Pride is the feeling of satisfaction you get from an achievement or an association; it’s the confidence and self-respect that comes as a result. Looking at what makes us proud gives us lots of reasons to think about who we are, what we care about, and how we see our lives. When we do things that make us proud, it builds our confidence in our ability to affect change in our lives.

What (small or big) thing have you accomplished that made you proud? Describe the emotion. Who did you tell, or did you keep it to yourself? Are there things you have done, or survived or confronted in the past that you look upon now with pride? Write about why it matters.

MESSAGE FROM LEEZA

Is Everything OK with Your Brain?

We can’t see if our brain is bruised or broken, but we know that if Alzheimer’s has crept in, it could be eating away at our brains decades before any symptoms appear. So, how do we know if our brains are ok? Well, here are some broad strokes:

If you forget a name, but it comes back to you- Probably OK.

If you lose your car keys or your phone, but you still know how to use them and you find them later. Probably OK.

If you forget to pay the bills one month. Probably OK. (You should worry if it continues to happen).

If you can’t find words or you get lost occasionally. Probably OK. (You should worry if it continues and others begin to notice.)

None of these signs are absolute, of course, and you should pay attention to any feeling you may have that something just isn’t right... but I can tell you there are lots of people who seem to be doing everything right. They are known as SuperAgers, people over 80 whose memories are as good (or better) than those 20 to 30 years younger. Since 75% of seniors worry about getting dementia, we all want to know what we can do to prevent it. And there ARE things we can do.

In fact, research shows that up to 40% of cases of dementia can be prevented. So, this month, we want to focus on Secrets of the SuperAgers. Read the article we’ve included here which explains how basically it comes down to these “secrets”

1. Stay Active
2. Socialize
3. Challenge your brain
4. Indulge sometimes

There’s a lot of good news around keeping our brains healthy, and SuperAgers show us that Optimism and Resilience are at the top of the list, so here at Leeza’s Care Connection, we can help because that’s our game!

Ever Forward,

Leeza
Alzheimer’s and other dementias are on the rise, but you can take a proactive approach to help protect yourself as you age. Although it’s an exclusive group, research suggests SuperAgers might hold the key to learning more about aging and age-related health issues like dementia. This research attempts to identify commonalities among these cognitively “young” individuals.

Neuroscientist Emily Rogalski, PhD, leads the SuperAging study at Northwestern University in Chicago and shares some of the scientists’ findings.

What’s a SuperAger?
A SuperAger is someone in their 80s or older who exhibits cognitive function that is comparable to that of an average middle-aged individual. Additionally, this group has been shown to exhibit less brain volume loss. Using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), scientists measured the thickness of the cortex in 24 SuperAgers and 12 members of a control group. Normally aging adults lose roughly 2.24 percent in brain volume per year, but the SuperAgers lost around 1.06 percent. Because SuperAgers lose brain volume more slowly than their peers, they may be better protected from dementia.

Common Habits of SuperAgers:

1. **SuperAgers live an active lifestyle.**
   Staying active is one of the best things you can do as you age. Physical activity results in increased oxygen intake, which helps your body perform optimally. Exercise helps your heart, and muscle-strengthening exercises specifically reduce the risk for falls. Regular exercise also helps you maintain a healthy weight. The risk for developing Alzheimer’s disease triples in individuals with a body mass index (BMI) over 30. Even exercising twice a week will help lower your chances of getting the disease later in life.

2. **SuperAgers continue to challenge themselves.**
   Mental activity can be just as important as physical activity. If Sudoku doesn’t speak to you, no need to fret. Mental activity comes in many forms. Try reading an article on a subject with which you’re unfamiliar, or take classes that put you outside your comfort zone. These will help stimulate and engage the brain in new ways.

3. **SuperAgers are social butterflies.**
   SuperAgers tend to report strong social relationships with others, says Dr. Rogalski. To support this, the attention region deep in the brain is larger in SuperAgers. This region is packed with large, spindly neurons called von Economo neurons, which are thought to play a role in social processing and awareness. Dr. Rogalski states that autopsies on SuperAgers revealed they have more than four to five times the number of such neurons compared to the average octogenarian.
   "It's not as simple as saying, 'If you have a strong social network, you'll never get Alzheimer's disease,'" says Dr. Rogalski. "But if there is a list of healthy choices one can make, such as eating a certain diet and not smoking, maintaining strong social networks may be an important one on that list."

