

# Care Partner Support Group Newsletter

*Supporting Families. Empowering Caregivers*

=====S. Parker===Program Coordinator

## October 2026

### When Memory Changes, Love Finds New Ways to Connect



Caregiving does not always begin with knowing exactly what to do. Sometimes it begins with simply realizing that the person you love needs you in a different way.

For Kerry and her husband, Rob, life began to change when Kerry was diagnosed with early-stage Alzheimer's at age 59. After years of

being independent and building a successful career, Kerry found that some things that once came easily were becoming more difficult.

**Reference:** Alzheimer's Association, "Caregiving Is Love in Action: Kerry and Rob's Story."

For Rob, becoming a care partner meant learning how to help without taking away the independence that was so important to his wife.

He learned that caregiving was not about doing everything for Kerry. Sometimes it meant stepping back and allowing her to do something herself. Other times, it meant gently stepping in when she needed help.

That balance was not always easy. There were changes in appointments, daily routines, emotions and responsibilities. There were moments when things did not go as planned. But instead of allowing Alzheimer's to become the only thing they focused on, Kerry and Rob worked to continue living their life together.

They made room for laughter. They made time for the things they enjoyed. They learned to give each other grace. And they tried not to let the fear of what might happen tomorrow take away from the good moments they could have today.

One of the most meaningful lessons from their journey is that connection does not have to disappear when memory changes, it may simply look different.

A conversation may become shorter. A familiar activity may need to be changed.

A loved one may need more help than they once did.

But a handheld, a smile shared, a favorite song, a laugh, or simply sitting beside someone can still say:

"I am here. We are still us."

### **A Message for Care Partners**

- If dementia has changed your relationship with someone you love, give yourself permission to grieve the changes while also looking for the moments that are still possible.
- You do not have to have everything figured out
- Some days will be difficult.
- Some days may surprise you with a moment of laughter, tenderness or connection.
- Try not to miss the good moments because you are worrying about what will come next.
- Take the day as it comes.

**Reference:** Alzheimer's Association, "Caregiving Is Love in Action: Kerry and Rob's Story."

# 5 Ways to Stay Connected When Memory Changes

When someone you love is living with dementia, communication and relationships can change. You may find yourself repeating things, answering the same questions, or feeling frustrated when your loved one does not remember something you just shared.

It can be difficult—but connection is still possible

Instead of focusing on whether your loved one remembers the conversation or activity, try focusing on how the moment makes them feel.

Here are five simple ways to help maintain connection:

## 1. Meet Them Where They Are

Try to enter your loved one's world instead of always bringing them back to yours.

If they are talking about someone or something from the past, listen and ask questions. You do not always have to correct a detail that is not important.

- **Try** saying:  
“Tell me more about that.”  
“That sounds like a special memory.”  
“I remember how much you enjoyed that.”

## 2. Focus on Feelings, Not Facts

Correcting every mistake can sometimes lead to frustration for both of you.

If your loved one remembers something differently than you do, ask yourself: *Does correcting this really matter?*

If it does not affect their safety, try acknowledging the feeling behind what they are saying.

- **Instead of:**  
“That happened 20 years ago.”
- **Try:**  
“You really miss those days.”

The goal is not to prove who is right.  
The goal is to help your loved one  
feel heard and supported.

### 3. Use Familiar Things to Create Connection

Familiar music, photographs, foods,  
hobbies and routines can help create  
opportunities for connection.

- Try putting on a favorite song,  
looking through an old photo  
album, preparing a familiar  
recipe together, or doing an  
activity your loved one has  
enjoyed throughout their life.

You don't need complicated activities.  
*Sometimes the simplest things create  
the best moments.*

### 4. Slow Down and Give Them Time

Dementia can make it harder to find  
the right words, process information  
or respond quickly.

Give your loved one time to answer.

- Try asking one question at a  
time and avoid rushing to finish  
their sentences.

A little extra patience can make  
communication less stressful for both  
of you. **Remember:** Silence is okay.  
Your loved one does not have to  
respond immediately.

