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Hello and Happy Belated Easter. I hope you all had a lovely Easter Weekend.

My name is Anne Scott the Deepness Dementia Newsletter Editor. Welcome to the April 2024 edition of the newsletter.

If you are a regular reader of this newsletter and enjoy reading it, please do send me a quick email or message on MailChimp about what you like and not like. I'd love to promote the newsletter, to increase our readership, so some testimonials would be great!.

I'd like to welcome Jim Campbell who has been helping me with the newsletter in recent months. Like myself, Jim is on the Deepness Board.

Lots of interesting articles in this month's newsletter, including all our regular features. Deepness is recruiting new volunteers; we have an article about the controversial Alzheimer's Society advert; two articles and recipes from Michael Cheung; Gail Gregory's amazing Photography; and a really useful article about Carers Allowance by Howard Gordon.

I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter.

As always you can contact me at - [scottanne@live.co.uk](mailto:scottanne@live.co.uk)

**Thanks**

**Anne Scott**





Check out below a list of what is coming up in this newsletter.

If you are viewing this in a PDF format you can click on the links and skip straight to that article. Otherwise, keep scrolling down.

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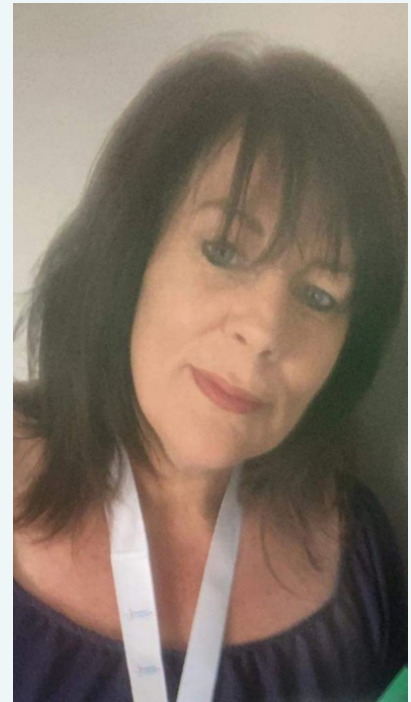
## We are Recruiting New Volunteer...by Anne Scott

We are excited to announce that Deepness is recruiting new volunteers!

If you are living with dementia or cognitive impairment (or know someone who is) and are passionate about dementia activism, bringing changes to the way dementia is perceived and have some spare time we would love to hear from you!

There are lots of opportunities and lots of rewards.

- **Become a Deepness Board Member**
- **Help out on Deepness Dementia Radio**
- **Learn how to run Deepness Dementia TV**
- **Produce dementia courses and become a tutor at our Wellbeing College**
- **Help with the planning of our Dementia Arts Festivals or even exhibit some of your work**
- **Post on our Social Media**



These are just a few of the opportunities. In fact, if you have an idea in Dementia Activism, we want to hear from you and make it a reality.

To find out more email:

[ron@deepnessdementiaradio.com](mailto:ron@deepnessdementiaradio.com)

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# Outrage from the Dementia Community: Alzheimer's Society latest Advert...

## by Jim Campbell

I am sure most of you will have heard about the outrage within the dementia community about the latest Alzheimer's Society advert, '**The Long Goodbye**'.

There are so many different posts about it, so in this article, I will try and pull together some of the reactions from the dementia community. Thanks to the Deepness Board for sharing many of these.

However, to start with, if you haven't seen it, here is the shortened version of the advert (if you do an internet search for '*The Long Goodbye Alzheimer's Society YouTube*' you can easily find on YouTube the longer 'Extended Cut' version).



**The Long Goodbye - Advert by Alzheimer's Society** (1 min, 30 secs)

<https://youtu.be/NWPA8wa4cME?si=1EddDZwDfZTc3EjZ>

As soon as the advert was released there was a barrage of outrage across the UK and the world from the dementia community talking to each other, posts on social media, campaigns and newspaper articles. Here are just a few that I have picked out.

### **Dementia is not a living death - I'm very much alive**

Willy Gilder who is a member of the Deepness Board, wrote this letter to The Guardian saying he thinks the latest Alzheimer's Society ad campaign is a mistake and would like to see it withdrawn.

The chief executive of the Alzheimer's Society [has sought to justify](#) its new ad campaign, [The Long Goodbye](#), by saying that it "tells the unvarnished truth about the devastation caused by dementia". It isn't a truth that I, as a person with Alzheimer's disease, recognise. The ad shows a family mourning their mum, and saying that she died several times in advance of her actual death as she realised that she could no longer cook a family meal, or take part in social activities.

