

The Mosaic

A Masterpiece Living Network Newsletter About Living Well



Volunteerism, Redefined

Winter 2019

By: Teresa Beshwate

“One of the great ironies of life is this: He or she who serves almost always benefits more than he or she who is served.” - Gordon Hinckle

Research has clearly shown the tremendously positive impact of serving others. Those who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability, and lower rates of depression than those who do not volunteer. Volunteers report a greater sense of life satisfaction and meaning and purpose. They feel physically healthier and enjoy a better sense of well-being and lower stress levels. Twenty nine percent of volunteers who live with a chronic condition say that volunteering has helped them manage their chronic illness.

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The Committee on Aging

By: Danielle Palli



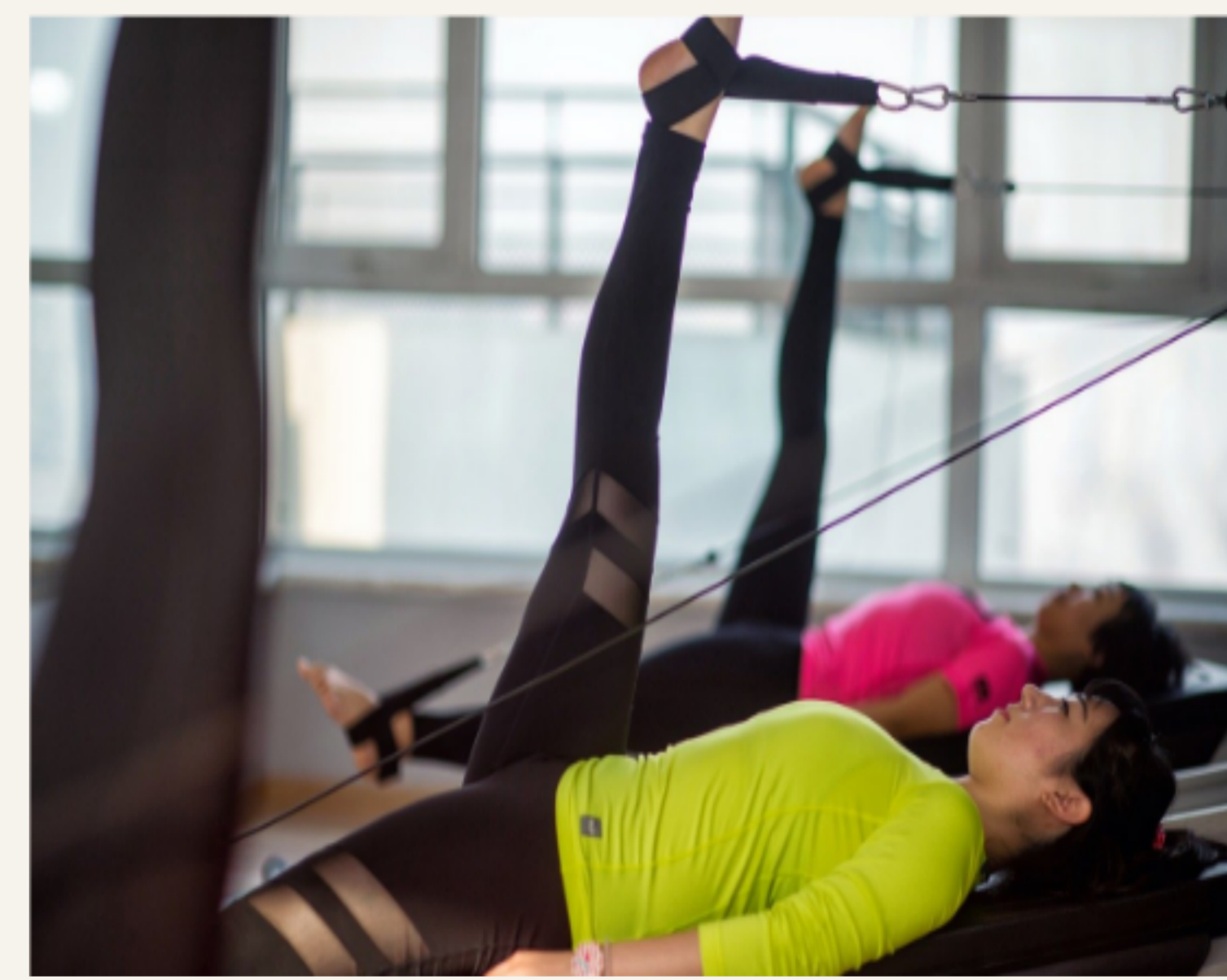
Residents and team members of Westminster Woods at Huntington formed the Committee on Aging in 2019 as a way to utilize aggregate data collected during Masterpiece Living’s Mobility and Lifestyle Reviews to drive programming and decision making. The committee currently has a dozen members that meet monthly to identify and set data goals, develop action plans, and provide opportunities for residents in Independent Living, Assisted Living and – very soon – Skilled Nursing. The committee has also been valuable in ensuring that all residents have a voice and are part of the decision-making at Westminster Woods.

