

Embracing their Role Reversal

For over half a decade, Dolores Linvog resided at an assisted living residence. That changed when her care needs compelled her to find new living arrangements. She was welcomed with open arms by one of her oldest friends, her daughter, Theresa Linvog-Wood.

“My mamà moved in on Valentine’s Day of 2014,” says Theresa. “It’s a studio apartment but we’ve just had a wonderful time. It’s been really an amazing experience.”

Still, like any pair of roommates, the two need their space at times, which is where Full Life Care enters the picture. Dolores, who has dementia, visits the North Seattle Adult Day Health center two to three times a week, providing time for Theresa to take care of herself.

“I go running, maybe head to the beach, catch up with friends, and I’ve started taking up meditation at the



Theresa and Dolores

Frye Art Museum, which I’ve really grown fond of,” she says. “It’s so nice to know that she’s taken care of at Full Life and that I can just focus on myself for a little while.”

The respite is something that Theresa leans on. Caring for her mother is a full-time responsibility, as Theresa is the sole caregiver.

Theresa is now responsible for the woman that raised her. She admits that the role reversal brings forth complicated feelings. She

also notes that while their roles may have changed, they still enjoy the same activities.

“When I was younger, mamà used to take me to the museums a lot,” says Theresa. “It’s been a special experience to be the one that’s taking her to the museums now. Our love for them and each other hasn’t changed after all these years.”

Dolores, an extremely social individual, enjoys interacting with other attendees. In addition to skilled nursing and rehabilitative therapies available at the centers, she loves the activities throughout the day,

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Elaine Sanchez to Speak at Family Caregiving Conference

On Monday, June 4, 2018 the extremely popular conference for caregivers, *Giving Care, Taking Care*, returns to the Tukwila Community Center.



Back by popular demand, Elaine Sanchez, caregiver, author, nationally known speaker and co-founder of Caregiver.Com will start the day with her Seven Survival Tips for Caregivers, and will follow with workshops

on important topics like anger, guilt, and grief.

Caregivers can also choose from 16 workshops and visit over 40 exhibitors with information about products and services that assist caregivers in Washington State.

WORKSHOP TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Caregiver Survival Tips
- Dementia Basics
- Essential Legal Documents
- Reducing Stress and Finding Joy
- The Healthy Brain
- Take Care of Your Back
- Guilt, Anger

THIS CONFERENCE IS APPROPRIATE FOR CAREGIVERS INCLUDING:

- Family caregivers (spouses, adult children, parents of adults with disabilities, or other relatives)
- Home care workers and adult day services staff
- Adult family home or assisted living staff
- Social service or mental health professionals who work with family caregivers

Giving Care, Taking Care is hosted by Aging and Long-Term Support Administration, Full Life Care, and Pierce County Human Services, with the support of numerous community organizations.

The early registration deadline for fee discount is May 14 and space is limited. The brochure and online registration form are available at www.fulllifecare.org/givingcaretakingcare.

giving care • taking care

A Conference for Family Caregivers

JUNE 4, 2018 • TUKWILA, WA



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Essential Legal Documents • Reducing Stress • Much More!

Early Registration Deadline: May 14, 2018

Limited Space • Preregistration Required

MORE INFO: <http://tinyurl.com/GivingCareTakingCare>

or call (360) 725-2544 or 1-800-422-3263 to leave a voicemail with your name and street mailing address.

Role Reversal

Continued from page 1

especially bingo and painting. A recent music class also developed a new skill in Dolores as well.

“She’s started singing and she never did that when I was growing up,” says Theresa. “Full Life has brought this wonderful talent out. She loves to sing now and it is so enjoyable.”

For the two of them, there is a balance that Full Life has helped them strike. For Dolores, it’s the amount of fun she has while at the adult day health center. For Theresa, it comes from the time to care for herself and the comfort she feels knowing her mother is in good hands.

“I know that she is safe,” says Theresa. “She comes back so happy every time and that is always the best part of the day.”

To find out more about enrolling at one of Full Life Care’s adult day health centers, contact (206) 528-5315 (King County) or (425) 355-1313 (Snohomish County).



Eden Amital

by Eden Amital
AmeriCorps, Friendly Visiting
Program Coordinator

When I describe my AmeriCorps service position, I often joke that I'm Match.com personified, except I foster friendships, not romantic relationships. In the ElderFriends program, we connect volunteers and elders with a goal to relieve social isolation and loneliness.

My role as ElderFriends Match Coordinator is a blast: pairing people together is like assembling a puzzle, and it's rewarding when the pieces fit together just right. I recently worked with a sports-loving elder who was a nanny for thirty years. I matched her with a sporty couple who have an infant. Another recent match is a volunteer and elder who care deeply about feminism and politics, and I have another pair who share not only the same faith, but also a passion for thrifting! When I make my check-in

Reflections from the ElderFriends Match Coordinator

calls in the coming months, I'm sure I'll hear many wonderful stories about their blossoming friendships.

When I'm not coordinating and supporting matches, I visit my own ElderFriends. My friend Deena is navigating a challenging housing situation and doesn't always have energy to socialize. When it's too daunting for her to meet in person, we talk on the phone. Our conversations give her space to vent about her worries, but we also make time to discuss our mutual interests. She often shares videos of ospreys with me, and we're planning a trip to the Woodland Park Zoo to marvel at birds up close. Deena and I both keep up with current events, and I'm going to show her how to use her tablet to stream my favorite news podcasts. Despite the generational gap between us, we've found that we share a love for Amy Winehouse. And, since I recently arrived to Seattle, Deena makes sure I know about the city's history and tells me all about local dives and dance clubs that no longer exist.