This idea of dementia being a "living death" reinforces the most negative stereotypes of my condition, and contravenes [guidance](#) for journalists drawn up by the society itself six years ago. I share a dementia diagnosis with the star of Die Hard, Bruce Willis. I prefer to try to Live Well, or as well as I am able. It dismays me that the country's leading dementia charity seems to want to reinforce the stigma surrounding brain disease.



I recognise, of course, that having a diagnosis can be distressing for an individual – and that family members and carers can find life difficult, which is why we need to concentrate on the good news that many people living with dementia are actively involved in developing better services and support. [The Meeting Centres](#) network in Scotland is one such example. I call on the Alzheimer’s Society to admit that its ad was a mistake, and withdraw it.

**Willy Gilder**  
*Edinburgh*

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2024/mar/28/dementia-is-not-a-living-death-im-very-much-alive>

### **Dear Alzheimer’s Society by George Hook**

George writes a frank and poignant letter to Alzheimer’s Society, well worth a read:

<https://georgerook51.wordpress.com/2024/03/24/dear-alzheimers-society>

### **Alzheimer’s Society CEO responds to criticism of their latest TV campaign**

Kate Lee, Alzheimer’s Society CEO, said: "Our new advert ‘The Long Goodbye’ tells the unvarnished truth about the devastation caused by dementia. It’s not an easy watch but it’s an important one.":

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/news/2024-03-24/ceo-responds-criticism>

### **Keith explains what happened when he and others in the Three Nations Dementia Working Group were consulted about the new Alzheimer’s Society video**

In this short ‘Dementia Diaries’ audio, Keith explains how the working group that Alzheimer’s Society used to consult with, on producing the advert, who were unanimously opposed to it, ignored their advice and ploughed on anyway. In my opinion, it is easier to listen to this on headphones:

<https://dementiadiaries.org/entry/22331/keith-explains-what-happened-when-he-and-others-in-the-three-nations-dementia-working-group-were-consulted-about-the-new-alzheimers-society-video>



### **Alzheimer's Scotland Response to the Advert**

Alzheimer's Scotland has given their response to the advert, which includes: "The dated stereotypes and demoralising tone are unhelpful to those living with dementia now, and undermine our fight to break down the stigma that surrounds this brain disease."

<https://www.alzscot.org/news/our-response-to-alzheimers-research-uk-film>

### **Will this brutally honest look at dementia finally get us talking or will we look away?**

This article in The Guardian gives a more balanced reaction to the advert.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/mar/31/alzheimers-society-advert-truth-about-dementia>

### **I AM NOT DEAD by George Hook**

Another blog post by George which is well worth a read.

<https://georgerook51.wordpress.com/2024/03/23/i-am-not-dead>

As I said at the start of this article, these are just a few of the many posts and articles that have been written in recent weeks. If you are interested in reading more, turn to Social Media for more hard hitting views and opinions.

So if like all of us, at Deepness, you are left angry and frustrated by the advert and you are wondering what you can do. In the next couple of pages, there are some suggestions.



## **Petition - Stop negative and inaccurate dementia publicity. Show the hopeful, creative possibilities**

This petition has been growing more and more, on 29th March it had 852 signatures, at time of writing it has 1308 signatures. Please consider signing it.

<https://www.change.org/p/stop-negative-and-inaccurate-dementia-publicity-show-the-hopeful-creative-possibilities>

And here are just a few of the recent comments in the petition, that caught my eye:

“My name is Berrie Holtzhausen. I am a Namibian (West Africa). I was diagnosed with Dementia November 2020. My slogan is: "It is not about the "End" but about the journey. I am living a full life, am the founder and CEO of Alzheimer Dementia Namibia ( ADN). I am still the CEO of ADN, am involve in caring for PLWD , Awareness and Education and totally disagree with a perception that PLWD are not capable to live a full life. I am daily fighting against stigma and perceptions which portrait us as Zombies”.

“I find this advertisement very offensive. I live with my husband who has Alzheimer’s disease and when we are relaxing watching tv we do not want to be reminded of the negative aspects of this disease. This is not how we view our lives, it is difficult but we see the journey as a challenge not as a death.”

“I am angry that the Alzheimer's Society shows such a lack of respect for those it is supposed to support.”

“I am a person with a dementia diagnosis. I've had it since my 50s. I'm now 72.”