4. **SuperAgers indulge.**
   Yes, you read that correctly. Dr. Rogalski’s SuperAgers included individuals who are fitness buffs and those who indulge in a nightcap every evening. They also indulged in an occasional glass of alcohol; moderate drinkers were 23 percent less likely to develop Alzheimer’s disease or signs of memory problems than non-drinkers. The key here is moderation. It's equally important to note that drinking more than the recommended amount would be considered a risk factor for Alzheimer's disease.

**Read the rest of the article here:**
https://www.nm.org/healthbeat/healthy-tips/4-habits-super-agers
Brain Teaser

A man stands on one side of a river, his dog on the other. The man calls his dog, who immediately crosses the river without getting wet and without using a bridge or a boat. How did the dog do it?

Answer:
The river was frozen.

Healthy Brain Recipe

These Blueberry Popsicles are Healthy popsicles made with blueberries, banana, and yogurt for a cool sweet treat. You'll love how healthy this homemade popsicle recipe is – plenty of protein and no refined sugar. These delicious popsicles are the perfect summer treat for a hot day.

Source: Good Life Eats

INGREDIENTS
1 1/4 cups fresh or frozen blueberries
1 cup vanilla yogurt
1 large ripe banana, peeled

INSTRUCTIONS

Making the Blueberry Popsicle Mixture
1. First, place the blueberries, banana, and yogurt in a blender. Then, secure the lid and puree until completely smooth.
2. Add a small amount of liquid (water, orange juice, milk, etc.), if needed, to blend well. Make sure no chunks are remaining.

Assembling the Popsicles
1. Next, pour the blueberry mixture into popsicle molds, leaving about 1/4-inch space at the top. After that, cover the popsicle molds with foil (or the lid if yours comes with one).
2. Insert the sticks into the center of each popsicle.

Freezing the Blueberry Popsicles
1. Transfer the popsicle mold to the freezer and freeze until the popsicle mixture is frozen solid. Freezing will take at least 3 hours.

Serving the Popsicles
1. To serve, briefly dip the molds into warm water to help loosen them, and gently pull on the stick to release the pops from the mold.

Summertime Chills with Blueberry Popsicles

Healthy Brain Tip

Move, Move, Move

We all know that exercise improves our physical fitness, but staying in shape can also boost our brainpower. Scientific research conducted over the last several decades has revealed that exercise not only benefits our bodies – but our minds as well. Exercise doesn’t have to be boring.

Make it fun.

Whether it's a game of rigorous tag with your children or a nice jog around the block, physical activity allows for increased fuel delivery to the brain. Exercise also strengthens the connections between nerve cells and decreases the harmful effects of stress on the brain.

Source: The Brain Workshop
Memorial Leaf
now available - limited quantity
Honor your loved one with a memorial leaf, custom etched with your loved one's name and permanently placed at Leeza's Care Connection.
Contact Ellen@leezascareconnection.org to secure your leaf.

Community

$150
Support Groups

Caregiver Support Group - Meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 1:00pm – 2:15pm. You are not alone! Connecting with other caregivers, sharing, venting, and learning from each other and our facilitators help you gain an understanding that you are not alone.

Parkinson’s Caregiver Support Group – Meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday from 11:30am–1:00pm. This is a group for caregivers who are caring for someone with Parkinson’s Disease. Lunch and respite provided.

Caregiver Support Group for Early & Mid Stages of Dementia – Meets 1st & 3rd Tuesday from 11:30am–1:00pm. This is a group for caregivers and families adjusting to a new diagnosis of some form of dementia. It focuses on what you need to know, plan and do in order to live the best life possible in the midst of this chronic illness. Lunch provided.

Grief Support Group – Meets the 2nd & 4th Monday from 1:00 – 2:00pm. Connect with others who have experienced loss and the challenges that living with grief brings.

