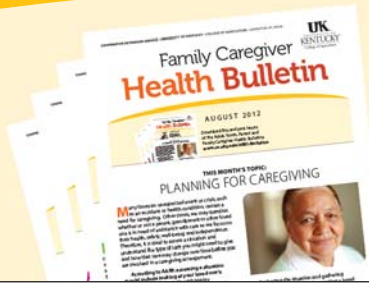


# Family Caregiver Health Bulletin



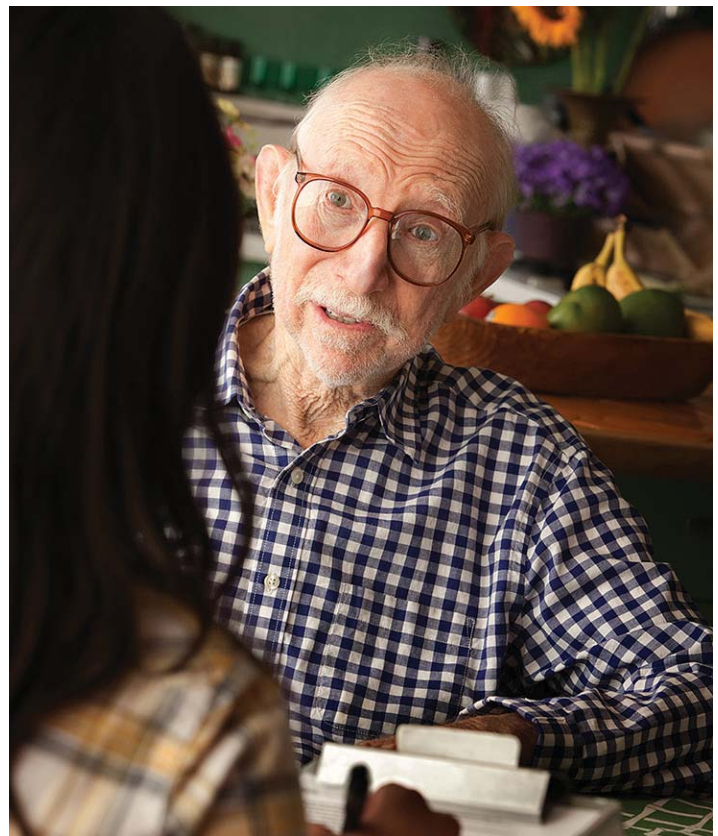
JUNE 2014

Download this and past issues  
of the Adult, Youth, Parent and  
Family Caregiver Health Bulletins:  
[www.ca.uky.edu/HEEL/Bulletins](http://www.ca.uky.edu/HEEL/Bulletins)

Reprinted by:  
K-State Research & Extension  
Atchison County Office  
405 Main/PO Box 109  
Effingham, KS 66023  
913-833-5450

## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: MEMORY BANKING

According to the Alzheimer's Association, of the 43.5 million adult family caregivers who care for someone more than 50 years of age, 14.9 million care for someone who has Alzheimer's disease or other dementia. Few programs, however, prepare individuals to serve as caregivers for older adults or to be care receivers in old age. This lack of preparation can lead to increased burden and distress. With challenging conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, caregivers may wonder if they are able to provide the best care should it become necessary. On the other hand, individuals diagnosed with dementia may become concerned about whether they will receive the best care. The University of Kentucky Family and Consumer Sciences Memory Banking program is a life story program that can be used as a caregiving tool. The program helps build the necessary skills to



Continued on the back →



# Reminiscing encourages individuals to think about personal experiences, knowledge, concerns and desires.

Continued from page 1

collect, document and maintain life stories and health histories as a way to maintain identity and personhood.

Memory Banking is unique in that it promotes caregiving as a two-way street. Both caregivers and care-receivers work together to develop individual stories and identities by recording and sharing their personal life stories and health histories. Such effort helps each partnership better understand each other as well as enhance communication, legacy building, brain activity and mental health. As a tool, life story has the potential to benefit both the caregiver and care receiver by improving knowledge and creating a sense of support and connection. In regards to memory loss and caregiving and the effort to reduce or prevent distress, documenting life story may be most effective in the early stages of the disease. Intervening at the early stages of dementia can strengthen the process of caregiving through the disease process and provide a sense of action at a time often associated with hopelessness.

Through life story, individuals can communicate important memories of situations, events, feelings, emotions and meanings toward worldviews, behavior and decisions. Reminiscing encourages individuals to think about personal experiences, knowledge, concerns and desires. This can prevent late-life depression and improve wellbeing. Learning how to effectively document a life story can promote and improve quality care by establishing a foundation of personal knowledge that helps explain and justify behaviors, wishes and decisions. A person's life story, especially a sincere understanding of a person's life, can help informal caregivers recognize that a family member is more than a disease and can assist the care receiver in better understanding the individual who has taken on the caregiver role.

For more information on life story and the Memory Banking program, contact your county Extension Agent.



#### REFERENCES:

- Adams KB. The transition to caregiving: the experience of family members embarking on the dementia caregiving career. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work* 2006; 47(3-4):3-29.
- Alzheimer's Association, 2011 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures, Alzheimer's and Dementia, Vol.7, Issue 2
- Anderson KA, Taha RD, Hosier AF. Know thy residents: An exploration of long-term care nursing staff's knowledge. *Research in Gerontological Nursing* 2009; 2(1): 69-76.
- Butler RN. The life review: An interpretation of reminiscence in the aged. *Psychiatry* 1963; 26(1): 65-76.
- Haight BK. Life review: A therapeutic modality for home health. *South Carolina Nurses Association* 1989; 4(1): 19-20.
- Haight BK, Michel Y, Hendrix S. Life Review: Preventing despair in newly relocated nursing home residents short- and long-term effects. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development* 1998; 47(2): 119-142.
- Motenko AK, Greenberg S. Reframing dependence in old age: a positive transition for families. *Social Work* 1995; 40(3): 382-90.
- Peck MD. Looking back at life and its influence on subjective well-being. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work* 2001; 35(2): 3-20.
- Silva-Smith AL. Restructuring life: preparing for and beginning a new caregiving role. *Journal of Family Nursing* 2007;13(1):99-116.
- Thorpe JM, Van Houtven CH, Sleath BL, Thorpe CT. Rural-urban differences in preventable hospitalizations among community-dwelling veterans with dementia. *J Rural Health*. 2010 Summer;26(2):146-55
- Turner MJ, Killian TS, Cain R. Life course transitions and depressive symptoms among women in midlife. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development* 2004; 58(4): 241-265.
- van Manen M. *Researching lived experience*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press: 1990.
- Wong PTP, Watt LM. What types of reminiscence are associated with successfully aging. *Psychology and Aging* 1991; 6(2): 272-279.

Family Caregiver  
**Health Bulletin**

**Written by:** Amy Hosier, Ph.D.  
Extension Specialist for Family Life  
**Edited by:** Connee Wheeler  
**Designed by:** Rusty Manseau  
**Stock images:** 123RF.com