## **Complain to Alzheimer’s Society**

You can complain direct to Alzheimer’s Society by submitting a complaint online form; by phoning and making a complaint over the phone; by sending an email; or by writing a letter and sending it in the post.

This will start their formal complaints procedure, with is listed in full on their website.

All information and ways to contact them are providing in the link below.

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/complaints>



### **Advertising Standards Authority**

Increasing numbers of people are complaining to the Advertising Standards Authority about the advert as it may breach Code 4 “Harm and Offence”.

<https://www.asa.org.uk/make-a-complaint.html>

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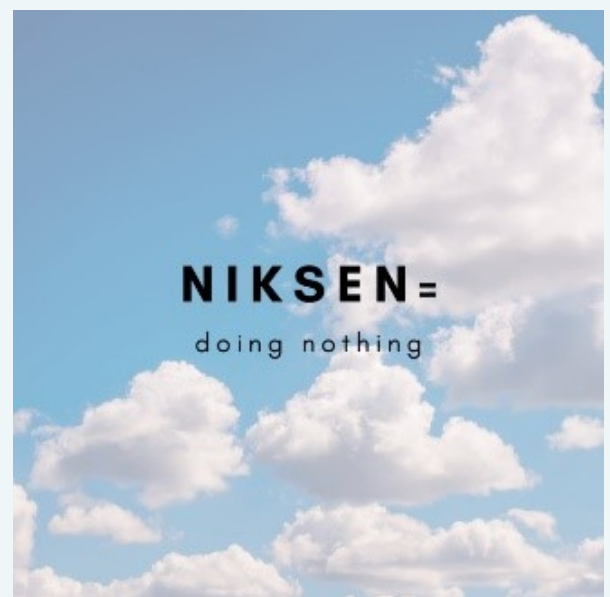


# Niksen Is the Dutch Lifestyle Concept of Doing Nothing...by Michael Cheung

Until recently, the concept of Niksen has been considered as laziness (or not being productive). Veenhoven, (the Dutch sociologist and a pioneer on the scientific study of happiness), suggested how to put the concept into practice. “Sit alone on a park bench, do semi-automatic things like knitting or gaze out of a window.” One way to start off might be to make sure you have at least one open evening/half day every week to allow us to do nothing.

Sandi Mann, the author of ‘The Science of Boredom’ talked about ‘The Upside (And Downside) Of Downtime,’ she told Vogue: “Daydreaming is the key.” So, too, is embracing boredom. “Do what I do! I switch my devices off regularly – I have a digital detox day when I cannot swipe and scroll my boredom away,” says Mann. “I also stare out of the window of trains or look at the clouds. I walk and let my mind wander. **Try it!**”

Could there be a better time to try it out, than now? In recent weeks, for the first time, the World Health Organisation officially recognised burnout as a chronic health illness caused by stress from modern life. Ironically, the business of modern life is also part of our happiness. “The pace of life today is fast because there is much to enjoy,” says Veenhoven.





The video - [Niksen: Your Way to a Happier, Healthier Life \(youtube.com\)](#) explores the concept of Niksen and how it can help you reduce stress, increase productivity, and improve overall well-being. This is a simple, yet powerful practice that involves taking a break from productivity and allowing yourself to simply be in the moment. The video provides tips and techniques for incorporating Niksen into your daily routine. It provides useful information and advice for anyone looking to live a happier, healthier life. In today's world, we're constantly on the go, always busy, and often stressed out. The Dutch concept of Niksen, which translates to "doing nothing," offers a refreshing perspective on how to find inner peace and balance. The video explores the art of Niksen and show us how to incorporate it into our daily life. It shows a bit of history and philosophy about Niksen, shares practical tips on how to practice it in our daily routines. From taking a break from your screens to simply staring out the window, it shows you how to slow down and find moments of calm in our day-to-day life. It highlights the benefits of disconnecting, including reduced stress and increased creativity. Whether you're looking to reduce stress, improve your mental health, or simply find more joy in the present moment, this video is for you. The art of Niksen has helped countless people in the Netherlands find balance and contentment, and it can do the same for you. So, sit back, relax, and learn the secrets of Niksen. Will Niksen be useful for people living with dementia?

[Discover Niksen: The Dutch Art of Doing Nothing for Mental Well-being - YouTube](#)



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## This Month's Recipe

### **Asparagus, Chicken and Walnuts Stir Fry**

- Cook's note: Don't overcook the asparagus because you would like to enjoy the crisp stems. You might replace it with your favourite meat or just skip the meat if you feel like it is a vegan dish.
- Prep time: 10 mins.
- Cook time: 10 mins.
- Serves 2-3 persons

### Ingredients

- 60g walnuts
- 180 g asparagus
- 150 g chicken breast
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 1 tsp Shaoxing wine
- salt, to taste!