### 5. Create Small Moments of Connection

Connection does not have to mean  
having a long conversation.

#### It can be:

- Holding hands
- Sharing a cup of coffee
- Looking through photographs
- Listening to music
- Taking a short walk
- Watch favorite television  
program
- Sitting together quietly
- Sharing a laugh



Even when words become difficult,  
your presence can still communicate  
love and comfort.

## A Reminder for Care Partners

Dementia may change what your relationship looks like, but it does not erase the relationship. There may be days when you feel like you are losing pieces of the person you knew. Allow yourself to feel those emotions. Then look for the moments that are still there.

**Meet them where they are.**

**Slow down.**

**Listen.**

**Be present.**

**Look for the connection.**



You don't have to create a perfect moment. Sometimes, simply being there is enough.

*Caregiver reminder: If communication or behavior changes are creating significant distress or safety concerns, talk with your loved one's healthcare provider or a dementia-care professional for guidance.*

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Reference:** Alzheimer's Association, "Caregiving Is Love in Action: Kerry and Rob's Story."



# October 2026 Care Partner Support Group Meetings

## In-Person Meeting

10/2/26 — **Denham Springs** — 12 PM  
10/1/26 — **Greenwell Springs** — 11 AM  
10/12/26 — **First Baptist, Zachary** — 12 PM  
10/12/26 — **Gonzales** — 1:30 PM  
10/19/26 — **Parkview Baptist** — 1 PM  
10/19/26 — **New Roads** — 4 PM

## Virtual Zoom Meeting

10/6/26 — **Alzheimer's Services** — 10 AM  
10/9/26 — **In the Beginning** — 2:30 PM  
10/20/26 — **PM/Night** — 7 PM

## **Facilitator:**

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

For online meeting information and links, contact Shyrell Parker at [programs4@alzbr.org](mailto:programs4@alzbr.org) or 225-334-7494.

# Resource of the Month: Brain Cafe

## Brain Café: A Place to Connect, Learn & Share

Living with memory changes can sometimes feel isolating. Brain Café offers a welcoming environment where individuals experiencing changes in memory or thinking can connect with others, enjoy conversation, participate in activities, and learn helpful information.

It is a great opportunity to stay socially connected, meet others who understand, and enjoy time together in a supportive setting.

### Why try Brain Café?

- Connect with others
- Enjoy meaningful conversation
- Participate in engaging activities
- Learning about helpful resources
- Have fun in a welcoming environment

### Interested in learning more?

- 📍 Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area, 3772 North Blvd., Baton Rouge
- 🕒 10:00–11:00 AM
- 👥 For individuals living with brain change
- 🤝 Focuses on connection, conversation, encouragement, and education
- 📞 Contact Brook at 225-334-7494 or [programs3@alzbr.org](mailto:programs3@alzbr.org) for information.

