

## *Why is the Caregiver Network network crumbling?*

The network around you may experience some discomfort. For example, not knowing what to say or do in certain circumstances. The situation may be unsettling for some people in your network. Fear, dread, doubt and denial are all emotions that can be experienced. Faced with these discomforts, the protective reaction may be to withdraw from the relationship temporarily or permanently.

### NETWORK IMPOVERISHMENT: THE MAIN RISK FACTORS :

#### Individual

- His or her physical and psychological health
- Life changes such as the departure of children
- A new job prospect
- Retirement
- Moving to a new house

#### Collective

- City expansion which adds to travel time for work or activities
- The promotion of a lifestyle based on autonomy
- Individualistic choices such as preferring shopping rather than having coffee with a group of friends

#### Related to caregivers

- The nature of my loved one's illness
- The intensity of the care provided
- The length of time of help and support
- The inaccessibility of resources
- Etc.

### SOME QUESTIONS MAY ARISE:



How to find a comforting space?



Who can help me not to lose my way within the responsibilities I assume?



Where can I find strength and inspiration in difficult times?

*Reminiscence is a way of nourishing my relationships.*

## What is a reminiscence activity?

A reminiscence activity calls on memories linked to our personal or collective history. The aim is to enter into relationships by communicating and sharing these memories. It is possible to use the senses to stimulate memories. For example, the smell of freshly baked bread, the sound of a sewing machine, the taste of a recipe from our childhood, looking at an old car show or the softness of a fabric that reminds us of the skin of a loved one.

## Why share our memories?

Caring for the relationships we have with those around us can be a daily challenge. How can we ensure that we share authentic, nourishing moments with those around us? The network in the caregiving journey is an invaluable asset. Reminiscence is an effective, accessible tool that appeals to everyone. We have identified four types of links that make for a present and welcoming caregiving network.

- The link between the caregiver and the cared-for ;
- Links with peers (neighbors, work colleagues, participants in a support group, people who who take part in the same activities...);
- Family and friendship links;
- Links with professionals (caregiver, doctor, speech therapist, homemaker, social worker social worker, nutritionist, occupational therapist, etc.);

## The benefits of reminiscence activities for caregivers and their and their network.

### For the caregivers

- Reconnecting with our identity by recalling who we were before taking on the role of caregiver
- Allow yourself to laugh, smile, breathe to soak up emotions of hope
- Get away from routine
- Draw on your experience and transpose it into the present situation, bringing a sense of security.

### For both

- Dedramatize the situation by remembering that there is always a beginning and an end to situation
- Live a positive and pleasant moment despite difficult situations (multiple new challenges, important decisions to be made, uncertainties etc.)
- Develop more authentic relationships and strengthen bonds
- Discover or rediscover facets of the other's personality.

### For the surrounding

- Realizing a person's adaptive strengths of the caregiver and feeling reassured about their ability to find solutions.
- Recognize the expertise and experience of the caregiver;
- Allow you to see the person in his or her whole and not just as a caregiver;
- Adapt its approach to respect the identity of the caregiver's with dignity

# bonus tool

Pistes de réflexion pour vivre une activité de réminiscence

Reminiscence can be **LIVED** in everyday life, by spontaneously evoking memories, listening to a song linked to one's past or watching a favorite old movie. Sometimes, however, we may feel the need to create moments of reminiscence to fulfill a very specific objective (improving bonds, generating an emotion, resurrecting forgotten strength, etc.).

## What do you want to achieve with this activity?

- Create a positive moment with someone close to me with someone close to me;
- Generate a positive emotion to reduce discomfort or unease;
- Touch up a part of my identity;
- Find common ground with my peers;
- Create a safe space-time;
- Take care of a difficult relationship.

## When and where is the best time to carry out this activity?

Taking the time to think about this question increases the effectiveness of the reminiscence experience. Here are a few suggestions!

- In the morning, when my energy level is highest
- During a meal in a restaurant in a meaningful place or at home;
- When I'm in the presence of a loved one.

## Do I need to prepare any equipment to fully enjoy this activity?

- Photos and videos (baptism gathering, school photos, dance show, etc.);
- Significant objects from the past (wedding dress, toys, school uniform, family melting pot, etc.);
- Meaningful music for those present (from travel, religious songs, country of origin, generation, etc.).

## Who will be affected by the activity?

- Family (parents, brothers, sisters, children, nephews, nieces, etc.);
- Person being cared for;
- Co-workers, classmates, volunteers;
- Friends, neighbors, housemates etc.



Share your activities with us!