### Marinade

- 1 tsp light soy sauce
- ½ tsp sugar
- ½ tsp cornflour / corn starch
- sesame oil, to taste
- white pepper, to taste
- 2 tsp fish sauce
- 2 Tbsp chicken stock

### Method:

1. Heat walnuts in a small pan without any oil over medium heat until aromatic. Remove from the heat. Let them cool down. Mix chicken with marinade. Set aside.

2. Heat oil in a wok or a frying pan. Cook the chicken over high medium heat until chicken turns white and cooked through. Set aside.





3..Blanch asparagus in boiling water for about 2 minutes. Drain well and immediately soak in cold water until cold to touch. Drain well again. Cut them into 3 to 4 sections. Stir fry in the same pan with a little of oil. Add garlic and saute until aromatic. Season with salt and sprinkle wine. Quickly stir to combine well. Pour chicken stock and fish sauce. Cook further for another 2 minutes. Toss back the chicken and quickly combine well. Turn off the heat. Stir in the walnuts. Serve immediately.

**Notes:**

- By soaking the blanched asparagus, you can keep its fresh green colour.
- To get the best results, stir fry the thicker stems first, then add the thinner ones to cook together.

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# Carers Allowance...by Howard Gordon

## Carers Allowance/Carer Support Payment in Scotland

In 2018, the new Social Security Agency, in Scotland, took over responsibility for Carer's Allowance in Scotland.

They have now started migrating to the devolved replacement benefit, **Carer Support Payment**. From 26th of February, new applicants in Perth and Kinross, Dundee and the Western Isles will receive the new benefit.



The weekly rate is the same: £76.75, rising to £81.90 in April 2024.

**Existing claimants will be transferred automatically, and don't need to take any action.**

Everybody should be moved to the new benefit by Spring 2025.

## What is Carer's Allowance?

Carer's Allowance (CA) is a benefit paid to some people who care full-time for someone who is severely disabled. You may have to pay tax on it.

There is a limit to the amount of money a carer can earn from work, and still qualify for Carer's Allowance.

As at April 2024, this is £151 a week.

## Carer's Allowance Supplement

Carers in Scotland get an extra £577.20 a year in Carer's Allowance Supplement, on top of the weekly Carer's Allowance. This brings CA north of the border up to a level that is higher than Jobseeker's Allowance.

It is paid in two lots of £288.60 in June and December.

You don't have to claim the payment – If you are receiving Carer's Allowance Or Carer Support Payment on the qualifying dates, 8th April 2024 and 7th October 2024, you will automatically receive Carer's Allowance Supplement.



## What is Carer's Allowance?

- Paid to full-time carers.
- Your other benefits may increase or decrease.
- Certain benefits for the person you look after may sometimes reduce.

## Can you apply?

- If you are aged 16 or over **and**
- Spending at least 35 hours a week looking after someone who is getting or waiting to hear about these benefits:

- **Personal Independence Payment (PIP)**. The daily living component of PIP is a qualifying benefit for Carer's Allowance.

- **Attendance Allowance**

- **Disability Living Allowance (DLA)** at the middle or highest rate for personal care

- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit Constant Attendance Allowance.

- War Pensions Constant Attendance Allowance.

Then you should claim CA. [You can apply for CA here](#)

**Note that the government has confirmed that providing emotional support counts towards the threshold of 35 hours of care a week.**

## How much is it?

Weekly amount: **£81.90**.

Carer's Allowance is reduced by the amount of certain other benefits you receive, including State Pension.

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### **Other information about Carer's Allowance Scotland:**

**You cannot get CA if you are in full-time education.**

**You cannot get CA if you earn above a certain amount – £151 per week from 6th April 2024.**

#### **No account is taken of money you pay out for things like:**

- Some National Insurance (NI) contributions.
- Income tax.
- Half of any money you pay towards a personal or occupational pension.
- Paying someone who is not a close relative to look after the disabled person while you are at work (up to a certain limit).
- Paying someone who is not a close relative to look after children aged under 16 while you are at work (up to a certain limit).
- Some other expenses.
- You may be able to get extra money for your family.
- CA may carry on when you become 65 if your Retirement Pension is less than CA.

