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[https://syvnews.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/certified-dementia-practitioner-addresses-alzheimer-s-in-santa-ynez-valley/article\\_82f34222-9a0b-50c6-8f9a-e6594019caa4.html](https://syvnews.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/certified-dementia-practitioner-addresses-alzheimer-s-in-santa-ynez-valley/article_82f34222-9a0b-50c6-8f9a-e6594019caa4.html)

## **Certified dementia practitioner addresses Alzheimer's in Santa Ynez Valley**

Lisa André  
Feb 9, 2020

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Lauren Mahakian, founder of Family Connect Care.

Contributed Photo

**L**aura Mahakian, founder of **Family Connect Care**, is on a mission to educate families, seniors and community members on how to initiate productive dialogue and navigate the waters of cognitive dysfunction. The public is invited to attend a group of informational seminars and a support group session from now until April, free of charge.

According to Mahakian, over 5.8 million people are afflicted with Alzheimer's, dementia, Lewy body and other forms of cognitive impairment. Equally as significant than this fact, Mahakian says, is that no one wants to talk about it.

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"I want to help people become more aware of the symptoms but most importantly, I want to let everyone know that a person with dementia/Alzheimer's can live a good life," she said.

For over two decades, Mahakian, a certified dementia specialist, facilitator and educator affiliated with **Alzheimer's Association Los Angeles**, has been focused on enhancing the quality of life for senior citizens and aiding the memory-impaired.

"They need a strong advocate," she said. "Many people think that because they can no longer remember, that they are to be placed on the sidelines of life. And because people do not know how to communicate or engage with the memory-impaired, I want to be that person offering help to these fragile people and their concerned families."

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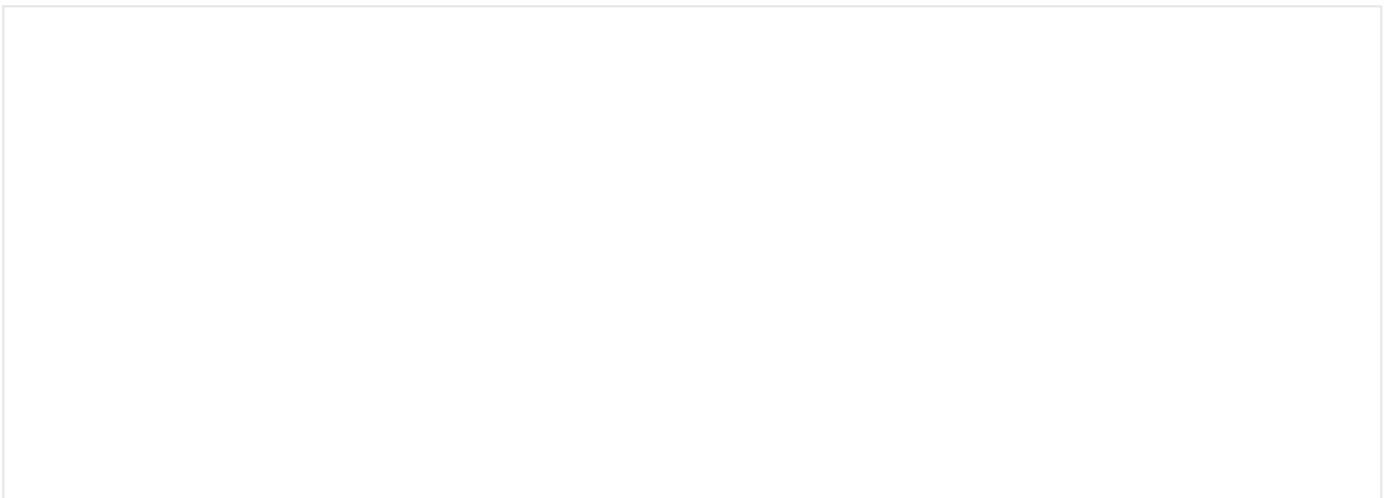
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## Upcoming Alzheimer's seminars:

- Old Mission Santa Ines: Monday, Feb. 17, from 7–9 p.m.
- (Support group session) at Shepherd-of-the-Valley-Lutheran-Church: Tuesday, Feb. 18 at 10-11:30 a.m. & 6–7:30 p.m.
- Luis Oasis Senior Center, Orcutt: Monday, March 6, from 1–3 p.m.
- Buellton Senior Center: Tuesday, April 21, from 6–8 p.m.
- Santa Maria Wisdom Center: Tuesday, April 28, from 3:30–5:30 p.m.

For event reservations, questions and additional information, contact Lauren at 310-383-1877; or find Lauren's podcast "Unlocking the Doors of Dementia with Lauren" on her website at <http://familyconnectcare.com/dementia-podcast/>

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**Solvang Friendship House staffers earn dementia care specialist titles**



## 'Alzheimer Whisperer' to present free seminar at Solvang Senior Center Jan. 21

*Lisa André covers Valley Life for Santa Ynez Valley News.*

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**Lisa André**  
Lifestyle Editor

