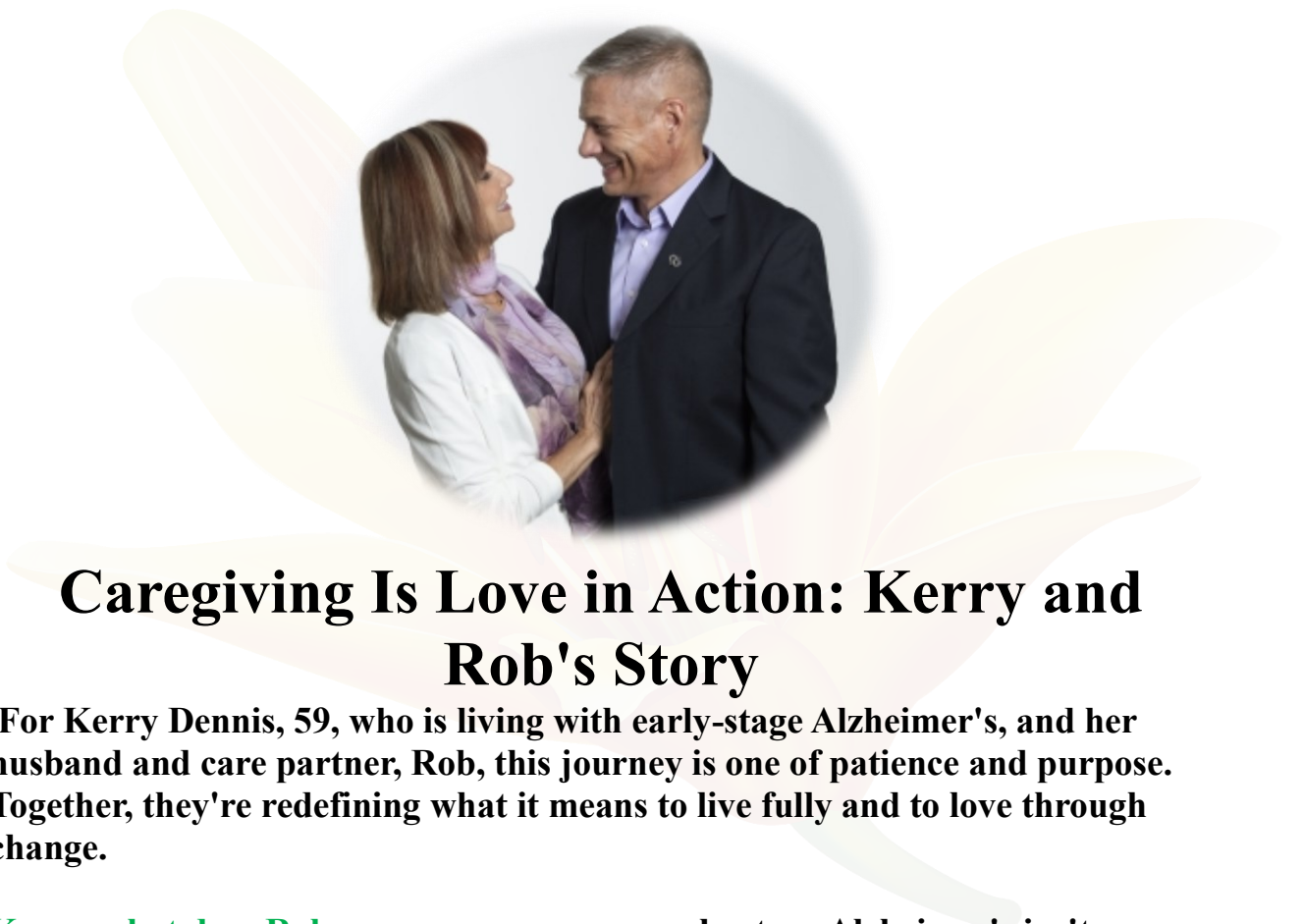


Care Partner Support Group Newsletter

Supporting Families. Empowering Caregivers

=====S.Parker===ProgramCoordinator

May 2026



Caregiving Is Love in Action: Kerry and Rob's Story

For Kerry Dennis, 59, who is living with early-stage Alzheimer's, and her husband and care partner, Rob, this journey is one of patience and purpose. Together, they're redefining what it means to live fully and to love through change.

