

Simple & Affordable Cremations
 Right here on The Central Coast from
 Coast Valley Cremations of Santa Maria FD-2374
 Call 805 801-1546 or visit CoastValleyCremations.com



Brain Health with Lauren

Empowering those with dementia through self-worth | Lauren Mahakian

Apr 13, 2023



Lauren Mahakian
Contributed Photo

Parents who want the best for their kids work hard to create experiences for their children to learn. As the children become more capable, parents increase the level of challenge and empower their kids to learn and grow more independently. These parents strive to raise self-sufficient adults who embark on their journey through life with confidence and a sense of self-worth.

Caring for adults with dementia effectively reverses the experience.

Although dementia is complex and comes with many different facets, memory loss is the most notable aspect of the condition. As the disease progresses, our loved ones become less capable and require more assistance each year.

Sometimes we forget that they also need challenging experiences to help them feel self-sufficient, especially when they are the parents who raised us to be independent ourselves.

The deterioration from dementia manifests in countless ways, including masking the symptoms from others to hide the extent of their impairment or adding memory devices like sticky notes around the house. We readily ascribe these behaviors to ways of clinging to independence, but these behaviors are also symptoms of feeling less worthy, less confident, and more vulnerable.



Most Popular

- 1 Dear Abby: Neighbor's quirky questions don't sit right with couple
- 2 Dear Abby: Grandma required to treat newcomers as one of her own
- 3 Dear Abby: Overwhelmed young adult looking for a rest
- 4 Dear Abby: Firefighter's wife alarmed by man's behavior at party
- 5 Dear Abby: Drunk uncle pushes family to the limit of tolerance

Local Events

CREATE AN EVENT

Search for events

JUN 10 Toy & Train Fair

RocketTown Comic Con
 Lompoc Valley Middle School 10:00AM

APR



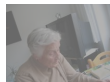
COLUMNISTS
When a loved one with dementia 'wants to go home' | Lauren Mahakian

We can help our loved ones improve their sense of usefulness and self-worth by finding ways to empower them to do a wide variety of activities consistent with their level of impairment.

As the disease progresses, we must lower our expectations rather than increase them as we would with raising children.

Empowering adults with dementia can often feel discouraging because we know their capacity will not grow alongside our efforts, but we must try.

We must also control our emotions and not react in ways that increase anxiety over progressive memory loss. People with dementia have so many emotional battles of their own to fight, and it can be calming and encouraging to see their loved ones with strong, positive attitudes.



COLUMNISTS

Does my mom know she has dementia? | Lauren Mahakian

Good memory care homes that are focused on memory care will have the resources to empower residents with daily meaningful tasks and stimulating activities.

To the greatest extent possible, experiences will be crafted based on the residents' lifelong occupations, interests, and hobbies. Finding safe but meaningful activities like this is a great way to start restoring a lost sense of purpose for your loved ones as they struggle with dementia.

Here are additional useful tools to help empower a loved one with dementia:

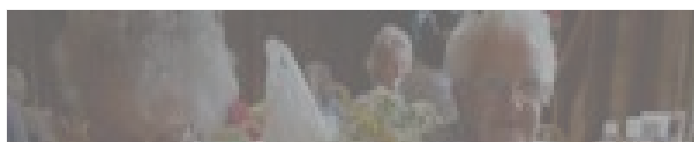
- Establish daily routines which reduce anxiety, outline expectations and promote ease and independence;
- Encourage that they write in a daily journal;
- Set reminders for their appointments or daily tasks;
- Assign appropriate but necessary tasks toward self-care to encourage self-worth;
- Label cabinets to indicate the location of personal care items, dishes, or pantry items;
- Keep important objects (e.g., wallet, purse, and house keys) in the same place;
- Read a daily newspaper or find news online to stay current with events.

All these tools can help to live in the here-and-now, reduce confusion, boost independence, and as such, self-sufficiency and self-esteem. No matter what condition a person is battling, it is vital to their quality of life that they believe in themselves and their self-worth. If we can help our loved ones feel good about themselves, we make their whole lives better.



When dementia says 'I need some space' | Lauren Mahakian

When a person with dementia is agitated or combative, our first instinct is often to try to calm the person down. However, attempting to calm them down does not solve the problem they are facing, and may even increase their level of agitation.





Nourishing dementia, feeding a loved one | Lauren Mahakian

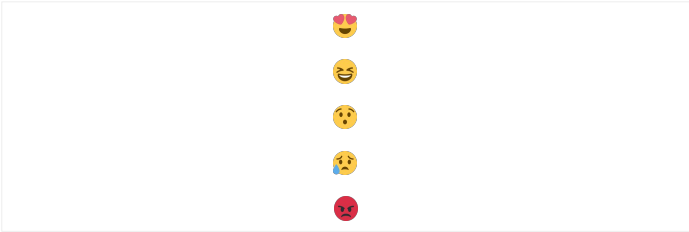
Encouraging and empowering feeding themselves as much as possible during meals can help maintain their independence and dignity.



Good night, sleep tight with dementia | Lauren Mahakian

Stimulating activities like outdoor walks, meeting up with friends and family members, doing puzzles, and artmaking can help your loved one have a full, joyful day that leads perfectly into well-earned sleep.

Lauren Mahakian is a Certified Dementia Practitioner. She supports families affected by Alzheimers, dementia, and cognitive disorders through care management services and podcast "Unlocking the Doors of Dementia"™ with Lauren, as well as free support groups, and specialty memory care homes located in Torrance and Solvang. Visit familyconnectmemorycare.com for more information.

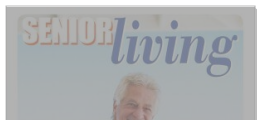
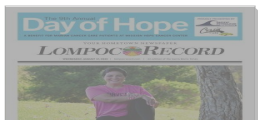
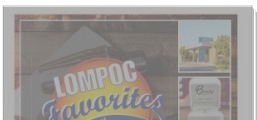


- Tags
- Lifestyles
 - Local-columnist
 - Health-and-fitness
 - Santa Ynez Valley
 - Lauren Mahakian
 - Alzheimer's Disease
 - Dementia
 - Meals
 - Caregivers
 - Swallowing

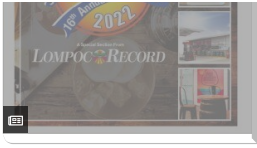


[Read More](#)

Recent Special Sections



Home Improvement
Feb 24, 2021



Lompoc Favorites

Oct 26, 2022



Day of Hope 2022

Aug 17, 2022



Senior Living

Jun 29, 2022

[See More Special Sections Here](#)



Santa Maria Times
Santa Ynez Valley News

Sections

- [E-Edition](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Weather](#)
- [Newspaper Special Sections](#)

Services

- [Contact Us](#)
- [Customer Service](#)