You may be able to get extra money added to [Income Support](#), income-based [Jobseeker's Allowance](#), Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

If the person you are caring for gets Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, they may lose their severe disability premium. Check with the person whether they are getting either of these benefits.

If you have a short break from looking after the person you care for, your CA may be able to continue.

You will earn extra pension through State Second Pension for the weeks when you are paid CA. For periods between April 2002 and April 2010, you will only receive extra State Pension for complete years when you were paid Carer's Allowance.

#### **CA after the death of the disabled person**

If the disabled person dies, CA will continue for up to a further 8 weeks. This is intended to help ex-carers who have recently been bereaved, by giving them time to adjust and make plans for their own future.



## What is Carer's Allowance Supplement (CAS)?

In the first clear divergence of policy on carer support between Westminster and Holyrood, the Scottish government pays a Carer's Allowance Supplement, which brings CA up to a level that is higher than [Jobseeker's Allowance](#).

There are two payments this year:

- £288.60 in June 2024 – you'll get this payment if you're getting Carer's Allowance on 08 April 2024.
- £288.60 in December 2024 – you'll get this payment if you're getting Carer's Allowance on 07 October 2024.

You don't need to claim Carer's Allowance Supplement: anyone who lives in Scotland and receives carer's allowance on the qualifying dates will get it automatically.

If for any reason you haven't received CAS, and you believe that you are entitled to it, you can contact Social Security Scotland on Freephone: 0800 182 2222 between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday.

## Help for Carers

For more information you can contact Jobcentre Plus office.

You may be able to get help with things like adapting a home for a disabled person, respite care or other support.

To find out whether you are eligible, contact your social work department.

Or you can contact the **Carers National Association** by calling Freephone: 0808 808 7777 Monday to Friday 10.00am to noon and 2.00pm to 4.00pm.

The address is:

Carers National Association, 20-25 Glasshouse Yard, London EC1A 4JS.





## Help for young carers

Notoriously, young people in full-time education can't claim carer's allowance.

The Scottish government has set up a new grant, the **Young Carer Grant**, for those aged 16 to 18 who are still at school, providing at least 16 hours care a week for someone on qualifying benefits, and not receiving carer's allowance.

The grant is worth £305.10 currently, and has been payable since autumn 2019. It is estimated that 1,700 young carers will be eligible for the grant each year.

Young carers can apply for the grant each year they are eligible. There is more information on the [MyGov.Scot website](#) (*external link will open in a new browser window*).

Other help includes a young carer's element to the Young Scot National Entitlement Card, offering tailored entitlements and rewards such as leisure activities for young carers between the ages of 11 and 18.

Young carers are also entitled to free bus travel from 2020/21.

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## Photography Corner...by Gail Gregory

You may know Gail from our 24 hour radio station, Deepness Dementia Radio. Gail presents her Radio Blog - Living with Dementia. If you haven't heard it do tune into our radio station. Gail's photography hobby, featuring some of the wonderful photos she has taken.

In this second feature with Gail's photography hobby, featuring some of the wonderful photos she has taken.

We are hoping that Gail's photography corner within the newsletter will become a regular feature.



I love an early morning walk, so peaceful, so quiet, for me it's the best part of the day.

There is something about the sunrising that makes you feel like your day is starting the best way possible.

Once the sun has risen it's off to the pond to find my feathered friends.



Never forget to look up!

Clouds are amazing creating some very interesting formations.

When out walking look up, look down, look all around.

You never know what beauty you could be missing.



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# Bilingualism and Dementia - how some People Living With Dementia lose their second language and rediscover their first?.....by Michael Cheung

For many people living with dementia, their memories of early childhood appeared to be more powerful than theirs of the present. What happens when the PLWD has experienced a different language other than the one spoken in childhood/younger days? It might be difficult to expect carers and care homes to cope with the additional level of complexity in looking after bilingual people living with dementia.

This is not just relevant for people living with dementia and those who care for them. It can provide insights into the human mind that are equally important to brain researchers, social scientists and even artists.

*This relationship between dementia and bilingualism was the focus of a workshop we held recently in Glasgow. Bringing together healthcare professionals, volunteers, community activists, dementia researchers, translation experts, writers and actors, the workshop was organised around a reading of a new play performed by the Gaelic language group, Theatre Tog-i.*





## Is there evidence that learning a new Language stave off Dementia?

Some research suggests that bilingual people enjoy some cognitive benefits later in life, but it probably requires more than a few Spanish lessons in your 60s.

