

Happy Holidays!

Namaste Care™ is a sensory-based program and the holiday season is filled with wonderful scents, reminders of home and celebration. Small branches of a live pine tree have such a beautiful fragrance and are easy for people with dementia to hold. Lavender can be replaced with holiday scents this month, cinnamon evokes memories of baking holiday cookies and rosemary brings to mind a savory meal. Many Christmas-related ideas for using essential oils are available at <http://www.aromaweb.com/essentialoils/essentialoilsforchristmas.asp>.

A Christmas tree and stockings can change the look of the Namaste Care™ room. Make sure decorations are safe and meet regulations. Poinsettia plants are less toxic than once believed to be but, to be on the safe side, do not use real ones in the Namaste Care™ room. People in care homes will likely react with delight as they enter a room where Christmas music is playing, a lighted tree can be seen, and the room has aromas appropriate for the season.



Joyce Simard, MSW, is the founder of Namaste Care and an Adjunct Associate Professor School of Nursing, University of Western Sydney Australia. She is also an internationally sought private geriatric consultant providing consulting services, staff education, and marketing events to skilled nursing facilities, assisted living communities, and hospice organizations. [read more](#)



This festive time of the year can be difficult for family members wishing to communicate with their loved ones who are in the advanced stage of an irreversible dementia. Looking at holiday items may help everyone recall celebrations from the past and get into the spirit of the holidays. I remember a small snow globe that my parents had when I was a child. I would shake the globe to watch flakes of snow float around the snowman inside. Some residents may be able to shake the globe while others can watch someone else and enjoy the sight when the snow begins to fall. Christmas ornaments, tree lights (the old fashioned kind), and tree toppings are all items that may bring back fond memories of Christmas. Be careful to ensure that they are safe, not breakable, and have no sharp edges.

You may have other religions represented that have their own traditions so make sure you account for the religious background and practices of each of your residents.

Around the world with Namaste Care™

Sharon Kaasalainen, RN, PhD. Associate Professor from the School of Nursing at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario has submitted a grant to the TVN 2014 Catalyst Grant Program. Professor Kaasalainen and many of her colleagues spent an enormous amount of time writing this grant. We should hear if it was accepted sometime this month. She submitted another proposal to the Canadian Alzheimer's Society to implement Namaste Care™ in two provinces.

Kimberly St. John, a hospice nurse in the UK, has submitted her master's thesis, describing her development of Namaste Care™ at Kings College Hospital in London. She can be reached at (kimberleystjohn3@gmail.com) if you would like more information on her project.

Associate professor Jenny van der Steen received notice that her four year grant, entitled "Effects on quality of life and family caregiving experiences by the Namaste Care™ family program for advanced dementia," has been accepted. The research proposal was approved both by peers and by a panel of families and people with dementia. The grant is part of the Dutch national "Memorabel" dementia program which addresses the major societal challenges that dementia poses by improving the quality of life and care of citizens with dementia in the Netherlands, and by decreasing care burdens. The Dutch government also promotes informal caregiving. The Namaste Care™ project makes an

excellent fit for these efforts, and the family participation component of Namaste Care™ will be strengthened when it is implemented and tested in the Netherlands. The project started December 1, 2014 at the VU University Medical Center in Amsterdam.

The LWDP Caring Concepts have invited me to provide two dementia related events; one will be in the North Midland on Tuesday the 9th and another in Lancashire on the 10th. This organization is a part of the Lancashire Workforce Development Partnership. <http://www.caringconcepts.org.uk>.

Namaste USA

Theresa Bertram, President/CEO of the Lutheran Homes of Oshkosh, Wisconsin has received notice from the Division of Quality Assurance that the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have approved a grant to further implement the Namaste Care™ Program for people with dementia. The grant will also include funds for quantitative and qualitative research conducted by the College of Nursing, University of Wisconsin in Oshkosh. I helped implement Namaste Care at Lutheran Homes of Oshkosh one year ago and they now have two programs; they have spoken about Namaste Care™ at several conferences and received this grant. We do not work with a population who can wait for us to make sure everything is perfect to start

Namaste Care™. The dynamic leaders at the Lutheran Homes of Oshkosh make things happen, thoughtfully and quickly!

Seasons Hospice and Palliative Care is based in Chicago and provides end of life & palliative care. Seasons has 24 sites in 17 states and is the fourth largest hospice in the country. They have changed the name of their program for patients with advanced dementia from “A Touch for All Seasons” to Namaste Care™. I helped them develop “touch” six years ago. They decided to change the name as Namaste Care™ is becoming well known across the country. Seasons sponsors me to present Namaste Care™ events in their various sites. If you are interested in attending an event, contact Seasons Hospice & Palliative Care at info@seasons.org

Brooke Lamotte, Director of Resident Services at Vista Cove in San Gabriel, California has worked with her staff to develop a mission statement for their new Namaste Care™ program:

**We may have not known you, in your days long ago
where that time went, we just don't know.
You say you've lost yourself, yet you're still here.
Tell us who you are, we'll lend you our ear.
You still have stories, you still have breath
We'll hold your hand, there is still time left.**

I have always thought that a Namaste Care™ room in

an emergency room or in a geriatric psychiatry inpatient unit would help to manage behaviors while reducing the use of antipsychotic medications. If anyone is interested in investigating this, please contact me.

This time of year reminds me of the many blessings I have in my life. If you are reading this, I am counting you as one of them.

Namaste,
Joyce