Art of Coping with Loss – Meets 4th Thursday from 6:30 – 8:00 pm. Dr. Delores Gulledge teaches us to use art as a medicine when dealing with loss and grief. No experience is required.

MS & Family Support Group – Meets the 3rd Monday from 1:00 – 2:00 pm. This is an uplifting group for those living with MS and for their family members.

Education & Special Programs

Wednesday, August 2nd LUNCH ‘N LEARN: 12.30p Lunch | 1p Presentation (in-person & virtual)
The Blood Connection
Join us as The Blood Connection teaches about the importance of giving back to the community and saving lives with blood giving.

Wednesday, August 9th LUNCH ‘N LEARN: 12.30p Lunch | 1p Presentation (in-person & virtual)
Wellness Bloom (Nutritionist)
Join us as we walk down the journey of healthy meal planning and what’s important for our bodies.

Wednesday, August 16th LUNCH ‘N LEARN: 12.30p Lunch | 1p Presentation (in-person & virtual)
Atria Senior Living

Wednesday, August 23rd LUNCH ‘N LEARN: 12:30p Lunch | 1p Presentation (in-person & virtual)
NorthWestern Mutual
Join us as we talk about the importance of life insurance, health insurance, and more...

Wednesday, August 23rd LUNCH ‘N LEARN: 12:30p Lunch | 1p Presentation (in-person & virtual)
The Blake Senior Living

August 7th, Free Memory Screening | 2:30–3:30 | Please call or email resources@leezascareconnection.org to reserve your spot

Lunch Sponsors:

• BlueDot Cares
• Carolina Healthcare
• Caughman-Harman & Dunbar Funeral Home
• Chick-fil-A Ballentine
• Colonial Gardens ALF & Memory Care
• First Light Home Care
• Heart of Hospice
• Right at Home
• Solutions for Living at Home
• Presbyterian Communities of SC
Art With Heart- Meets every Thursday from 10:00 am – 11:00 am. Ever feel like you just don't get a chance to connect with others who get what it's like to be a caregiver? Well, not anymore! Join us on Thursdays for a social time filled with smiles, crafts, and friendship!

Men’s Coffee Club- Meets the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month at 9:30 am. Connect with other caregivers who have walked the caregiving path over coffee and breakfast.

NEW* Women’s Coffee, Tea, and Everything Sweet- Meets the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month at 10:30 am. Connect with other caregivers who have walked the caregiving path over coffee and pastries.

Beginner Tai Chi- Meets the 2nd and 4th Monday from 11:30 am - 12:30 pm. Join Rob McCue for a low-impact, slow-motion exercise that helps you breathe deeply and naturally, focusing your attention on your bodily sensations. Tai Chi helps balance & stability done both sitting & standing.

Chair Yoga - Meets the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month from 11:30 am-12:30 pm. This class is for beginners and yogis of all levels. This class incorporates simple flowing sequences to warm up the body, as well as slower-paced movements focusing on alignment, stretching, balance, and flexibility. This yoga can be performed standing or sitting.

GIRL! YOU’VE GOT THIS! 1st Wednesday (in-person only) - The mission of the group is to build community and connection with women and to their higher power through the healing arts. Monthly meetings will provide a time to meet other creative, inspiring women and a healing arts program. This month, please join us for ORACLE CARDS.
Oracle cards help navigate you from a place of uncertainty to one of clarity and knowing, which can then be used as a tool for guidance, self-reflection, personal growth, and a deeper connection with your intuition. Nan Graham Ford will teach us more about these insightful cards and assist us in making our own personal cards. Light refreshments are provided.

Senior Healthcare Review- 4th Monday of each month from 9:30 am-12:00 pm. Come review your current Medicare plan to make sure you understand all your options & benefits. Open to all. Contact Cyndi Boot to RSVP at resourcesc@gmail.com to reserve your time slot.

NEW* Midday Game Day- August 17th from 11:30 am- 12:30 pm. Join us for some PRICE IS RIGHT with fun, prizes, and treats.