

***Meeting Alzheimer's: Learning to Communicate and Connect
An Experiential Caregiver Resilience Program***

Developed by Jade C. Angelica
Healing Moments for Alzheimer's

Uniting Science, Scholarship, Spirit and Art, *Meeting Alzheimer's* workshops are designed to enhance the quality of life for deeply forgetful people, reduce stress and increase confidence for caregivers, and inspire a hopeful attitude for all. The intent of this programming, which is both informative and supportive, is to help individuals and communities develop a deeper understanding of Alzheimer's and nurture the belief that meaningful relationships remain possible throughout the disease.

Using experiential methods based on improvisational theatre exercises and mindfulness techniques, *Meeting Alzheimer's* creates a safe, calming, and mirthful environment while teaching caregivers to:

- effectively implement the recommended communication techniques for "meeting in the moment,"
- connect with their deeply forgetful loved ones via emotional memory,
- identify and accept the limitations and gifts of Alzheimer's,
- reduce conflict, increase cooperation, and provide quality, therapeutic care.

The *Meeting Alzheimer's* 2-Day workshop for family caregivers was the subject of a research study by the University of Iowa Department of Neurology from 2014-2017. The findings show that after attending this workshop Alzheimer's and dementia caregivers experienced a significant reduction of stress over a period of at least 6 months, and their confidence in the caregiver role was bolstered. The findings were published in 2018 in *Alzheimer's and Dementia: Translational Research and Clinical Interventions*. The study results can be read here: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6153380/>

Meeting Alzheimer's workshops, consisting of various topics and times, are suitable for conferences and provide effective training for professional caregivers and care center administrators and staff, as well as family and informal caregivers. Continuing education units have been granted in multiple states for all disciplines.



"The pleasure which accompanies mirth makes learning easier and creates a climate for social as well as intellectual discovery." ~ Patricia Madsen, *Improv Wisdom*

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