GIVING
TUESDAY
Dec 1

SAVE THE DATE!

Together we help.

On Giving Tuesday, your donation to the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia will be matched* by an anonymous donor.

"As a former caregiver, I have seen first hand how the Society supports those living with dementia, and those who support people with dementia. That is why I am matching donations on Giving Tuesday."

*up to $5,000

In the Loop

FALL 2020

Société
Alzheimer
Society
NOVA SCOTIA

FALL 2020

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In the Loop

Find the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia on your favourite social media platform:

- @AlzheimerNS
- @AlzheimerNS
- @alzheimerns
- www.youtube.ca/alzheimerns
- www.linkedin.com/company/alzheimerns

Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia
112-2719 Gladstone St, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 4W6
902-422-7961 or 1-800-611-6345 (toll free within NS)

Finding Your Way Through the Winter Season: Tips for Staying Safe with Dementia

Adapted from Alzheimer Society of Canada

Winter is on its way, bringing with it snow, sleigh bells and a renewed importance of being safe in our homes and communities. To prepare, we are putting snow tires on our cars, pulling winter boots out of storage and stocking up on salt for our sidewalks and driveways. For people with dementia, there are more safety precautions to consider.

If you are living with dementia, or helping to care for someone with dementia, here are some tips to help maintain safety in your home and community throughout the winter.

Proper clothing is one of our first levels of protection in inclement weather. Be sure to pull the sweaters, winter coats, boots, hats, scarves and mitts out of storage so that they're close at hand. Footwear considerations are also important. Find boots with good grip, that are well-insulated and perhaps with Velcro instead of laces for ease. For items like hats and mitts that seem to disappear, purchase a few extras so that you are never without.

Decreased sunlight can cause someone with dementia to feel increased anxiety, confusion and even depression during the winter. You can help by making sure they are exposed to natural daylight when possible. Get outside when you can; a quick walk around the block or even just sitting outside in the garden for a few minutes can do wonders.

At home, make sure curtains are open during the day to let in as much light as possible. You could also position the furniture so that the person with dementia is sitting near a window. As natural light starts to fade, make sure lights and lamps are turned on.

If applicable, ensure that outdoor walkways around the home are well lit, and consider adding motion-detected lights outside. Remember that people with dementia often have issues with visual perception, so helping to keep homes well-lit indoors and out is extremely important.

Keeping active can help to boost circulation and staying active, even in the winter months, although more difficult, it is just as important. It is a good idea to encourage the person with dementia to move around, even if winter weather does not permit outside activity. If walking is difficult or extreme weather conditions make it hard to go outside, simply moving their arms and legs and wiggling their toes can be helpful.

These tips are just some of the ways that people with dementia can remain safe and active during the winter months. If you want to learn more please call 1-800-611-6345 to speak to a trained Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia staff or visit www.alzheimer.ca/ns

Winter is a beautiful season, and meant to be enjoyed. Be safe and have fun!

JOIN US ON THURSDAYS FOR ONLINE EDUCATION!

ALZEducate

- Various topics & presenters
- Information and conversations about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias
- Open to anyone at no cost, just register online!

Sessions are held via ZOOM every second Thursday from 1:30-2:30 p.m.
For more information visit alzheimer.ca/ns

Reducing Stress Through the Holiday Season

Connie VanBerkel, Manager, Community Development

Comfort, joy, magic, family, food and friends. Each of these words comes to mind when we think about the holiday season. Perhaps it's a favorite memory or tradition, or a time to reflect quietly. For many of us, the holidays are a very special time of year. For those of us who are caring for someone on the dementia journey, however, the holidays can also be a bit more challenging, and especially so this year. Changes in routine, the inability for extended family to visit and unfamiliarity in situations can create extra anxiety in a person living with dementia and added stress for caregivers.

There are many things we can do to make the holidays a little less stressful and overwhelming for both both people with dementia and care partners. Planning early, simplifying events and setting realistic expectations can go a long way to reduce stress and helping to ensure a warm, enjoyable holiday season.

