

The Heart of Alzheimer's Caregiving

CaringKind Helpline: 646-744-2900 caringkindnyc.org 360 Lexington Avenue, 3rd Floor New York, New York 10017

You Funded Our Support Group Program — and Joan Took Care of the Rest

Lessons learned from ten years as a Support Group Leader.



Joan Gross has been a volunteer Support Group Leader for almost 10 years. And, at 93, she is stepping down as Leader to place her focus on other passion projects. We sat down with Joan to talk about her life as a dancer, student, teacher, social worker, psychoanalyst, and support group leader.

"I started my career as a dancer. I obtained a master's degree in dance from Mills College in California and moved to New York to perform. I loved performing – I did the Perry Como Show, City Center, and plenty of Summer Stock. But after 10 years in the business, I was ready to try something new. And I decided that I was a good fit for social work."

"When I arrived at NYU, I was so interested in this new career that I took it further than I expected and became a clinical social worker. From there, I received my Certificate in Psychoanalysis, and I've been a practicing psychoanalyst ever since!

What resonates for me most, as a Support Group Leader, is the interaction between the members of the group. I find it fascinating. They play off each other and it's like watching a ball bounce around the room. It's emotional and joyful. And it's engrossing to watch the group's involvement with one another.

I remember one incredible moment when a member was so upset about a sibling's behavior that he suddenly stood up and tore at his hair. The group responded with compassion and humor, which immediately diffused the tension. And the group member's moment of desperation quickly dissipated in the presence of such support and validation. Remarkable.

My job as a support group leader is to provide a forum in which everyone can participate, speak, and respond. And to make sure everyone feels like they are part of the group. I think my training as a performer and improviser has really helped me facilitate this group. I've been more expressive and empathetic. And – like any good cast member – I have great appreciation for everything that happens among the members in the group.

At this age, however, it's time for me to streamline things. I will always love the group members, but I look forward to focusing on other things, like my continuing education classes, and training students in China (via zoom!) about psychoanalysis. These things keep my brain active!

After all my years as a support group leader, I would offer this advice to caregivers: Don't lose yourself in the caregiving. Always remember that your own life matters, too!"

Message from Eleonora

Support for People with Early-Stage Dementia

by Eleonora Tornatore-Mikesh, CaringKind President & CEO



A few weeks ago, the world learned the sad news about Bruce Willis being diagnosed with Frontotemporal dementia. We surmise

that it was not an easy decision for the family to share this vulnerable information. We salute the family, and especially Bruce Willis, for allowing his diagnosis to be made public. Raising awareness about this illness is still incredibly important for encouraging people to get early diagnoses and to find support, and to increase research.



The media has covered a number of new developments concerning dementia drug treatments. While treatments are paramount, we believe cognitive interventions are also influential in maintaining stability.

Organizations like Caringkind need to work side by side with individuals in early-stage dementia to provide programs that stimulate the brain. We strive to develop new cognitive programs that benefit people living with dementia and related disorders. CaringKind's partnership can help people express their wants and needs and allow them to live the best version of their lives.

We are also committed to creating social work services that lend support to families and caregivers during all stages of this very long and hard journey. We offer our programs and seminars in person and online, in multiple languages.

Please visit our website for CaringKind's expanded early-stage services and learn how you can get involved.

Lastly, our organization is grateful to our many wonderful volunteers who help shape and change the lives of people with dementia and their caregivers. If you'd like to be part of this movement at CaringKind, please call us and get involved! We need you all because we want to serve you all!

Contact us:
CaringKind Helpline: 646-744-2900
caringkindnyc.org

You Help People with Dementia Make It Matter!

Introducing a new pilot project that will change the landscape of dementia care and research.

Imagine this: Your friend's birthday is coming up and you have no idea what to give her. Would you just buy something and hope for the best? Or would you simply ask her what she wanted and needed? You'd probably just ask! You would involve her in the gift-buying process so that you could guarantee the gift was meaningful and desirable. Sounds obvious, right?

When it comes to dementia care services and research however, it hasn't always been so obvious to involve people with dementia and their care partners in the development of programs and research designed to benefit them.

Well, CaringKind wants to help change all that. With funds from a \$100,000 grant from the AARP, CaringKind is developing a new pilot program called "Make It Matter." This new education program – for people in the early stage of dementia and their care partners – seeks to prepare them for engagement opportunities in the realms of research, advocacy, focus groups, and

more. Graduates of the program will be primed to have a seat at the table in government agencies, nonprofits, academic institutions, and health care companies that need stakeholders with lived dementia experience.

After the training is completed, participants will be able to:

- Describe several types of stakeholder opportunities.
- Define their own priorities for engagement.
- Choose what kind of stakeholder roles would best suit them.
- Identify ways to adapt to the opportunity given their changing cognitive and physical abilities.
- Prepare themselves as an "optimized" stakeholder.

The training itself has both short-term and long-term goals.

In the short term, participants will experience increased hope, resilience

and knowledge abou, and interest in, stakeholder engagement activities.

In the long term, the program will help strengthen the programs of other institutions by providing those institutions feedback from people with lived experience in Alzheimer's and dementia.

We hope both short-term and long -term goals will help participants gain some sense of ways to make a difference; to make 'it — their Alzheimer's or dementia — matter.

We look forward to sharing the results of this pilot program with you in the Fall newsletter. Stay tuned!





Rui Huang, Dementia Care Specialist

Rui Huang has finished her BA in Korean Language & Literature in China and her MA in Linguistics at the City University of New York. She worked for several years at a domestic violence hotline, providing emotional support and crisis intervention services in English, Chinese, and Korean. Rui also teaches Chinese

and Korean language at LaGuardia Community College as an adjunct lecturer.