Watch this YouTube video

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_hptqJyTf8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_hptqJyTf8)



Extract of the video: Can we train our memory muscles? And if so, how long will the effects last? Wallenberg Academy Fellow Jessica Körning Ljungberg at Umeå University wants to find out whether being bilingual or having a mentally demanding job can improve the memory and stave off dementia.

## Can Bilingualism benefit the Aging Brain?

Lots of activities are linked to better brain health in old age, like getting more education when you are younger, physical activity and cognitively stimulating hobbies. Experts say regularly speaking multiple languages may be especially beneficial?

We use language in all aspects of daily life, so a bilingual brain is constantly working,” said Mark Antoniou, an associate professor at Western Sydney University in Australia who specialises in bilingualism. He also claimed, “You don’t really get that from other enriching experiences, like playing a musical instrument”??

The age at which you learn another language appears to be less important than how often you speak it, said Caitlin Ware, a research engineer at Broca Hospital in Paris who studies bilingualism and brain health. “The cognitive benefit is from having to inhibit your mother tongue,” she said, which your brain is forced to do if you are trying to recall the right words in another language. “So, if the second language is used a lot, you’re getting that cognitive training.”

This process – called cognitive inhibition is the mind's ability to tune out stimuli that are irrelevant to the task/process at hand or to the mind's current state, it is linked to better executive functioning. In theory, by improving these types of processes, the brain becomes more resilient to the impairments caused by diseases like dementia – a concept known as cognitive reserve. The stronger your mental faculties, the thinking goes, the longer you can function normally, even if your brain health starts to decline.



Two interesting YouTube clips:

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhSc7bWQrjg>

Extract of the video: It is not surprising that being bilingual has many practical benefits in an increasingly globalized world. What is surprising is that speaking two languages can have a direct impact on our health and well-being. Watch this video to hear Dr. Judith Kroll (University of California, Riverside) talk about remarkable research showing that bilingualism may delay the onset of symptoms of Alzheimer's disease by 4 to 5 years.



2. [Mia Nacamulli: The benefits of a bilingual brain | TED Talk](#)

Extract of the video: It's obvious that knowing more than one language can make certain things easier -- like traveling or watching movies without subtitles. But are there other advantages to having a bilingual (or multilingual) brain? Educator Mia Nacamulli details the three types of bilingual brains and shows how knowing more than one language keeps your brain healthy, complex and actively engaged. (Directed by TED-Ed, narrated by Pen-Pen Chen)



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## **April's Second Recipe**

### **Chicken Yakatori**

#### **Ingredients**

- Marinate for the chicken:
- Lemon juice – 1 tablespoon.
- Chopped garlic, or use garlic paste.
- Chopped coriander.
- 1-2 teaspoons of chilli powder.
- Thin sliced of spring onions – use both the stem and green parts.
- Chicken thighs x 6, skinned and boned, cut into 3-4 cm strips. Marinate the chicken thighs for at least 30 minutes.



#### **Method:**

##### **Prepare the Yakitori sauce.**

1. Add the dark soy and sake/dry sherry, stir & leave aside to cool.

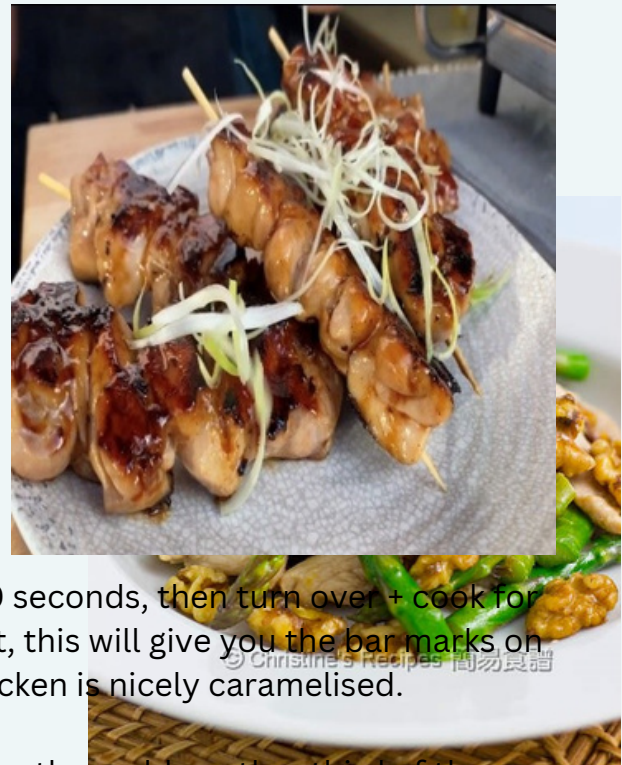
##### **Chicken**

2. Thread the chicken onto eight wooden skewers, place a ridged griddle pan over a high heat, add the oil. when hot.

3. Place the skewers in the pan, cook for 30 seconds, then turn over + cook for about 10 seconds before reducing the heat, this will give you the bar marks on the chicken. Continue cooking until the chicken is nicely caramelised.