Plan Early:

- Discuss ahead of time as a family what the holidays will look like, and try to keep as close to a regular routine as possible.
- Have a list of doctors' offices and pharmacies that are open over the holidays in case of emergency. If the person living with dementia takes medication, ensure they have enough for the holiday period.
- Shop for gifts early; try to avoid the hectic atmosphere of last-minute shopping
- Ask for help with shopping or cooking from a friend or neighbour.

Simplify events:

- Consider planning smaller gatherings. Less people and less noise can reduce feelings of being overwhelmed, especially in later stages of dementia.
- A potluck dinner is a great way for everyone to contribute and can lessen the expectation on you.
- Try to choose familiar locations. If possible, find a quiet area where the person living with dementia can retreat. Ask someone to keep them company.
- Consider celebrating over lunch or brunch, rather than an evening mealtime. The person you are caring for may be less restless at earlier times of day.

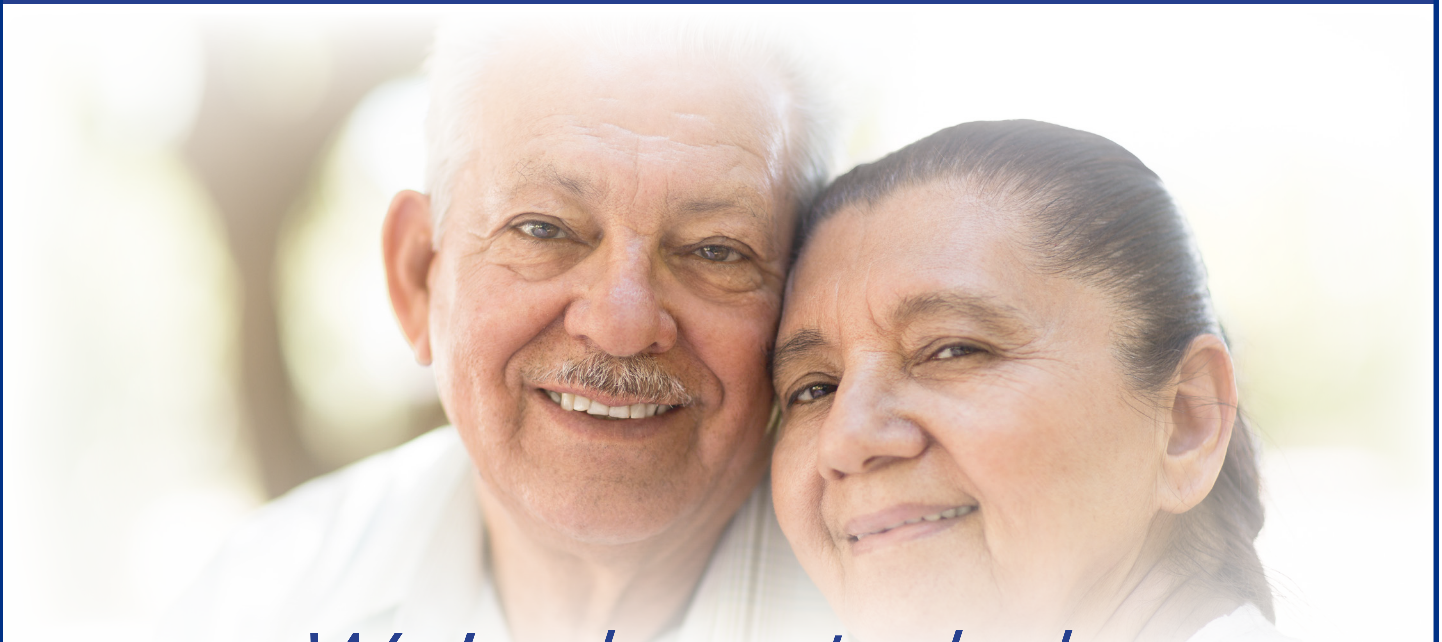
Keep Realistic Expectations:

- Overall, be flexible in the moment but recognize when you need a break. It's okay to ask for (and accept!) help.
- Try to be in the moment with the person – if they are focused on past events, try and meet them where they are, not to reorient them. Perhaps look through an old photo album together or sing favourite songs.