“One of our goals was to reduce the silos that separate the varied levels of living,” resident and committee member, Barbara Herrera told the Mosaic. “We’re putting systems in place that encourage greater interaction.” Additionally, Barbara shared, they seek to explain the importance of MPL Reviews for residents and how that information can directly impact changes within the community that will benefit everyone.

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Pilates Night at the Barrington

By: Danielle Palli



“We knew we wanted something interactive and movement oriented,” Memer Hoeltzel, Fitness Specialist at The Barrington of Carmel told us after recently hosting a Family Night with Pilates in Memory Support. The goal was to focus on Pilates for everyone by developing a chair workout appropriate for all skill levels. “It is empowering for people who are beginning to feel a sense of loss,” Sarah Lopez, Memory Support Lifestyles Coordinator at the Barrington, told the Mosaic.

“When someone realizes they are losing their memory they often experience self-depreciation. But participants felt accomplished after the class.” Lopez also pointed out that people are always more engaged and responsive when family members join in on the activity. To keep the momentum going, Hoeltzel made certain that everyone left the event with a few takeaways that their families could continue to do together.

The challenge with leading an activity such as this one in Memory Care is that many residents are very physically active, but instructions need to be given simply and slowly due to varying levels of cognitive abilities.

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Even when controlling for other factors such as age, health, and gender, research has found that when individuals volunteer, they are more likely to live longer and have less incidence of heart disease.

Research points to a “volunteering threshold,” meaning that in order to receive the positive health outcomes from volunteering, one must commit at least one or two hours a week to volunteer activities.

But what about when transportation becomes a challenge, or the need to care for a spouse arises, or a case of commitment-phobia emerges? Do the numerous benefits of volunteerism become out of reach? Maybe not.

You can still become a “RAKtivist,” or someone who practices Random Acts of Kindness (RAK). Just one RAK a day reduces stress, anxiety and depression, plus your body is flooded with hormones such as serotonin, oxytocin and endorphins that help you feel calmer and happier. RAKtivists report being energized, happier, have fewer aches and pains and feel more confident than their non-RAKtivist counterparts.

Holding the elevator, sending an encouraging email, giving a neighbor a hand with their groceries, praising a local business online, befriending a new neighbor, sharing a favorite recipe, leaving a surprise in a library book, baking someone a cake, sending a care package, leaving a surprise for your mail carrier, a simple smile, a handmade card, an unexpected sticky note, a knitted gift ... the possibilities are endless.

What RAK’s can you think of, and how many can you pull off in a week?

Random acts of kindness create a chain reaction that spreads through communities and beyond. And it all starts with just one person.

Get more ideas from RandomActsofKindness.org and start your chain reaction today.

Based on aggregate data from the recent Lifestyle Reviews in Independent Living, the committee decided to focus on fall risk. To address the issue, they worked with Executive Director Chad Evans, and other leadership, to make environmental changes and educate residents. Some of these changes included:

- Identifying potential fall-risk hazards on campus and painting all curbs “caution yellow.”
- Informing residents about fall-prevention programs such as Vertical 360 and creating brochures with at-home exercises that people can do on their own to increase balance.
- Inviting a podiatrist to lead a program on proper footwear to prevent falls.
- Inviting people who have fallen to lead discussions that remind people to remain mindful about their surroundings when they walk.

Their goal is to reduce falls by a minimum of 5%, and they believe that environmental adaptations, education and intervention is key.

