts. You will be notified by your facilitator upon registration.

Vancouver Coastal tele-support groups

Tele-support group

Date

Vancouver Coastal tele-support group

Open to anyone in Vancouver Coastal who is currently caring for a person living with dementia.

2nd Friday of the month, 10 – 11 a.m.

3rd Tuesday of the month, 2 – 3 p.m.

Vancouver Coastal tele-support group (Cantonese)

Open to anyone in Vancouver Coastal who speaks Cantonese and is currently caring for a person living with dementia.

3rd Wednesday of the month, 2 – 3 p.m.

4th Tuesday of the month, 10 – 11 a.m.

Provincial tele-support groups

Tele-support group

Date

Provincial young onset tele-support group

Open to caregivers anywhere in B.C. who are caring for a person living with dementia who is currently under the age of 65.

2nd Tuesday of the month, 7 – 8 p.m.

Provincial long-term care tele-support group

Open to caregivers anywhere in B.C. who are caring for a person living with dementia in a long-term care home.

3rd Tuesday of the month, 10 – 11 a.m.

3rd Tuesday of the month, 7 – 8 p.m.

3rd Wednesday of the month, 7 – 8 p.m.

4th Thursday of the month, 2 – 3 p.m.

Provincial tele-support groups

Tele-support group

Date

Provincial adult children tele-support group Open to caregivers anywhere in B.C. who are caring for a parent living with dementia.

2nd Wednesday of the month, 7 – 8 p.m.

2nd Thursday of the month, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

4th Tuesday of the month, 7 – 8 p.m.

Provincial general tele-support group
Open to caregivers anywhere in B.C. who are currently caring for a person living with dementia.

3rd Thursday of the month, 2 – 3 p.m.

3rd Thursday of the month, 7 – 8 p.m.

Provincial BvFTD tele-support group
Open to caregivers anywhere in B.C. who are caring for someone with behavioural variant frontotemporal dementia (bvFTD).

4th Monday of the month, 7 – 8 p.m.

Keep active and social at Minds in Motion® Online

Now online!

Minds in Motion® Online

Starting on January 19, 2021, Minds in Motion® will be offered online for people experiencing early symptoms of dementia and their care partners. This weekly program consists of a 30-minute fitness video followed by 45 minutes of social time, an opportunity to connect with others living with dementia.

Sessions are free to attend and hosted in Microsoft Teams. For more information and to register, please call the First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033.

Tuesday mornings, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday mornings, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Thursday mornings, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Friday mornings, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Thursday afternoons, 1 – 2:30 p.m.