While we may find it difficult to accept that someone may not experience this time of year as they normally would, we can still enjoy the season by meeting the person living with dementia where they are. Maybe mom can't bake the traditional holiday cookies she once could; but she may be able to help package them in festive tins. Maybe dad can no longer string the lights on the tree himself; but he might love a drive to look at the lights of the neighbourhood houses.

By planning ahead and keeping an open mind, the holidays can be a wonderful time for both persons living with dementia and their caregivers. The Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia can help provide you with further resources, or someone to talk to. Our Infoline staff are happy to talk any time and can be reached at 1-800-611-6345.

Alzheimer InfoLine | 1-800-611-6345



We're here to help

The Alzheimer InfoLine is a confidential phone service provided by our team of knowledgeable and caring staff.

We provide information, support, and referral for persons with dementia, families, caregivers, and professionals.

Grief and Loss is a Lifelong Condition. We're Afraid of it. It's Human.

Catherine Shepard, Coordinator, Education & Outreach, Cape Breton

Originally published in the Cape Breton Post.

Grief. It's a tough subject to say the least and maybe one that doesn't get talked about enough. A few weeks ago, the Society hosted an online public presentation with guest speaker Roy Ellis who is a Bereavement Coordinator with Integrated Palliative Care for Nova Scotia Health. I'd like to share some of his insights with you.

Grief is one of the most powerful human experiences and it's not an easy thing to move through. When we think of grief, we often think of grieving after a loved one dies, but there are a lot of other losses that can bring grief into our lives. A divorce, the loss of a job, and a diagnosis of dementia.

After someone is diagnosed with dementia, they can experience feelings of loss and grief over their diagnosis and throughout the progression of the disease. Family caregivers also experience and grieve losses like their dreams, expected future plans, the loss of a relationship, and the loss of shared roles. The ambiguous loss and grief that a caregiver experiences can make the caregiving experience even harder.

Ambiguous loss is a type of loss you feel when the person with dementia is still here but isn't present in the same

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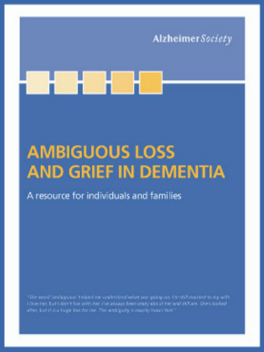
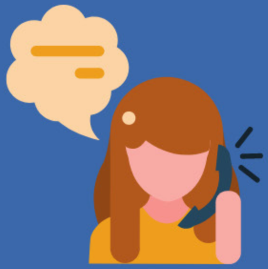
How to Cope with Grief & Loss



Download our booklet on ambiguous loss and grief in dementia at *alzheimer.ca/ns*

Don't do it alone. Talk to people around you and reach out for help if you need it.



Seek out programs and services in your community.

ways they were before. This can make it very complicated. To help us cope with grief and ambiguous loss, Roy suggests we should try and keep renegotiating the relationship with the person who has dementia.

“We have this idea of a fixed relationship,” says Roy. “You’re my father and I’m your son. So, as you enter dementia and I see you changing, I’m resentful and angry. If we’re going to hold on to this concrete sense of what a person should be, we’re going to suffer. There’s a place for the sadness and grief but also a place for this new relationship. What would it mean to expand large enough to both be angry and sad because I don’t have the old, and to be really curious about the encounter with the new?”

When I speak with families we talk about the progression of the disease and how challenging it can be to experience these losses. There are good days and bad days and sometimes abilities come and go. What we try to focus on is how to take it day by day and what supports they need right now to help them on their dementia journey.

Roy also mentioned the need to stay present and authentic to our feelings.

“We are often in caregiver or nurse mode and we’re not attending to our feelings and the sadness that arises when we’re losing a piece of a loved one,” says Roy. “Take time away from caregiving to turn into those feelings and add in as much playfulness as you can. Get out in nature, turn to self, read a book so that we’re more equipped to get back into the caregiving moment.”