# Brain teaser

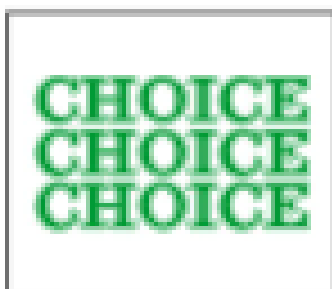


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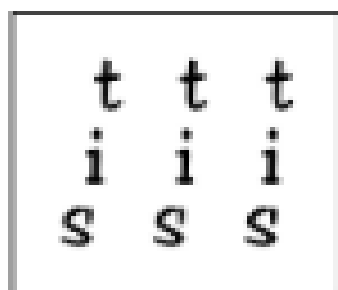
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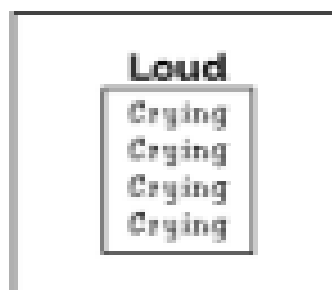
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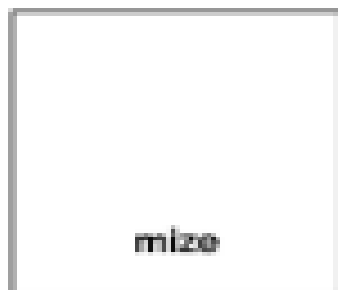
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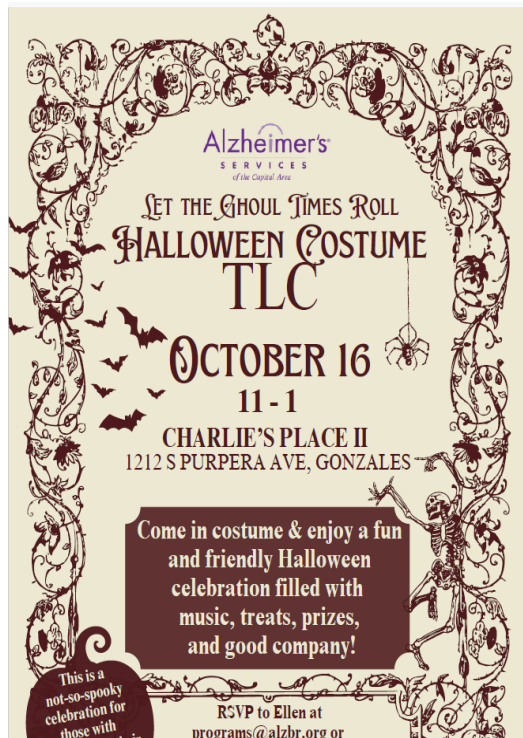
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# Save The Date!











## LIFE, LEGACY & WHAT'S NEXT

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*ADDRESSING THE NEEDS FOR:  
WIDOWS & WIDOWERS, EXECUTORS & EXECUTRIXES OF AGING  
PARENTS, VETERANS, AND SENIORS APPROACHING 65 AND UP*

**Details**

*Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup> – 11am till 1pm*  
**Central Funeral Home**  
9995 Hooper Rd. Central, LA 70818

**Limited Seating \* Registration!**

**CENTRAL FUNERAL HOME**  
FUNERALS • CREMATIONS • GRIEF RESOURCES  
225-236-0800  
1901 Hooper Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70818

*Every Detail Remembered* | Dignity

**Featuring Trusted Local Professionals** who will speak for 15 minutes each followed by a panel discussion to answer your questions.

**PRESENTERS**

- David Bayard Law, LLC:  
Estate Planning & Legal Preparedness
- Hope Falgout Health Insurance Rep.  
Healthcare Planning
- Shelly Carter – Branch Manager |  
AVP Bank of Zachary - Central  
Banking Financial Readiness
- Jimbo Walker CRPC™ –  
Financial Advisor Edward Jones  
Financial Planning
- Gretchen Varnell CPM, CFC, CPPP  
and Central Funeral Directors  
Funerals, Cremations, Grief Resources  
and LIFT®. | Dignity Memorial®

*Every Detail Remembered* | Dignity

1. Email you and your guest's name, address, and phone number to [Gretchen.varnell@DignityMemorial.com](mailto:Gretchen.varnell@DignityMemorial.com)
2. Call Central Funeral Home at 225-236-0800. Leave a Message on Gretchen's voicemail to register your Name, Address and Phone Number.
3. Stop in and Say Hello! Register with our receptionist, Ms. Darlene.

- A Lite Lunch is included in this event.
- Presenters will have individual tables for you to obtain further information.
- This program is brought to you in part by Dignity Memorial® LIFT® a socialization program for Widows and Widowers providing our participants with "Living Information For Today."



**Reference:** Alzheimer's Association, "Caregiving Is Love in Action: Kerry and Rob's Story."



**FMOL  
Health**

**Our Lady  
of the Lake**



**revfiber**  
for business

**Greenoaks,  
Central, Ourso,  
Rabenhorst**

*Every Detail Remastered.* **Dignity**



**Lee Michaels**  
FINE JEWELRY & DISTINCTIVE GIFTS