In her leisure time, she is a big fan of Korean movie and music. "Bong Joon-ho, BTS, Blackpink ... you can always find something in different cultures that is good for your mental and physical health!"



Andrea Tallent Spivak, VP of Strategic Alliance

Andrea Tallent Spivak brings over 20 years experience in business development, marketing, and strategic partnerships with clients in real estate operations, media and fashion. She has a BA in Business Administration from Furman University and has grown and managed multimillion dollar accounts for clients nationwide. Through volunteering, she co-founded *Caring to Remember*, an annual real estate-focused benefit

that has raised over \$1 million for Alzheimer's and dementia.

Andrea resides in Westchester County with her family and new puppy, Jax. She is passionate about her community, traveling and experiencing various cultures, music, the arts, and poetry. "Each one of us can make a difference. Together we make change."

~Barbara Mikulski

CaringKind In The News



CaringKind's CEO was included in the 2023 Health Care Power 100

When Eleonora Tornatore-Mikesh trained as an aging and dementia specialist at the start of her career, she didn't know she would be back, nearly 25 years later, to head the same organization.

Prior to her return, Tornatore-Mikesh implemented statewide dementia training in over 140 facilities as CEO of the Alzheimer's Association Connecticut chapter and is working toward reducing the disease's stigma. She's also currently working with development initiative Latina Empire to help educate Hispanic families whose loved ones are more likely to get Alzheimer's disease.

ALAN PATRICOF BACKS CARINGKIND AFTER FINDING SUPPORT DURING HIS WIFE'S 12-YEAR BATTLE WITH ALZHEIMER'S POWNED HIS STATES AND STATES

Alan Patricof featured on Fox Business News in support of CaringKind

Alan: "I joined Jackie DeAngelis on Fox Business Network to discuss my support for CaringKind, The Heart of Alzheimer's Caregiving. During my wife Susan's 12-year battle with Alzheimer's, we leaned on CaringKind to provide our family with top-notch care, support, and resources.

Last month, I ran the New York City marathon on behalf of CaringKind and raised over \$525,000 to support the organization. I'm immensely grateful for their work and look forward to continuing my support in the future."

Check out a clip from the show: https://lnkd.in/e2F7xidi

CaringKind celebrates the Chinese Lunar New Year

Coverage by World Journal: https://tinyurl.com/59whaf39

Coverage by SingTao Daily:



More news: www.caringkindnyc.org/pr

CaringKind's

Free Programs and Seminars March, April, and May

Events are at Eastern Time, and in English unless otherwise specified. Location or web-link provided on registration.

March 2023

Understanding Dementia March 10 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Legal and Financial March 6 12:00 - 1:30 pm

Medicaid Home Care March 2 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Monthly Education Meeting Take the Battle Out of Bathing Memory Loss Diagnosis 6:00 - 8:00 pm March 20

connect2culture Chinese Music Workshops In Mandarin March 7 1:30 - 2:45 pm March 21 1:30 - 2:45 pm

April 2023

Understanding Dementia April 14 10 am - Noon

Legal and Financial April 3 5:30 - 7:00 pm

Medicaid Home Care April 6 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Monthly **Education Meeting** I'm Still Me - Life After a 6:00 - 8:00 pm April 10

connect2culture Music performances:

Orpheus Reflections April 26 1:30 - 2:45 pm

With Music & Movement in Mind April 30 2:00 pm

May 2023

Understanding Dementia May 12 10 am - 12 pm

Legal and Financial May 1 12 - 1 pm

Medicaid Home Care May 2 5:30 - 7:00 pm

Monthly Education Meeting Getting Lost and Staying Safe

May 8 6:00 - 8:00 pm connect2culture Chinese Music Workshops In Mandarin

May 2 1:30 - 2:45 pm May 16 1:30 - 2:45 pm

The New York Pops With Music in Mind May 18 Time TBA

Register by calling the CaringKind Helpline: 646-744-2900 or visit: caringkindnyc.org/caregivereducation

Ways to Give

Giving by Check Please make checks payable to CaringKind and mail to:

360 Lexington Avenue, 3rd Floor New York, NY 10017

Online/Credit Card

Visit www.caringkindnyc.org and click on Donate or call 646-744-2908. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and American Express.

Appreciated Securities

Gifts such as stocks or bonds may offer substantial tax advantages. Please speak to your tax advisor.

Bequests

By remembering CaringKind in your will, you can have a significant impact on improving the quality of care for those affected by Alzheimer's disease. Your bequest may have estate tax planning benefits as well. The following is sample bequest language for discussion with your attorney:

I, _____ (first and last name, city, state, zip), give, devise and bequeath to CaringKind (or Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders, New York City, Inc.) with offices located at 360 Lexington Avenue, 3rd Floor, New York, New York 10017, (insert written amount of gift, percentage of the estate, or residuary of estate, or description of property) to be used for (insert "its unrestricted use" or name of CaringKind program).

Life Insurance and Retirement Plans CaringKind can be named a beneficiary of your retirement plan or insurance policy. Donor Advised Funds

If you have established a donor advised fund through another organization (e.g., community foundation, investment firm) you may recommend the award of a grant to CaringKind. Please check the guidelines pertaining to your donor advised fund.

Corporate Giving

Payroll deductions, matching gifts, and event sponsorships are ways to support

100% of your donation supports New York City individuals and families affected by an Alzheimer's or dementia diagnosis.

Please contact Christian Doucette at 646-744-2979 or cdoucette@cknyc.org if you would like additional information.

OUR MISSION

The mission of CaringKind is to create, deliver, and promote comprehensive and compassionate care and support services for individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research. We achieve our mission by providing programs and services for individuals with dementia, their family and professional caregivers; increasing public awareness; collaborating with research centers; and informing public policy through advocacy.