Kerry, what does Rob as a care partner mean to you?

My husband, Rob, means the world to me. He's my steady hand, my sounding board, and the one who helps me stay grounded when things feel uncertain. Living with

early-stage Alzheimer's isn't easy, but he shows up every day with patience, kindness and love.

I've always been independent; it's who I am, and he gets that. He's learned how to let me take the lead

[Caregiving Is Love in Action: Kerry and Rob's Story](#)

[Mother's Day When You Feel Like You've Already Lost Her: Finding Joy in the Journey of Dementia – Graying With Grace](#)

when I can and to gently step in when I need help, even if I don't want to admit it. That balance isn't easy, and I know this journey asks a lot of him. I'm so grateful for the way he sees me, not just the diagnosis but the whole me.

How has Rob's support made a difference in your life?

His support has turned something that could feel really isolated into something we face together. He helps me stay on track with appointments, changes, emotions, all of it. And he does it with so much patience and care. Because of him, I can keep showing up, keep advocating and reminding people that early-stage Alzheimer's doesn't mean invisible.

But maybe the biggest difference Rob's support has made is this: He's helped me let him in. Letting go of control hasn't come easy. I'm learning to release some of the things my former self would've clung to, and that's not weakness, it's growth. His support makes that possible. He gives me space to be who I am, while gently holding the parts I can't carry alone.

What would you say to other families just beginning this journey?

This is a journey, and it's OK if you don't have it all figured out. There will be hard days, but there will also be beautiful ones. Try not to get so caught up in what's coming that you miss the good stuff happening right now. Enjoy the quiet moments doing the things you love together, don't forget to laugh, and make time for the things that matter. Lean on each other. Be honest. Give grace. You don't have to do it perfectly; you just have to keep showing up.

Rob, what have you learned being a care partner for Kerry?

Being a care partner for Kerry means walking hand in hand with her through a journey neither of us expected but one we're facing together. It's about noticing the quiet shifts: when she hesitates over a familiar task or searches for a word that used to come easily.

Instead of stepping in to fix it, I step beside her to support, to encourage, to adapt. We've had to find new rhythms, new ways to do things that used to be second nature. I've learned that my role isn't to take over. It's to help her hold on to her independence, her dignity and her joy. And every day, I'm reminded that love isn't just about being there when things are easy, it's about showing up, fully, when things get hard.

What's something you wish you'd known earlier about being a care partner?

Being a care partner doesn't mean carrying weight alone. There's a powerful support system available

especially through the Alzheimer's Association that offers guidance, resources and community. I also have learned to recognize the value of self-care. When I take time to recharge, I can show up for Kerry

with the love, patience and resilience she deserves.

What's been the most meaningful part of supporting Kerry during this journey?

Watching Kerry bring hope to others facing Alzheimer's. Her joy in that purpose has reignited something in both of us. We've learned to live more intentionally, creating memories now while we still can and embracing each day with love, laughter and gratitude.



Mother's Day When You Feel Like You've Already Lost Her: Finding Joy in the Journey of Dementia

By [Scott Grant, Certified Senior Advisor®, SHSS®](#)

That mixture of grief and guilt you feel about Mother's Day when mom has dementia. You're not alone. This compassionate guide offers practical ways to honor your mother as she is now while finding moments of genuine connection that can bring unexpected joy to both of you.

Did you know that over 11 million Americans are caring for someone with Alzheimer's or dementia?

If you're facing your first (or fifth) Mother's Day since your mom's diagnosis, you might be wondering how to celebrate a holiday that feels like it belongs to a past life.

That conflicted feeling in your chest right now? It's completely normal. Most of us imagine Mother's Day with cards she'll read, conversations she'll remember, and traditions that connect past to present.

[Caregiving Is Love in Action: Kerry and Rob's Story](#)
[Mother's Day When You Feel Like You've Already Lost Her: Finding Joy in the Journey of Dementia – Graying With Grace](#)

But what happens when dementia rewrites those rules?

How do you honor someone who might not recognize you or understand why this day is special?



