

May 2020

Alzheimer Society

SARNIA - LAMBTON

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Celebrating May

**Global Health and
Fitness Month**

Gardening for Wildlife Month

Cinco de Mayo
May 5

Mother's Day
May 10

Limerick Day
May 12

Victoria Day
May 18

World Turtle Day
May 23

**IG Wealth Management Walk
for Alzheimer's – see next
page for more details**
May 31



A Message to Our Clients:

I hope this greeting finds you safe and healthy amidst the Coronavirus Pandemic. I know that everyone is facing challenges brought on by COVID-19, and that these unprecedented times are especially difficult for those living with dementia and their care partners. Health and social supports can be difficult to access in regular times, and healthcare decisions are never easy. There is no doubt that this global pandemic has changed the course of your daily routines, family dynamics, overall well-being, and has you making decisions quite differently than before. I know there are many of you who are separated from family and may have someone living in Long Term Care with whom you cannot visit. Please know that we are here for you. We will do our best to help you navigate this new reality, while continuing to provide you with support.

While we have limited our in-person interactions, we continue to work hard both in the office and from our homes to ensure that you receive support and have access to programs. This experience has been a learning curve for all of us as we figure out how to use technology to stay in touch and figure out how to interact in virtual spaces.

There are some supports that must continue in person, and I want to send a special thank you to our respite workers who continue to provide care in the homes of our clients. Many have gone above and beyond their regular duties to provide check-ins and to deliver essential supplies and activity kits to those who are isolating at home.

We know that connections matter. We miss you all, and look forward to a time when we can gather together again.

Stay safe,

Melanie Bouck
Chief Executive Officer



Its official! The Alzheimer Society of Sarnia-Lambton will Walk Online this year on May 31st along with other communities across Canada! So, engage your family members in discussions about how you can support the Alzheimer Society on Walk day. Can you walk in your neighbourhood? Do a stair challenge at home or a fun obstacle course in your back yard? Whatever you can do in your own space to get active and support the Alzheimer's Society is fine by us! But first you need to register, so visit www.walkforalzheimers.ca, find the Sarnia-Lambton walk, then register yourself or your team (you can still enter as a team even though you are participating from a distance!) and join us online on May 31! When you register for this year's IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's, you will receive a printable image of a Forget-Me-Not flower that you can design. Use your Forget-Me-Not flower as a window decal and help colour the world with a message of connection to show people living with dementia, their care partners and their friends and family our support. Share your designs on our Facebook page using [#OurConnectionsMatter](https://www.facebook.com/OurConnectionsMatter) and help raise support and awareness for those living with dementia.

Picture Perfect

May is Photography Month, a time to not only enjoy snapping photos and capturing memories, but a time to look at the world differently, through the eyes of a photographer. And with pocket-sized cell phones equipped with powerful cameras that rival the top traditional cameras, it seems as if everyone these days is capable of high-quality photography. Photography has always seemed a bit magical. After all, photography gives us the ability to freeze a moment in time and cherish it forever. Photographers may record important moments in history, capture the energy and emotion of a single memory, or stage scenes to send political messages or make social or cultural critiques. In the end, however, what makes a photograph special is its subject matter and composition. What is the play between light and shadow? Is color saturated or muted? Are faces joyful and energetic or melancholy and lonely? A simple photograph communicates so much—both a message to the viewer and the self-expression of the photographer. And now that cell phones put cameras in the hands of most everyone, photography has become a part of many peoples' daily lives. In this way, photography has never been more democratic than it is today.

Just as a cell phone is a device used for communicating via voice or text, the cell phone camera is also a mode of communication, but via picture. The first camera phone was unveiled in 1995 to little fanfare. At first, it seemed strange to pair a phone with a camera. Today, cell phones without a camera are both unthinkable and unmarketable. The most powerful cell phone cameras are filled with sensors and meters that allow users to simply point and click to make mini masterpieces. Apps like Instagram, Tumblr, Snapchat, and Pinterest share photos with millions of people instantaneously. We share images of our children, vacations, artwork, and even our food. In Egypt and China, cell phone cameras captured images that broadcast revolutions to the world. In these ways, photography is more than art—it is a means to make your voice heard.

Connections Matter

It can be more difficult to carry on a conversation with someone living with dementia over the phone or computer. The following list can help family members, friends or neighbours helping with social isolation at this time. The goal is to maintain physical distancing not social distancing.

Conversation Starters for Person Living with Dementia

Reminiscence is an important therapeutic mechanism for persons living with dementia. Focus on their proudest moments, stories they love to share and talking about things or people they love. By bringing up positive topics you can steer them away from the current difficulties. It is also okay to bring up past favourite discussions since the overall goal is to give them a moment of joy and a pleasant interaction.

Topic ideas:

Past accomplishments, where they grew up, parents, grandparents, siblings, children & spouse (usually great topics, but in some cases may have to avoid discussion about some family members), pets, past job & first job, hobbies, friends, common interests, entertainment, courtship, lessons learned, funny stories, trips (unless it is going to come back to current COVID-19 situation), how things have changed i.e. new inventions, old fads, history of Sarnia/Lambton or their hometown, favourite things, cooking & favourite foods, & anything special you know about them.