I want families to know that they are not alone. Grieving has no timetable, and we all grieve in different ways. Please reach out if you need to talk more about grief or are looking for support services in the community by calling the Alzheimer InfoLine at 1-800-611-6345. To watch Roy’s presentation on grief, please visit the Society YouTube channel youtube.com/alzheimerns.

Holiday Office Closure Notice

The ASNS offices will be closed for the holidays **starting December 24, 2020, reopening on January 4, 2021.** If you need support during this time, please call 811 for health information and 911 in an emergency.

Have a safe and happy holiday season!

Your Commitment Shines through Zoom

Sacha Nadeau, First Link Coordinator & Research Liaison

We always knew people in the dementia sector were passionate, resilient and steadfast in their commitment to professional development. The recent turn out at our annual Provincial Conference takes this understanding to a whole new level. During this time of increased responsibility and uncertainty, we appreciate you spending a whole day with us on Zoom to learn about the latest practices in dementia care.

On October 20, a total of 266 users signed on to the Zoom session, but having heard about several "watch parties," we're confident that the actual number of participants exceeded 300. One group in particular showed us just how keen the continuing care sector is to exchange best practices in dementia care during the era of COVID-19.

Parkland at the Lakes, one of our generous sponsors, held a social distancing-style watch party for their staff. Ranging from nursing to housekeeping, food services to administration, nine of their staff gathered (six feet apart) in the auditorium to watch the conference on the big screen, along with the whole management team watching from their offices.

Parkland at the Lakes staff get together to watch the ASNS virtual provincial conference.

"We had a lot of interest from all different departments," says Melanie Murphy, LPN at Parkland at the Lakes. "It's so important for everyone who has contact with residents to participate and learn."

While we at the Alzheimer Society missed the hustle and bustle of connecting in person with colleagues across Nova Scotia, we're so glad to hear that some people were able to recreate that experience in a safe and socially distanced manner.

The conference included a vast cross section of perspectives, from academics to architects, persons with lived experience and various health care practitioners. Thanks to the virtual format, we were able to expand our audience reach across Nova Scotia, to Alberta and even as far as Ireland!

Thank you to all of our participants for your commitment to our first virtual conference. Thank you to our presenters and to ASNS staff for your dedication and adaptability. And a special heartfelt thank you to our conference sponsors, Dementia: Understanding the Journey, Northwood and Parkland at the Lakes for making it all possible.

Thank you to our conference sponsors!

Dementia
Understanding the Journey

Northwood
LIVE MORE

Parkland™
RETIREMENT LIVING
AT THE LAKES

You helped to provide over 1,700 total hours of education to participants across Nova Scotia and beyond

How does PPE Affect how we Communicate with People with Dementia?

Morgan Fleet, Communications & Marketing Assistant

Have you ever considered how masks and other PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) cover your facial expressions and body language, making it harder to determine who you are or how you're feeling?

Wearing a mask has become an important part of our new normal during the pandemic. While masks may not affect most of us in our normal day to day lives, for people living dementia PPE can act as an additional barrier to understanding their environment and the people around them, particularly health care workers. Masks and other PPE make it harder for them to connect with their caregivers and this lack of connection to the person caring for them can lead to increased anxiety and confusion.

People living with dementia often rely on body language and facial expressions during interactions, especially when language is affected. During our virtual provincial conference on October 20, Bernadette Lake, Continuing Care Support Specialist with the Health Association Nova Scotia, spoke on how this impacted care workers locally.

“Clients became resistive and agitated during care because they were unable to determine the intent of staff with PPE,” she says. “Simple things like body language suddenly became very hidden and things like smiles which would normally be seen as calming and welcoming to a dementia client were no longer visible to them.”

Throughout the pandemic, those who work in the dementia sector have gained a better understanding of the fears and anxieties that people living with dementia might experience and have found new ways to communicate and provide emotional support to those living with dementia that may not understand why someone has to wear a mask.