The Truth About Mother's Day and Dementia That No One Talks About

Many adult children feel a complex mix of emotions approaching Mother's Day—grief for the mother who seems to have slipped away, guilt about not feeling “festive enough,” and even dread about navigating a day that highlights what's been lost.

[Caregiving Is Love in Action: Kerry and Rob's Story](#)
[Mother's Day When You Feel Like You've Already Lost Her: Finding Joy in the Journey of Dementia – Graying With Grace](#)

But here's what might surprise you: letting go of traditional expectations doesn't mean giving up on meaningful celebration. In fact, it might open doors to more authentic connections than you thought possible.

Discover how to create these meaningful moments



- Music speaks where memory can't.
- Reframing Mother's Day: Meeting Mom Where She Is
- Shift your focus from memory to presence.

Traditional Mother's Day celebrations typically rely on shared memories and recognition. But when you release

those expectations and instead meet your mother exactly where she is at this moment, something beautiful can happen.

This approach isn't just better for her it's healing for you too. Research shows that caregivers who focus on creating moments of connection rather than correcting confusion experience less burnout and more satisfaction in their caregiving journey.



- It's not about the art—it's about the moment.
- **Engage Her Senses**

Our sensory memories often remain intact even when cognitive memories fade. Try hand massages with her favorite lotion, play music from her young adulthood, or

[Caregiving Is Love in Action: Kerry and Rob's Story](#)
[Mother's Day When You Feel Like You've Already Lost Her: Finding Joy in the Journey of Dementia – Graying With Grace](#)

bring comfortable fabrics she might enjoy touching.

- **Follow Her Timeline**

If she believes she's living in a different era, join her there. If she thinks she's a young mother, bring simple crafts reminiscent of that time. Don't correct—connect.

- **Create No-Pressure Activities**

Choose activities with no right or wrong way to participate: feeling sunshine on your faces in the garden, watching birds at a feeder, or simple watercolor painting where the process matters more than the result.

- **Simplify Your Gathering**

Small, quiet visits often work better than large, noisy celebrations. Consider shorter, more frequent visits instead of one long potentially overwhelming day. Bring along a memory box like these.

- **Preserve Your Own Memories**

Create a private ritual to honor the mother you remember. Write her a letter, look through old photos alone, or plant something in your

garden that reminds you of her.
Honoring her memory while
embracing the now.

How to Handle When Mom Doesn't Recognize You

The hardest part of Mother's Day might be when your mother doesn't recognize you or understand the significance of the day. This pain is real and acknowledging it is important.

When this happens, try this approach:

- Introduce yourself simply if needed: "Hi Mom, it's Michael, your son. I'm here to spend some time with you today."
- Focus on creating a pleasant moment rather than testing her memory
- Watch for non-verbal cues that show she's enjoying your company, even if she can't express it through words or recognition

Remember that emotional memory often persists even when factual memory fades. **Your mother may not remember who you are, but she can**

[Caregiving Is Love in Action: Kerry and Rob's Story](#)

[Mother's Day When You Feel Like You've Already Lost Her: Finding Joy in the Journey of Dementia – Graying With Grace](#)

still feel the warmth of your presence.



Finding Unexpected Gifts in the Journey

When you release expectations and embrace the mother who sits before you now—not the one who exists in your memories, surprising moments of connection become possible.

Many caregivers discover that:

- Authentic connection can happen even without recognition
- Simplifying celebrations often creates more meaningful experiences
- Being fully present in the moment is the greatest gift you can give
- The capacity to love doesn't depend on memory

These discoveries don't erase the pain of watching someone you love change. But they can help you find small islands of joy in what sometimes feels like an ocean of loss.

You Are Not Alone on This Journey

Navigating Mother's Day when dementia has changed your relationship is challenging, but you don't have to do it alone. The emotions you're feeling grief, guilt, frustration, and love all tangled together are shared by millions of others walking this path.

Be gentle with yourself. Honor your mother as she is now. And remember that love transcends memory your presence matters, even when it doesn't look like the Mother's Day celebration you once imagined.

Have you found meaningful ways to connect with your mom despite dementia?

What's worked best for you?