Tips:

- Ask questions but make sure it seems natural not like they are being interviewed
- You can have a list of past successful topics or things to bring up beside your phone
- Use open ended questions i.e. who was/is your favourite singer? Then follow up with Who, What, Where, When and How questions to keep the conversation rolling.
- Accentuate the positive. I.e. "I always love to chatting with you" "That is a great idea I will have to try that!"
- Share first to have them share. "I had a great conversation with my friend Charlene yesterday. It was so good to catch up since we have known each other since kindergarten." Then ask about their good friend. (This example will only work if you know they also have good friends and don't share anything too personal).
- Use prompts-purposefully bring up a subject you know they will shine with.
- Have a funny story, joke etc. to share handy
- What brings them joy-focus on it!
- Be patient & pre-pared to hear the same story.
- Be flexible you might start with a topic and they take you down a different road go with them or gentle guide them back to better topics.





Connections Matter (cont)

Ideas for things to say:

- Where did you grow up? Oh, I have/haven't been there. Tell me about....
- What did you and your family do for fun when you were younger?
- What is the best lesson you learned?
- What do you like to watch/ listen to now/years ago?
- Wow, you have done a lot, what are you the most proud of?
- Ask about their role in the family (had to take care of the sibling, rebellious one etc.)
- What did you want to be when you grow up? or What do you want to be when you grow up? 😊
- Tell me about your first job. Did it pay well? Did you like doing it?
- I real love to cook and I am running out of recipes, do you have any good suggestions?
- Did you ever get in trouble as a kid?
- What did you and your friends do for fun as a kid?
- What neighbourhood did you grow up in? Was there a lot of kids there?
- I saw a child the other day wearing, what crazy fads have you seen?

Caring Tip: If you are caring for someone with dementia from a distance you may want to start a "calling chain". You can set up a schedule for family members and friends to have a rotating calendar of who will call when. This can help when one person is getting too many calls, and to keep the person living dementia as social engaged as possible.

Celebrate Cinco de Mayo



Cinco de Mayo enjoys widespread popularity across the United States, despite many Americans mistaking the holiday as Mexico's Independence Day. Cinco de Mayo revelers take note! Mexico's

Independence Day is held on September 16. It commemorates the day in 1810 when a Catholic priest known as Father Hidalgo made a speech in the town of Dolores calling for independence from Spain. Hidalgo's speech has since been called the "Cry of Dolores," and the town is now known as Dolores Hidalgo. Cinco de Mayo commemorates a very different event on a date over 50 years later.

In 1861, Benito Juárez was elected the new president of Mexico, but the country he was elected to run was bankrupt after decades of civil war. Juárez was forced to put off repaying all debts to Europe for two years, a decision that angered France, Britain, and Spain. These countries responded by sending their naval fleets across the Atlantic to collect their due. Juárez negotiated a deal with Britain and Spain. France, however, saw an opportunity to invade Mexico. Napoleon III ordered the landing of French troops at Veracruz, and the French forces chased Juárez and his government out of the city.

French General Charles Latrille de Lorencez soon marched his force of 6,000 upon the town of Puebla de Los Angeles. Juárez was desperate. He rounded up a group of 2,000 locals and fortified the town under the command of General Ignacio Zaragoza. On May 5, 1862, Lorencez surrounded Puebla and began shelling the town with heavy artillery. Yet by nightfall, the French were forced to retreat, having lost 500 soldiers. Zaragoza's victory at the Battle of Puebla was not a major one, but it was symbolic. Juárez's government used the victory to rally support against the French. Five years later, the United States sided with Mexico against the French and put an end to the war. Americans celebrating Cinco de Mayo are not celebrating America's successful intervention. It is more a general celebration of Mexican culture, fueled by the marketing influence of the beverage industry.



Community Supports

Ask a Question Fill out the form below if you have a question about COVID-19 and vulnerable populations.

<https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus/community-supports/>

My Community Notification

Network is a local emergency alerting system that, during emergencies, can be used to notify residents with publicly listed land-line telephones. Residents will typically receive alerts for tornado warnings, drinking water emergencies, shelter-in-place advisories, evacuation advisories and missing children.

Click on the link below to register:

<https://emergencieslambton.ca/emergency-notifications-information/mycnn-2/>

SOCIAL ACTIVATION via ZOOM

Coffee Break: Mondays at 10am and Thursdays at 9am

Minds in Motion: Tuesdays at 1:30pm

Inspirational Moments: Wednesdays at 1:30pm

Chair Yoga and Dance: Thursdays at 10am

Sing-a-long with Kingston: Thursdays at 2 pm

Armchair Travelogue: Fridays at 11am

For more information please contact Vanessa at vbarnes@alzheimersarnia.ca

Topical Tuesday with Christine

If you would be interested in taking part in our Tuesday afternoon educational sessions, please email Christine at cwright@alzheimersarnia.ca for upcoming sessions and topics.

Time will be given to answer your questions.



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