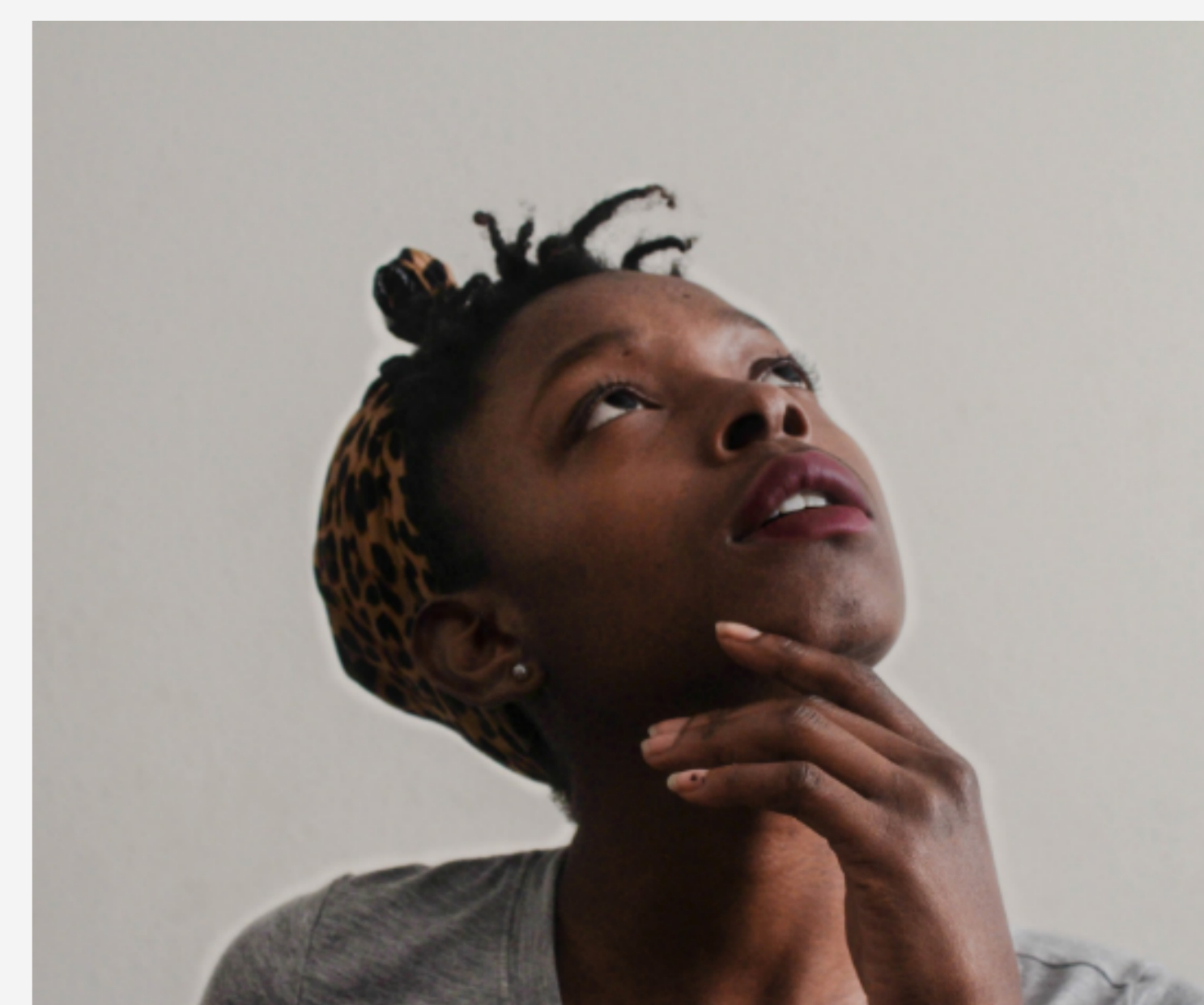
“We are lucky to have an administration that is enthusiastic about working with us,” Barbara said. “We’re building upon Masterpiece Living principles to encourage meaningful, high-quality lives. And, it’s important that people realize that they have a voice.”



Why Do We Forget Names?

Dr. Rob Winningham, PhD

Got a name on the tip of your tongue, but can't remember it? Don't worry. It may not be what you think. Dr. Rob explains...



One of the most common complaints about memory is the inability to remember names. In this short article, I will discuss this phenomenon and give some suggestions and hopefully peace of mind when one is unable to recall a name. There are a couple of primary reasons why we sometimes are unable to remember someone’s name.

