



As Executive Director and Associate Director of Founders Place Respite Ministry, we are in the wonderful position of helping people with memory loss have the best day *ever* (a phrase we use often) each and every day they attend our program. Along with a large group of incredibly loving, giving, and capable volunteers, we experience the deep joy of creating a community where people living with Alzheimer's, Lewy Body, vascular dementia, aphasia, Parkinson's, and other conditions are known for who they *are*, not for what they are no longer. We lift up the abilities - not the disabilities - of our participants, whom we call "friends". We ask our friends for help (with functional tasks), so that they still know they are vital and can do meaningful work among a group. We ask our friends what they think so that they will feel respected and relevant. We engage our friends in humor and levity through good natured-banter so they will have the joy of creativity and play. All of these things we do in response to the rapidly growing number of persons living with memory loss, both directly and indirectly as a caregiver.

The style of program was created, initially, as an aid to the caregiver who does the soul-draining work of caring for their loved one with memory loss. Quickly, it came to be understood that while the caregiver would receive much needed respite, their loved one would receive a life-changing experience, one that would enhance the well-being of both people in unforeseen ways. And as our volunteers will tell you, being in service to this community is life-giving, fun, and deeply meaningful.

As Lisa Genova (author of Still Alice) wrote, "We can't cure Alzheimer's, but we can cure loneliness." Thank you for your interest in what Dr. Power terms a "friendship revolution".

*Susanna Whitsett & Ellie Johnson*