4. Add a third of the sauce, turn the skewers, then add another third of the sauce, turn off the heat. Transfer the cooked chicken to a serving plate, drizzle with the remaining yakitori sauce.

5..To garnish, sprinkle with sliced spring onion & coriander – optional.



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# Grief and Dementia...by Teepa Snow

Many feel that the grief process for the condition of dementia is especially complex. As changes occur throughout the condition, those supporting the person often experience feelings of grief because they are missing the way the individual used to be. Another reason that grief can be complicated is that the journey of dementia is often longer than those of some other illnesses. Also, many care partners work closely and intimately with the individual, so when the journey ends it can create a highly noticeable void.



If a person living with dementia passes away quickly and unexpectedly due to another condition, this can also affect the grieving process. Some individuals may feel a bit of relief that the condition's duration was shorter than expected, and this may trigger feelings of guilt. Or, perhaps the care partner expected that they would have a long time yet with the person, and felt shocked and blindsided when they instead passed quickly. These feelings can certainly complicate the grieving process, as well.

While the journey of healing and acceptance takes time, here are a few recommendations:

## **1. Lean on someone**

Building a support team is critical when supporting a person living with dementia, but is just as helpful and important when the person is no longer living. It can be very healing to share both positive and painful memories and feelings from the dementia journey with others. Care partners may feel angry, guilty, lonely, relieved, lost, unburdened, and many other feelings. Being able to describe emotions and thoughts out loud to another trusted person can help bring a sense of comfort and peace. Asking for help or support does not come easy for everyone, but most people are very willing to support. If it is not possible to speak with a close friend or family member, seek an in-person or online grief support group to help process the loss of the person. Try not to do this alone.



## 2. Reflect

What was the journey like? What were the special moments, the pauses, the deep valleys, and the hard places? Reflecting on the journey shared with the person living with dementia is a way to celebrate and acknowledge all that was experienced together and as individuals.



## 3. Consider journaling, or creating a list of the positive, meaningful moments to remember

Writing down thoughts can help uncover moments and memories that had previously faded into the background. After having written down the items that are easiest to remember, the brain is actively tasked with digging a

little deeper, making it much more likely to recall situations that weren't top of mind. Keep the list nearby and read it over when needing a little comfort. As an alternative to writing, some individuals choose creative endeavours such as quilting, painting, woodworking, or weaving to create an item that symbolizes the journey.

## 4. Try to let go of guilt

Guilt is common among care partners, but it is important to process and try to move past guilt in the grieving process. When thinking about a care relationship with a person that has passed, don't just focus on what wasn't done, or should have been done differently. Instead, try thinking about the things that were done, and the things that went well. What were some of the wins? What are some things to feel truly good about? Celebrate the achievements, even if they don't seem significant. For the things that didn't go well, consider: What was the situation at that time, and what feelings were being experienced? Exhaustion? Frustration? Loneliness? Sadness? Realize that no one can be their best self all of the time. There are many opportunities to realize how resilient one has become, but it does require letting go of things that didn't go as planned.



## 5. Remember that it's okay to be sad

Very likely, life has changed a lot since the individual passed. Supporting this person may have taken a good deal of time and energy. The relationship, whether generally positive or not-so-positive, was unique, and such a significant change will take a while to process. It is absolutely normal to be sad, and to wonder what life will be like going forward. Allow time and patience to heal.

The grief process is a complicated experience, especially when dementia is part of the picture. Grief is a journey of appreciating what was, letting go, and, with time, finding the courage and strength to move forward.

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# Enhancing Communication for Individuals with Dementia: The Benefits of Using Tablets and Smartphones...by Craig Colligan

Dementia is a progressive neurological condition that affects millions of people worldwide, impacting memory, cognition, and communication skills. As the disease advances, individuals with dementia may experience difficulties in expressing themselves and connecting with others, leading to feelings of isolation and frustration. In recent years, the use of technology, specifically tablets and smartphones, has emerged as a valuable tool in improving communication and enhancing the quality of life for individuals with dementia. In this article, we explore the benefits of using tablets and smartphones as communication aids for individuals living with dementia.