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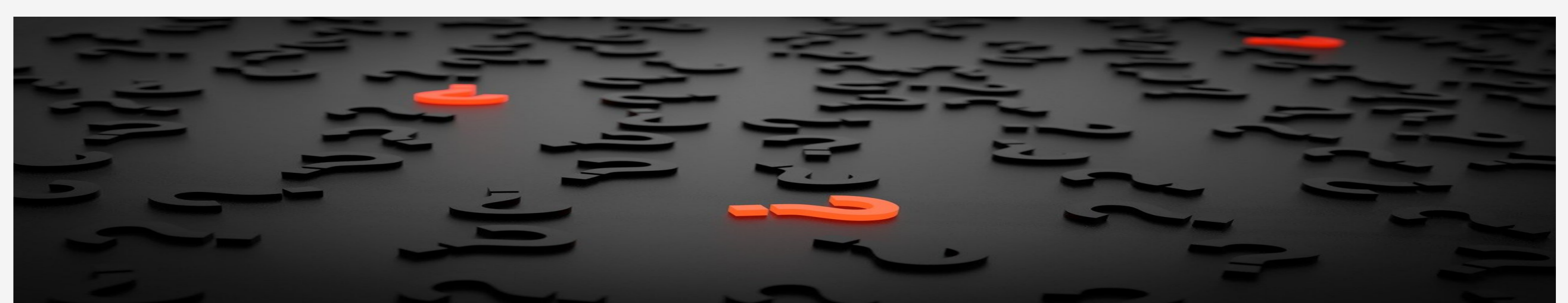


With study after study linking physical activity and social connection with greater health and wellbeing, and cognitive stability, the Pilates family night gave loved ones the opportunity to spend time together in a meaningful way. Lopez pointed out that even if a person doesn't immediately recognize a loved one, the emotional ties are there, and they recognize that the person with them is important. She recounted the story of one woman who visits her mother weekly, but instead of quickly offering "I'm your daughter" when her mother forgets who she is, she'll say something such as, "People tell me I look like you. Why do you think that is?" Eventually, her mother will recognize her and reconnect with her daughter. It is always a powerful moment when that happens.

What's up next for residents in Memory Support? The team is in the process of setting up a weekly intergenerational play group with residents, families and children (from local churches and schools).



"Sometimes, we want to offer a movement that we know will help residents – such as waving their arm a specific way for rotator cuff mobility, and they'll say, 'that's childish,'" Lopez said. "But, if we bring children in to swat at bubbles with a fly swatter, residents will absolutely want to participate alongside the kids." Additionally, residents from Independent Living regularly volunteer for cooking, arts and crafts, and music programs in Memory Support – providing yet another way for people of all ages, and of all levels of living, to connect in meaningful ways.



First, we often don't encode or make a new memory of someone's name in the first place. We can't later retrieve a name if we never stored it. The failure to make a new memory of someone's name when you first meet them is probably the most common challenge we have with names.

The second main reason we might not remember someone's name is not because we haven't learned it, rather we can't retrieve or find their name in our memory banks; this situation is known as the *Tip of the Tongue state*. With Tip of the Tongue experiences we know the name, we know we know the name, we might even know what sound or letter the name starts with, but alas it won't come to us. I am happy to report that Tip of the Tongue states do not appear to be a sign of a more significant problem, although they do often occur with increasing frequency during middle and late adulthood, however middle age and older adults are more likely to solve a Tip of the Tongue state than a younger adult.

One strategy for dealing with these situations is to simply stop thinking about the name for a while. Another strategy is to think about people and things related to the name one can't recall, such as other people associated with the person, places you have been with the person and so on.

If you want to remember someone's name, you might want to do one or more of the following suggestions:

1. When learning someone's name, imagine someone else you know with the same name. Quickly imagine whether the two people you know, with the same name, could be friends or if they have some sort of commonality.
2. Ask them to spell out their name. This will give you more time to rehearse the name and possibly create a more visual image of the name.
3. After learning someone's name, you can try repeating it back to them, then hold it on your mind for a moment and rehearse it by using it in a normal conversation. If you forget the name in the first few minutes, go ahead and ask them to remind you again. Be sure to use their name when you depart.

Try writing the name down as soon as possible, rehearse it over the next day or two.

Finally, don't worry if you are unable to remember a name, it is normal and something most of us find challenging at times.