



**MICHIGAN MEDICINE**  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

**MICHIGAN ALZHEIMER'S  
DISEASE CENTER**

**JULY 2020**

## Monthly Wellness Update

The Wellness Initiative is a program of the Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Center at the University of Michigan. This initiative supports family caregivers of adults living with memory loss through providing innovative wellness programs emphasizing stress resilience to ensure continued health and well-being on the caregiving journey.



*"A world of dew,  
And within every dewdrop  
A world of struggle."*

*~Kobayashi Issa*

As our communities open, we find ourselves in personal and collective paradox. There is at once a natural desire to gather with renewed closeness met by known, yet invisible, threats to our safety, compounded by the affinity to create normalcy during a time of heightened vigilance alongside the sweet, seductive seasonal gifts of summer. At once uplifted and renewed by longer days of sunshine and the possibility of nearness and enjoyment, we may find ourselves disheartened, fatigued and questioning what feels real and stable in our lives and in the world in which we now live.

Unfolding from our many-months-long cocoon, one which may have provided an incubator for looking closely at how we conduct our lives and responsibilities, we emerge cautiously, perhaps even protectively, exposed or fearful. Though it was unexpected and cast plans and provisions into temporary or extended chaos, we may have also discovered resilience and connection in new places. Energies may feel depleted in one area of our lives while reinvigorated in others. There has been self discovery and hard, sometimes unimaginable, choices in front of us as we evaluate what is supportive, enriching and sustaining in our lives and what may no longer serve us or our family in the interim or beyond. At its very core, this time provides a mirror. In the looking glass, reflecting both inward and outward into a world which ultimately is and can only be viewed through the lens of our own heart & discernment. It's hard to know what to do next and the meaning of trust broadens, hopefully with compassion, in greater understanding of our vulnerability and interconnectedness with everyone in our midst.

Whether viewed as an existential crisis or existential opportunity, change is inevitable. The transformative nature of change activates the currents of our lives in ways we cannot predict though earnestly we may try to corral and control. One day in the undertow, another on the shore observing the movement, both

necessary and offering insight into how we can move more skillfully through our struggle to survive and lead lives we recognize as our own and inline with our hopes, values and needs. As caregivers, what is being illuminated through these times may be new ways of honoring and preserving family life and your own identity, differentiated from the role of caregiving in surprising ways. The conversations I have been fortunate to have with caregivers over the past four months have been indescribably complex while also strikingly simple and direct in descriptions of love in action, dedication through mundanity, self-compassion through heartache and inspiration found in the smallest of affections and kindnesses. What matters most is often the most difficult to convey in personal, specific terms. Communication means more and carries more intention when there are obstacles and limitations, when we are flummoxed and uncertain what to say.

I hope you will consider joining the conversation this month for *Catching Your Breath* as we take another deep dive into our individual and shared, present moment experiences, and as we explore ways to communicate and come closer to what is true for ourselves now and the next best-for-us step forward.

In gratitude,

—Laura Rice-Oeschger, LMSW



## Catching Your Breath

Please register [online](#), or call 734-615-8293 to reserve your place.



### **VIRTUAL: Catching Your Breath**

A monthly well-being and mindfulness program for family caregivers of adults living with memory loss. The program varies each month and newcomers are always welcome.

Monday, July 6 at 10:00 - 11:30am

**Registration required by Friday, July 3. We will send you the virtual call details upon registration.**

[Register here](#)

## New Research Study Looking for Caregivers



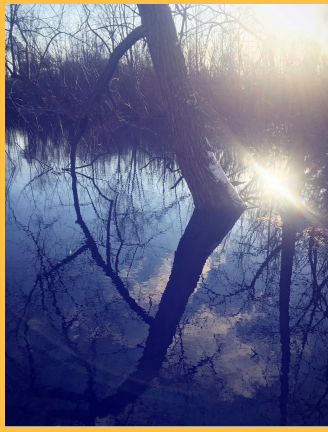
### **Perceptions of Family Caregivers of Older Adults with Dementia Regarding Behavioral and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia, and the Impact of COVID-19**

Exploring the experiences of caregivers of people with dementia regarding challenging symptoms of dementia, how they manage these symptoms in the home, and how their experiences have changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study is seeking

family caregivers living with older adults with dementia to participate in individual interviews. Contact Melissa Harris at [mharrisl@umich.edu](mailto:mharrisl@umich.edu) or 405-513-1271. **This study will meet with participants virtually or by telephone.**

[More information here](#)

**Soothing word of the month**



### **Phantasmagoria**

An exhibition of optical effects and illusions; a constantly shifting complex succession of things seen or imagined; a scene that constantly changes; a bizarre or fantastic combination, collection, or assemblage.

## **Have a Seat. Practicing alone, together. with Laura Rice-Oeschger, LMSW**



**Thursdays, 12:00 - 12:30PM  
Virtually via Zoom**

We are happy to announce our new weekly Have a Seat mindfulness meditation program taking place Thursdays at noon. To participate in this program, all you need is a computer to join via the web link or a phone to listen to the guided meditation. More information is available on our website [here](#). **Would you like to receive weekly reminders for the program? If so, subscribe below.**

Subscribe to receive weekly reminders

## **New & Upcoming Center Programs**



### **"Can Alzheimer's Disease be Prevented?"**

**July 21, 10:00 - 11:00AM**

Dr. Scott Roberts, Professor of Health Behavior & Health Education at the University of Michigan School of Public Health and Leader of our Center's Outreach Core, will present.

Registration is required [here](#).

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