

# Your Memory Minute



APRIL 2009

TIPS AND UPDATES FROM THAT MEMORY GUY

**Dr. Bill E. Beckwith of Memory Management**

**"Dr. Bill — My husband is not motivated to do anything anymore and seems very bored. What can I do?"**

**T**HERE WAS A RECENT ARTICLE IN *The New York Times* titled "Keep those with Alzheimer's disease engaged." This is the essential key to successful treatment of dementias—keep them engaged. No matter what stage of the disease, the person needs to be active in the world. They need stimulation for their brain as much as the rest of us. The challenge is that they cannot safely go to the things they enjoy on their own.

For example, residents at Arden Courts Alzheimer's Assisted Living are provided "palliative" memory rehabilitation through engagement therapy. In essence, this means bring residents to joyful and stimulating activities such as walking, socializing, thinking (e.g., word games, watching movies, art therapy, music therapy) that fit their level of memory and skill. Residents who function at the highest levels are encouraged to engage in activities outside of the community. Those still at home also need to get out and do what they love. Some still love to play golf but need someone to organize and gently monitor them. Others love movies, going to lunch, going to concerts, seeing museums, fishing. The world opens so many possibilities if we have the right safety net and outings provide more stimulation when done in small groups.

We have recently started two programs that are "outside the walls" to provide this stimulation to those who have mild memory loss. First, Leoma Lovegrove has begun an art therapy class at Arden Courts for stimulation, self-esteem, and socialization. Second, Jim Moran launched a new program CompanionPlus which takes small groups of three or four persons on outings. Their first outing was a group of three who went to a Twins game. Others are going golfing again. Still others are going in small groups to supervised exercise. The intent of the program is to give life back to those who are memory impaired, to get people out and about that are in assisted living communities, and to provide respite for caregivers who are trying to do it all. For more information about the art therapy call 239-454-1277 and for more information about CompanionPlus, call 239-566-2815.

**DR. BILL BECKWITH**, memory expert and author of *Managing Your Memory: Practical Solutions for Forgetting*, is a speaker and consultant for Arden Courts. He is available to those who want to monitor their memory through screenings or memory evaluations. He is also available to caregivers to assist them in coping with the changes in their loved ones as well as the stress they face, either as a caregiver at home or through the difficult process of placement. Please keep sending your questions to [memoryseminars@aol.com](mailto:memoryseminars@aol.com).



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Dr. Beckwith's book,  
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