CarePartners INITIATIVE

JANUARY 2026 E-NEWSLETTER

caring for the caregiver

As we bid farewell to 2025, our CarePartners Initiative team wants to thank you for being a vital part of our community. Your trust has been the cornerstone of our shared progress during the impactful journey we've shared over the past year. We are deeply grateful for your partnership and the confidence you place in our team every day.

Your support in 2025 helped us to reach over 200 individuals across Sonoma Valley providing them with over 30 Memory Cafe events and 27 Support Groups for over 50 individual caregivers.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are energized by the new initiatives we have in store and look forward to supporting our community. We will continue to evolve our programs to help build a community where people are not defined by diagnosis, but recognized for their strengths, gifts, and wisdom.

Whether you participate in our programs, share resources, advocate in our community, or support us financially, you are an essential part of our progress and success. Thank you!

We extend our warmest wishes for a meaningful and supportive 2026.

With Gratitude

We thank Jack London Yacht Club for their generous grant to CarePartners Initiative received at their *Grant Distribution Celebration* held November 9th at Wellington Cellars in Glen Ellen.

One of the founding principles of the Jack London Yacht Club is to support Valley of the Moon nonprofits through grants. Funds raised from the Jack to Jack Yacht Race and other events are distributed to local charities and non-profits.

Memory Cafe

CarePartners Initiative offers a free **Memory Cafe** twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Monday, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, at the Sonoma United Methodist Church (Community Room), located at 109 Patten Street, Sonoma.

★ Upcoming Memory Cafe Dates:
Monday, January 12
Monday, January 26

Attending a Memory Cafe is a very important time for loved ones and caregivers to socialize and enjoy fun activities. Loved ones must be accompanied by a caregiver, however, a friend or family member may bring the loved one in place of the primary caregiver. They are free to attend. We hope to see you!

December was a busy month for our Memory Cafes. On December 8th, we celebrated our 2-year anniversary! Our holiday sing-along was so much fun on December 23rd!

Memory Cafe Adventures

CarePartners Initiative also offers a free **Memory Cafe Adventures** program once a month on the 3rd Wednesday, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, meeting at a different location in Sonoma each month.

On December 10th we had our Memory Cafe Adventure program at the Sonoma Charter School where we painted winter landscapes with the 8th grade leadership class. The 8th graders were so engaging and everyone left with a great painting of birch trees. Thank you to Sonoma Charter School and art director Julie Calhoun for their continued support of CarePartners Initiative!

★ Upcoming Memory Cafe Adventures Date: **Wednesday, January 21**

We will be meeting at the **Black Bear Diner** from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Come and join in connection with your memory cafe friends and community while enjoying breakfast and fun activities. RSVP is required as there is a limit to participants. Please RSVP HERE.
Black Bear Diner is located at 201 W Napa St , Sonoma

PLEASE NOTE: Starting in 2026 Memory Cafe Adventures will be on the 3rd Wednesday instead of the 3rd Thursday. We heard from many participants that they couldn't attend Thursdays because they attend the Senior Social Club at Vintage House. We are here to serve you, heard your suggestion, and we listened!

Support Groups for Caregivers (in-person and Zoom)

CarePartners Initiative offers a free in-person support group each month.
Location:
Sonoma United Methodist Church Community Room,109 Patten St., Sonoma

4th Wednesday, 11:00am - 12:30pm | Facilitator: Heidi Lage, LMFT
★ **Upcoming: Wednesday, January 28**

Please consider joining us. It is a confidential space to share challenges and successes with other caregivers. It is truly validating to be in the company of others who intimately understand the journey of a caregiver.

Please **RSVP** here to let us know if you plan to attend. We are limiting the support groups to 10 people to be sure everyone has adequate time and space to share.

CarePartners Initiative offers a free Zoom caregiver support group each month.

2nd Tuesday, 12:00-1:30 pm | Facilitator: Heidi Lage, LMFT
★ **Upcoming: Tuesday, January 13**

Please **RSVP** here to let us know if you plan to attend. We are limiting the support groups to 10 people to be sure everyone has adequate time and space to share. You may attend both our two monthly caregiver support groups (one in-person and one via Zoom) as space allows.

Please contact Heidi for a short intake and the Zoom link. Telephone (707) 640-3734 or email here.

CarePartners Initiative offers a free in-person grief support group series.

Dates and time TBD | Facilitator: Heidi Lage, LMFT
Location:
Sonoma United Methodist Church Community Room, 109 Patten St., Sonoma

In December we wrapped up our pilot grief support group program for those who have lost their loved one to dementia. We are planning to hold another series of grief support circles in 2026. **Please let us know if you would like to be on the list by sending an email to Heidi,** heidilagelmft@gmail.com,

The grief support group is for those who have lost their loved one due to dementia. It is a closed group. The grief support group is the same group of people for the entire series and includes a psychoeducation component. Each session builds on the previous session.

Social Activities Group

December Social Activity

A joyous time was had by all who attended the dress rehearsal of *The Snow Maiden*. The talented dancers and beautiful costumers brought joy to all our participants.

Many thanks to Patty O'Reilly, Executive and Artistic Director and Lead Instructor, from Sonoma Conservatory of Dance for her continued support of CarePartners Initiative!

Please Consider Making a Donation

We need your help as we expand our **no cost programs** to support caregivers and their loved ones impacted by memory decline. Our programs touch lives and make a difference, and you can too.

Please consider a tax-deductible donation. It helps drive our efforts to expand our programs and reach many more people whose lives can be transformed. We appreciate that you have many choices when it comes to your charitable giving, and we would be grateful for any amount you choose to give. Thank you.