One of the key advantages of using tablets and smartphones for communication is the accessibility of various communication apps and tools designed specifically for individuals with dementia. These apps often feature intuitive interfaces, large buttons, and simple navigation, making it easier for individuals with dementia to engage with the device and communicate effectively. From text-to-speech apps that help individuals verbalize their thoughts to visual aids that assist with memory recall, these tools can empower individuals with dementia to express themselves and engage with others in meaningful ways.

Furthermore, tablets and smartphones offer a wide range of communication options beyond traditional verbal communication. For individuals with dementia who may struggle with speech or language skills, alternative forms of communication such as text messaging, email, or video calls can provide new avenues for connecting with family members, friends, and caregivers. The visual and auditory cues provided by these devices can help individuals with dementia stay engaged and connected, fostering social interactions and reducing feelings of loneliness and isolation.



In addition to enhancing communication, tablets and smartphones can also serve as valuable cognitive aids for individuals with dementia. Memory apps, calendar reminders, and cognitive games can help individuals with dementia improve cognitive function, maintain daily routines, and enhance memory recall. These digital tools can support cognitive stimulation and mental engagement, slowing the progression of cognitive decline and promoting overall brain health.

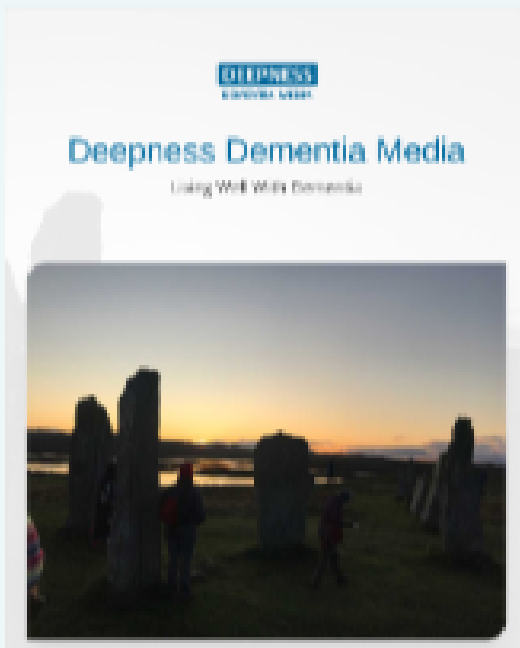
Another benefit of using tablets and smartphones for communication is the versatility and portability of these devices. Individuals with dementia can carry their device with them wherever they go, allowing them to communicate and engage with others in various settings. Whether at home, in a care facility, or out in the community, individuals with dementia can use their device to stay connected with loved ones, access resources, and engage in activities that promote social interaction and mental stimulation.

In conclusion, the use of tablets and smartphones as communication aids for individuals with dementia offers a wide range of benefits that can significantly improve quality of life and well-being. From enhancing communication and social interaction to supporting cognitive function and mental engagement, these devices have the potential to empower individuals with dementia and help them maintain connections with the world around them. As technology continues to advance, it is essential to explore innovative ways to leverage digital tools to support individuals with dementia and enhance their quality of life. By embracing the benefits of tablets and smartphones for communication, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for individuals living with dementia.

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Dementia Media is a platform that gives people tools for living well with dementia designed collaboratively with those with dementia leading the process. By coming together in a supportive, energetic common space makes up a huge difference to the well-being of those going through dementia. As opposed to providing a cure, our goal is to help people become autonomous and get the most out of life. We bring a series of innovative projects - such as our radio station, online education courses, and much more - that use technology and music in a way that keeps people connected and stimulated.

“I didn’t want to die without leaving something for my family to enjoy and remember my strengths,” he says of the thinking behind the EP. “The whole concept was to create something that was a legacy for the person, and as soon as I thought about wanting to do that for myself I knew it was something other people would want to do, to leave our mark on society. It’s almost like leaving our families a gift.”

**The Demented Poets EP is on sale now via Bandcamp iTunes and other outlets:**

**Bandcamp** - <https://thedementedpoets.bandcamp.com>

**Spotify** - <https://open.spotify.com/album/6pngYVybZ3qUf6XMhOOFuK>

**Deezer** - <https://www.deezer.com/en/album/258048592>

**iTunes / Apple Music** - <https://music.apple.com/us/album/the-demented-poets-ep/1585080810>

**Amazon** - <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09FRVYQ1F>