Here are a few key things to remember when interacting with people living with dementia while wearing PPE:

- Allow them time to process who is approaching them. This may take more time when masks can distort their ability to recognize faces
- Be aware of tone and volume. It can be beneficial to animate your tone to supplement for the reduced facial visibility
- Using their name often when providing instructions also helps maintain attention
- When providing emotional support, it is important to validate the person's reality

and emotional state. Distract them by supplying them with an activity of interest or redirect them by changing the topic to something less distressing or confusing

Wearing masks and other PPE are an unavoidable part of our new normal. It is important to always wear your PPE when necessary, to protect yourself and others. Use these suggestions when interacting with a person with dementia so you are not tempted to remove it.

This article is adapted from: "The Person Behind the Mask: Communicating with Clients Living with Dementia While Protecting Ourselves" by the Alzheimer Society of Peel.

Giving Through Work

Sarah Lyon, CFRE, Director, Philanthropy

Fall and Winter workplace giving campaigns have started! Each fall workplaces across Nova Scotia launch their internal giving campaigns. Many do this through the United Way or HealthPartners. A workplace giving campaign is an easy way to make a monthly donation via a contribution directly from your pay cheque, to your charity of choice.

The Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia is a HealthPartners organization. HealthPartners works with the top 16 health related charities in the country to bring the stories of those effected by serious and chronic illness, to your workplace campaign. Call us directly to book a guest speaker to help with your workplace campaign at 1-800-611-6345. We can do this virtually!

When it comes time to make your donation, both the HealthPartners and United Way campaign forms allow you to write in your charity of choice. If you would like to choose ASNS directly, thank you! Here is how you do it:

- At the bottom of the form where you can write in a charity name, please write: Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia
- You are then asked to write the charitable registration number of that charity, please write: 10670 5379 RR0001

Does your workplace not have a giving campaign? To set one up you can contact HealthPartners or the United Way. They have tools, resources and staff to help make it easy for you and your colleagues.

Another way to give to support Nova Scotians on the dementia journey, is through a monthly donation set up directly with the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia. This can be done with a credit card, or through direct withdrawal from your bank account. Call us today to learn more at 1-800-611-6345.

United Way
Halifax

HealthPartners
PartenaireSanté
Charities At Work
La philanthropie au travail

Giving Back With Art

Morgan Fleet, Communications & Marketing Assistant


Robert with his painting, The Tibetan Nomad.

Robert Milne was always fairly good at art and has been painting ever since he was a kid. However, one of the last paintings he worked on was in 1964, *The Tibetan Nomad*. He stored it away, and only took out on occasion. Only the hand of the man in the painting needed to be completed but he didn't have the confidence to finish; not until he returned to it during the pandemic this year.

When the COVID-19 pandemic started, Robert stayed at home and isolated so that he could continue to see his wife as a caregiver at Saint Vincent's Nursing Home.

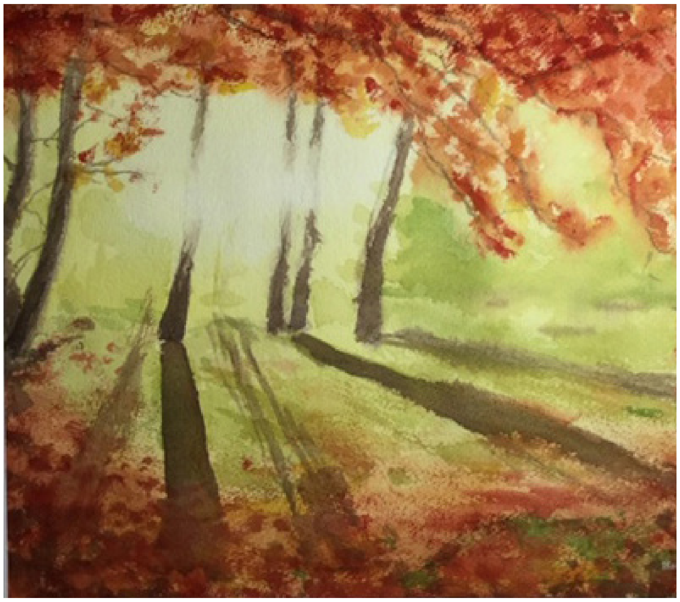
"I started painting during lock down and I sent an email to my daughter-in-law, who posted it, and there were 100 hits that day," says Robert. "People started asking if I sold my work."