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Featured Resource

Today & Together

Today & Together is a nonprofit adult day services program in Sonoma Valley. Your loved one will spend the day in an engaged, structured setting with trained and attentive staff. You as a caregiver will have the confidence to go to work, run errands, recharge, etc. knowing your loved one is in a nurturing and caring environment.

A warm, structured space where older adults enjoy engaging days, and family caregivers get the respite and support they need. Your loved one will be with friends and caregivers who understand how to provide the care they deserve. Whether it's memory loss, mobility needs, or simply needing more support, Today & Together is there to help.

They are offering three open houses to accommodate varying schedules:
- Thursday, January 8: 11:00 am - 1:00 pm
- Tuesday, January 13: 4:00 - 6:00 pm
- Thursday, January 15: 4:00 - 6:00 pm

To learn more about Today & Together's adult day services, visit their website here.

Resource Corner

Caregiver 101 Class via Zoom
Date: Tuesday, January 20 | Time: 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm
For the family members or caregivers of loved ones with dementia.
Discussion: Strategies for dealing with dementia associated symptoms and the importance of advance planning.
Who should attend: Family members or caregivers of patients who have a diagnosis of dementia. It is recommended that patients with dementia should not attend this class.
Click **here** to register.

Share & Care Support Group via Zoom
2nd and 4th Thursday of each month, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
ZOOM video teleconferencing or call-in
• To receive Zoom information please contact
Amie at axh@redwoodcrc.org | Phone: (707) 582-2329

Evening Caregiver Support Group via Zoom
2nd Thursday of each month, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
ZOOM video teleconferencing or call-in
• To receive Zoom information please contact
Amie at axh@redwoodcrc.org | Phone: (707) 582-2329

First Steps for New Caregivers
Date: Friday, January 9 | Via Zoom
Time: 11:00 am - 12:30 pm
At the beginning stages of caregiving, it can be a struggle, it can be confusing and sometimes frightening. Learn about what steps you need to take, where to start and what to do. Learn to reach out to people, services, and information that will be a guide for you to help care for a loved one. The earlier you act and find support, the sooner you'll get a handle on the confusion and frustration that is often experienced in the caregiving process.
Click here to register. Phone: (800) 543-8312

Grief and The Caregiving Journey
Date: Tuesday, January 13 | Via Zoom
Time: 2:00 - 3:30 pm
The guest speaker will be discussing the different types of grief (including anticipatory) that are common among caregivers. We will be exploring the stages of grief, understanding the emotional and behavioral impacts, developing coping strategies, and more.
Click here to register. Phone: (800) 541-8614

Powerful Tools for Caregivers
Date: Six consecutive Tuesdays, beginning 1/20/26 and ending 2/24/26 | Via Zoom
Time: 12:30 - 2:00 pm
The Powerful Tools for Caregivers class series helps caregivers take better care of themselves while providing for a friend or relative. By taking care of your own health and well-being, you become a better caregiver. Six class sessions held once a week are led by experienced class leaders. Participants are given a copy of the Powerful Tools for Caregivers Workbook as a companion guide and to provide additional caregiver resources. Please contact the Event Organizer for more information:
Name: Charles Hoy-Ellis | Email: ellisc@uw.edu
Phone: (206) 221-5514 (If leaving a voicemail, please mention Powerful Tools for Caregivers)

Champions of Chaos Supportive Peer Weekly Meeting
Date: Weekly on Wednesdays | Via Zoom
Time: 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
The virtual gatherings are always free and always optional. A supportive peer weekly meeting for individuals navigating the aging process for someone else, this is a mutual self-help group, not a therapy group. Everyone is encouraged to participate to whatever extent comfortable whether you need to vent, need to brainstorm resources or solutions, or just know that you are not alone.

How meeting works: Complete the registration form. Receive a link to the one-hour weekly call. Join as you can/need to. Click here to learn more or to register.
Phone: (415) 828-3733

CarePartners' Library at Vintage House

CarePartners Initiative has a collection of books and DVDs relating to caregiving of loved ones with dementia in the library at Vintage House. The above photo on the left shows the location of the shelf on the right-hand wall next to the clock, just inside the Vintage House library, and the photo on the right shows the shelf itself. The books must be checked out at the front desk and returned ASAP. If you have library donations, please email Susanne Sipple here.

We hope you have an opportunity to stop by the Vintage House library to delve into all our resource shelf has to offer.

Vintage House Senior Center is located at 264 1st St. East, Sonoma.

Volunteer to Help Us Make a Difference!

Looking for a New Sense of Purpose in Your Life?
CarePartners Initiative is looking for volunteers with experience in fundraising, program management and hands-on help executing our many cost-free programs.

If you are looking for a rewarding volunteer experience, please contact us here or call our Helpline (707) 732-9436. We look forward to hearing from you!

Dementia Friendly Sonoma Valley

Sonoma is a Dementia Friendly Community

Dementia Friendly America: https://dfamerica.org/
Part of our mission is to deepen awareness of the symptoms and signs of dementia. As a community, we can enhance the safety and quality of life for the estimated 1,000 people in Sonoma Valley with dementia and their caregivers.

Dementia is complex. Click here for a short video that summarizes it well. If you would like more information on Sonoma's program, please visit the Dementia Friendly Sonoma Valley information page on our website here.

Dementia Friends Milestones
There are currently 188,262 Dementia Friends throughout the United States.

"Volunteers are America's silent strength. Those who give of themselves in a spirit of unselfish devotion to the needs of others are truly this nation's most generous, unsung heroes."
William Arthur Ward, Who's Who in American Education

Don't forget to visit our website for more information about us and our no cost programs!
carepartnersinitiative.org

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