

CAREGIVERS CORNER

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<https://respitecareatlanta.org/>



Hello RCA and Community Caregivers,

During this pandemic, you are not alone. So many lives have been adversely impacted by illness, social isolation and/or changes in daily routine. However, as caregivers, you already faced immense challenges in supporting the needs of your loved ones and households. The RCA Board, staff, volunteers, and donors honor you for your perseverance in balancing the endless responsibilities that come with this territory. We hope that our support for you is evident through continual efforts to stay connected, as well as sustaining RCA operations.

Ironically, safety protocols for those at greatest risk for complications from Covid-19 have contributed to accelerated cognitive decline in those with

dementia. For some caregivers, this had led to hard decisions to bring care into the home despite some risk, or to transition loved ones to new settings that will provide additional support, coupled with a sense of community. These are heart-wrenching decisions but be assured that others have and will face the same critical juncture and make the same or similar choices to ensure the safety, health and well-being of *the family member and the family unit.*

If you've had to confront and act on just such a decision, please recognize the need to do so and quickly dispense with any shame or guilt in taking action. It is nothing short of being responsible, *responsible for yourself and your loved one.* Also, remember that you remain the *primary caregiver* but perhaps in a different way. You will be partnering with others to ensure that the best possible care is delivered. (From my personal experience, only sustained caregiver vigilance will ensure the best outcome.)

In our efforts to continuously serve you, please call me (404-591-4365) if you are seeking emotional or informational support for the journey forward.

Best,
Wendy
Wendy Liverant
Director

Piedmont Health System Dementia Support Group

Meets online, 2nd Thursday each month, 1-2pm

Contact: Tammy Pearl, LMSW (Tammy.pearl@piedmont.org)

Senior Provisions (Amy Hentschel) Support Group

Meets online 2nd Friday each month, 10-11am

Register at <https://www.seniorprovisions.com/events/caregiver-support-groups/>

Monthly Online Alzheimer's Support Network of Naples, FL with Carolyn Lukert

Register at [Public Online Support Network Gathering/](#)

Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Caregiver Hotline: 1-800-272-3900

Let's talk about
Dementia

Educational Webinars/Videos/Resources

Alzheimer's Association: https://www.alz.org/georgia/helping_you/education_programs

Careblazers (Dr. Natali Edmonds): [Careblazers Channel on Youtube.com](#)

Alzheimer's Reading Room (Facebook): <https://www.facebook.com/alzheimersreadingroom>

Positive Approach to Care (Teepa Snow): <https://teepasnow.com/services/online-learning/webinars/>



Kintsugi: Repaired Tea Bowl

Kintsugi and Dementia Caregiving

Recently, I read about the restoration art of *kintsugi* (golden repair) or *kintsukuroi* (golden joinery). This “is a pottery repair method that honors the artifact’s unique history by emphasizing, not hiding, the break” (Mantovani, 2019). The technique fascinates me but equally so is the philosophy behind it.

Kintsugi fuses two concepts, *mottainai*, or the feeling of regret when something is wasted and *mushin*, the need to accept change (Mantovani, 2019). This Japanese art form is used to repair broken ceramic pieces (see the tea bowl above) by using liquid gold, silver, platinum, or a lacquer dusted with powdered gold to adhere the broken pieces together.

Given how randomly individual ceramic pieces break and the manner of their repair, a piece is given new life. Stefano Carnazzi (2016) describes the breaks and cracks in such pieces as “scars” or “wounds” and how artful transformation can leave a uniquely distinctive identity. Applying this to the human experience, he states that kintsugi reminds us of the *power of resilience*. “Each of us should look for a way to cope with traumatic events in a positive way, learn from negative experiences, take the best from them and convince ourselves that exactly these experiences make each person unique, precious” (Carnazzi, 2016).

As caregivers, it is your commitment to work through the difficulties, disappointments, limitations and human imperfections that makes you invaluable, indispensable and profoundly special to your loved ones, families and community. As your dementia journey experience is deeply personal and unique to you, it is also the source of inner wisdom and there is surely beauty in that. Said another way,

Things may fall apart. That’s life. But if you’re wise, you can use every scrap, patch yourself up, and keep going. That’s the essence of resourcefulness, resilience, persistence. It’s mottainai. Some philosophers would argue it actually is the meaning of life.

Andrea Mantovani

Sources:

Carnazzi, S. (2016, January 30). Kintsugi: The art of precious scars. Retrieved from: <https://www.lifegate.com/kintsugi>

Mantovani, A. (2019, September 19). Kintsugi and the art of repair: Life is what makes us. Retrieved from: <https://medium.com/@andreamantovani/kintsugi-and-the-art-of-repair-life-is-what-makes-us-b4af13a39921>

AUTUMN MEANS APPLES!!!



There is nothing like a juicy red apple on a brisk autumn day. However, there are so many varieties to choose from and some lend themselves better than others to cooking, baking or drying. The following is not an exhaustive list but may afford some guidance:

Applesauce: Braeburn, Cortland, Jonagold, McIntosh

Apple Pies: Cortland, Jonagold

General Baking: Fuji, Granny Smith, Rome Beauty

Drying: Gala

Source: The Old Farmer’s Almanac, Almanac.com

Are you a Baked Apple fan? Quick, easy to make and just delicious! Check out this recipe:

https://www.simplyrecipes.com/recipes/baked_apples

If you are reading this e-Newsletter and not an RCA member family but would like to be on our e-Newsletter and Activity distribution lists, contact me at: info@respitecareatlanta.org
I will be happy to add you!