He agreed to sell the paintings, but only if the money went to charity, naming the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia and Saint Vincent's Nursing home as the beneficiaries of any money that came in. He sold his first painting on June 13 and within a month, sold 20 more.

"I think we're up to 40 paintings now," he says.

Robert chose to give to the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia after accessing the Society's programs and services, which helped him care for his wife. Painting is now his way of giving back to those who helped them.

"I will likely never sell a painting for my own benefit," says Robert. "I enjoy it and there is something very satisfying about being able to hand over a cheque to a charity of your choice."


Autumn Sun

My Reasons to Care

Faye Forbes, Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia Board Member

I was rapidly going downhill.

Doctors told me I was depressed. All I wanted to do was to lay in bed watching old TV reruns. I wouldn't answer the phone. I didn't care if I saw or talked to people.

It took a long time before I was diagnosed with dementia.

When a Nova Scotian is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia, the Alzheimer Society is there to provide timely, compassionate, quality information and care.

2020 has created obstacles and challenges for everyone; but the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia has maintained and evolved many of their programs, which means I am still getting the support, the opportunity to learn, and a chance to meet with others in a confidential conversation group, as we laugh and cry, and share our experiences.

These meetings and offerings mean so much to me. I want all Nova Scotians with dementia to have access to them! To do so, the Society needs your continued support. **Can you make a donation of today?**

The Alzheimer InfoLine, is the toll-free, counselling support line I have used many times. It costs $60 to facilitate one telephone call through the Alzheimer InfoLine. A monthly gift of $20 will provide four InfoLine calls for Nova Scotians this year.

When it comes to compassion and caring, the Alzheimer Society is ready to give you what you need. They care about the people they serve. **My Reason to Care is the 17,000 Nova Scotians** who are on a similar journey to the one I am on. Nova Scotians like me and my family.

My life has changed since a diagnosis of dementia; I often say this "it isn't the dance card I expected, but it is the one I got." Now, I am a volunteer board member with the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia, my reasons to care about the future has amplified, if that was even possible.

Please consider a gift today to help the Society continue its wonderful work, delivering a higher quality of life for people with dementia today and, I hope, a brighter future without Alzheimer's disease tomorrow.

Special Reply From:

Name: ____

Full mailing address: ______________________________

____

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REASONS TO CARE

Société Alzheimer Society
NOVA SCOTIA

Yes! I am pleased to become a monthly donor with a monthly gift of:

○ $10 ○ $20 ○ $50 ○ $ __________

Please process my: ○ Visa ○ MasterCard ○ Amex

Card #: _________________________ Expiry: ____ /____

Phone #: ______________________ Email: ______________________________

You can stop your monthly gift at anytime by contacting Alzheimer Society Nova Scotia by phone or email.

I am pleased to make a one-time donation with a single gift of:

○ $20 ○ $50 ○ $100 ○ $ __________

Please process my: ○ Visa ○ MasterCard ○ Amex

Card #: _________________________ Expiry: ____ /____

Phone #: ______________________ Email: ______________________________

○ I enclosed a cheque made payable to the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia

What are your Reasons to Care? ____

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May we share your Reasons to Care with others? ○ Yes ○ No

Thank you! Please return in the enclosed envelope. You can also make your secure donation at **www.reasonstocare.ca**

Hope for Tomorrow.

Many donors today are exploring charitable gifts as part of their estate planning efforts. Please let us know if you have considered Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia in your estate plans, or if you would like more information about these options.

○ I have made a gift in my will

○ I would like to learn more about making a gift in my will