Oftentimes, there isn't a "point" to our discussions, and we certainly don't resolve everything that might be troubling her over the course of a conversation. But our goal isn't to solve everything. We just seek to share something unique and precious – ourselves – so that we can grow our friendship.

Holding Space for a Friend

ElderFriends strives to provide increased social belonging and community for older adults. As the Match Coordinator and as an ElderFriends visitor, I'm learning what it means to honor another person's dignity and agency.

What does it mean to "hold space" for another person? Dr. Sheryl Niebuhr is a psychologist who says we must avoid seeking to "fix" the problems of people we seek to support. Instead, she suggests, we can offer a safe and nonjudgmental space in which people are free to express feelings, frustrations, and joys. It can be challenging to bear witness to a person's distress and suffering without immediately intervening or proposing solutions. Holding such space, however, creates trust and encourages those we care about to process, heal, and consider their options. I often find myself in situations where I struggle with how to respond to pain – and then I step back from my desire to "fix" everything in the moment and recognize the importance of being fully present for a friend.

FRESH TAKE, FAVORITE FUNDRAISER



photo: Barbie Hull

A creative group of Full Life Care volunteers wanted to spread the word about our mission with their friends and family.

They collaborated with local businesses and cranked up the fun for our first Beer for a Cause fundraiser. People loved it! Guests gathered to contribute charitably while sipping local brews, fingers crossed for a big win in the raffle. Years later, the tradition continues.

What makes this fundraiser so lovable?

The people. The

peers who rally around Full Life Care are dedicated to improving the lives of adults with serious illnesses or disabilities. Our volunteers, staff, and donors truly care and give generously time and again. That's why we added "peers" to the name, **Peers & Beers for a Cause**, to recognize the people who make this event a success.


Georgetown Brewing Company came aboard early on, donating their "darn tasty beer" to help Full Life raise money. This spring, Georgetown Brewing helps create a fresh take on this favorite fundraiser — on Saturday, April 28, from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. — by welcoming you into their tasting room. This casual, friendly venue has limited space; your **RSVP is required to attend**. Purchase your custom pint glass and please RSVP now at fulllifecare.org/pfac.

Just as fun-loving volunteers helped fundraise years ago with a new idea, now you can help Full Life in a new way, by creating your own personalized webpage at fulllifecare.org/peers. Set a goal and invite peers, near or far, to donate by May 31. It's quick, easy, and fun.


See back page for more information about **Peers & Beers for a Cause**, and thank you for your ongoing support of Full Life.

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WITH FEATURED SPEAKER
BRIAN WONG, MD, MPH
CEO OF THE BEDSIDE TRUST



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NORA GIBSON, MSW

FULLLIFECARE.ORG/LUNCH





Growing Small Miracles at Full Life Care

By Dave Budd, Executive Director

In the nearly forty-year history of Full Life Care, the agency has had exactly two executive directors. One was Betty Sanders, who started the program with a small group of friends and supporters. And many of that group, like the Gaffney family, are still involved with the agency today. In the beginning, the organization was solely a labor of love, existing largely on donations, grants, volunteer labor and a corps of dedicated individuals. Among them was Nora Gibson, who would become executive director in the early 1990s. During Nora's tenure, Full Life grew steadily into the organization that today has a dozen different programs serving 3,000 individuals and their families across two counties. It has been an amazing accomplishment, especially in light of the challenges inherent in serving our clients, most of whom rely on Medicaid and charitable donations to cover the cost of their care.



*Nora Gibson
Executive Director,
1994 – 2018*

But beyond our leadership, there is another secret to our success.

Do you remember our blizzard of 2008? It closed down Seattle for a week right before Christmas. During that storm, Full Life received a desperate call from another agency: one of their home care employees was unable to reach their client, Richard, who was isolated in his home and in serious need of help. Lucy Mugo rose to the occasion and made her way to Richard's home every day throughout that storm. And beyond. You see, the client was so impressed with Lucy

that he asked her to become his ongoing caregiver, and every single day for the past decade, Lucy or another caregiver from Full Life has been at Richard's home to provide him the care essential for his health and well-being.

We recently learned that Richard passed away. This was not completely unexpected; his health had been in decline for some time, but it was still emotional news for our staff. Still, we were consoled to know that Full Life had made it possible for Richard to live in his own home through the end of his life. That was a great gift for which he was very grateful. Lucy recalled to me today her special memories of Richard: "He was always so gracious and so optimistic." I could see just how deeply she felt towards this man whom she had "rescued" all those years ago.

Lucy, and so many of our other colleagues, are what really make Full Life Care the success that it is. They are the reason that we so often hear from families, clients and other long-term care professionals: "I love Full Life."

You know what? We love it too!

Like Nora, and Betty before her, my goal at Full Life is this: to do my best to help grow the resources to support Lucy and our other 450 colleagues so that they can continue to perform small miracles every day. They provide life-sustaining care to people whom they treat as an extension of their own family. And that is one thing that has not changed since the Betty Sanders years—it is still a labor of love. As long as we continue to cultivate our love for our work and the clients we serve, I know Full Life Care will grow and thrive well into the future.



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