

Memory Café

If you eat at Christopher's Italian Restaurant in Atascocita on the first Tuesday of the month, you may hear laughter or singing emanating from the private room at the back. Gathered at tables there, enjoying a meal together, are people who have never met before. Many of them were here last month too, but they do not

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This is Kingwood Memory Café – a fun social time around a shared meal for people in the early stages of memory loss, accompanied by their care partners. Wives bring their husbands, husbands bring their wives, daughters and sons bring their moms and dads, and sometimes grandchildren come along too.

The rule is, "There are no rules." No behavior is judged or criticized. Ask the same question many times, and everyone keeps answering as if they have never heard you say that



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before. If you have trouble figuring out how to put on your jacket – which hand goes into which sleeve – no problem. They will only laugh with you. They never laugh at you.

Donna Composto was inspired to start Kingwood Memory Café after visiting a support group for people in early memory loss, run by Teri Miller of the Alzheimer's Association in Houston. Composto wanted to make a difference for families in similar situations in the Kingwood area. In researching group formats, she learned of Memory Café, which originated in the U.K. and came to the U.S. in 2008. It seemed to be just what she was looking for, so she shared the idea with her friend Barbara Hemphill. They decided to lead the café together. The two share a passion to assist the dementia community. Donna Composto owns Mom's Care Plan, a free elder care advisory service. Barbara Hemphill facilitates the Lake Houston Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group and runs a dementia-related web site, SynapseSite.net. They see Memory Café as another way they can support people with dementia, and have fun too!

Eric Scott, Christopher's owner, has been a great supporter of what they are trying to do. His restaurant is a perfect fit for the group.

There is no charge to participate in Kingwood Memory Café. To learn more or to make a reservation, contact Donna Composto (281-682-3727, donna.composto@momscareplan.com) or Barbara Hemphill (281-851-7504,