[Caregiving Is Love in Action: Kerry and Rob's Story](#)
[Mother's Day When You Feel Like You've Already Lost Her: Finding Joy in the Journey of Dementia – Graying With Grace](#)

May

Care Partner Support Group Meetings

In-Person Meeting

5.2.26 Denham Springs 12pm

5.7.26 Greenwell Springs 11am

5.11.26 First Baptist, Zachary 12pm

5.11.26 Gonzales 1:30 pm

5.18.26 Parkview Baptist 1pm

5.18.26 New Roads 4pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting

5.5.26 Alzheimer's Services 10 AM

5.8.26 In the Beginning 2:30 PM

5.19.26 (PM) Night 7 PM

**Facilitator: Shyrell Parker, Program Coordinator Alzheimer's Services
(225) 408-3101**



H A P P Y
Mother's Day
♥



05 MAY **MAKING SENSE OF CENTS SPRING 2026 SERIES**
STAY SAFE, STAY SUPPORTED: PROTECTING SENIORS FROM SCAMS

MAKING SENSE OF CENTS

Alzheimer's SERVICES of the Capital Area

Charlie's PLACE
BADER HOUSE - GONZALES

FREE financial literacy workshop for caregivers of loved ones with Alzheimer's.

EVENT DETAILS
Tuesday, May 5th at Noon- Stay Safe, Stay Supported: Protecting Seniors from Scams, Presented by Carmen Million, President/CEO of BBB of South Central Louisiana in this informative session, become aware of common scams targeting older adults and learn ways to protect yourself and loved ones @8999

TIME
(Tuesday) 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm CST

LOCATION
Online via Zoom

ORGANIZER
Brook Kitto
programs3@alzbr.org

06 MAY **BRAIN CAFE**
FOR THOSE LIVING WITH BRAIN CHANGE

EVENT DETAILS

Alzheimer's SERVICES of the Capital Area

BRAIN CAFE
for those living with brain change

First AND Third Wednesday of the month at 10am
Alzheimer's Services Conference Room
3772 North Blvd, Baton Rouge, LA 70806
no registration required

Navigating life after a dementia diagnosis can feel overwhelming—but you are not alone. Our Brain Café group offers a space where you can connect with others on a shared journey. Whether you're newly diagnosed or have been living with dementia for some time, this group is here to provide connection and community every step of the way. Share experiences, exchange practical tips, and find encouragement in a respectful environment. All stages and backgrounds are welcome.

find more info & events at alzbr.org or call 225-334-7494

14 MAY **SIP & SUPPORT GATHERING**
2ND THURSDAY EVERY MONTH

SIP & SUPPORT GATHERING

EVENT DETAILS

SIP & SUPPORT GATHERING

TIME
(Thursday) 10:00 am - 11:00 am

LOCATION
Alzheimer's Services
3772 North Blvd, Baton Rouge, LA 70806

<https://www.newsbreak.com/brproud-1590545/4015842463333-new-alzheimer-s-support-center-charlie-s-place-to-open-in-baker-Tips-for-People-with-Dementia>

<https://alzbr.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Emergency-Manual-Content-Updated-logo-and-services-2026.pdf>

Resource of the Month

ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA CARE AN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND DISASTER Manual

<https://alzbr.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Emergency-Manual-Content-Updated-logo-and-services-2026.pdf>

ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA CARE AN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND DISASTER MANUAL





Brainteaser



Mother's Day



WORD SCRAMBLE

- CRAD _____
- LEOV _____
- LABRECETE _____
- ACNYD _____
- EERCIPTAAP _____
- LOEFRSW _____
- TEMORH _____
- ALIFMY _____
- OMHE _____
- PENSTRE _____
- NAMOW _____
- RCAING _____
- VLGOIN _____
- CTEOPTR _____
- ETAREHC _____
- URTOSPP _____
- TERUNUR _____
- GEUNERS _____
- SREETPC _____
- RELNSTEI _____



Shyrell Parker, Program Coordinator
Alzheimer's Services
PH: (225)408-3101

<https://www.newsbreak.com/brproud-1590545/4015842463333-new-alzheimer-s-support-center-charlie-s-place-to-open-in-baker>
[Tips for People with Dementia](#)

<https://alzbr.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Emergency-Manual-Content-Updated-logo-and-services-2026.pdf>