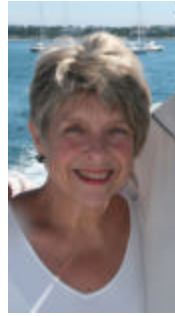


This free **Alzheimer's Association** sponsored support group meets twice a month in the evening.

➔ New members **must** call prior to attending.



This group is lead by Janet T. Pozen, Ph.D. Janet, along with her 3 brothers, has been learning about Alzheimer care on a 20yr. journey caring for their mother. Janet holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from Johns Hopkins University. A former faculty member of the BU Medical School and health care industry consultant, 15 years ago she ventured into Alzheimer's care by developing programs for families like hers at specialized Alzheimer's assisted living facilities in MA and NY. Then for 6 years she served as director of an assisted living program providing specialized residential care for people with mid-stage Alzheimer's where she oversaw care for over 250 people. In 2006 Janet added to her professional repertoire the role of support group leader. She conducts support groups in Newton for family caregivers and is co-leader of a group in Watertown for people with early stage, young onset Alzheimer's.

Q&A with Janet

After all the professional experience you've had why did you decide to become a support group leader? I appreciate the challenge and complexities of being a good caregiver to a person with Alzheimer's. I've developed a lot of knowledge through my years of experience as a caregiver. I know the both the caregiver and professional provider side of the experience, and I have a profound empathy for the person who lives with this disease. I want to share this with other caregivers.

Why do you think support groups are important for caregivers? Even though there are many people living with this disease, most caregivers say "I feel like I'm the only one." The group, the connectedness among the members when they come together, changes that. For those 4 hours a month, every month, we not alone. We share, listen, laugh, and move forward together.

In your group, what do you feel is the most important information caregivers receive? How to most creatively problem solve. We look at what seems to be a single, impossible issue, then we 'tease out' the separate pieces. This way, things are not so overwhelming and the solutions are much more possible. We also try to "stand in the shoes" of everyone involved. We talk about what the person with Alzheimer's is experiencing, then see more clearly how to interact; about the care a provider is trying to deliver, so we can then ask more productively about our family member's care.

What should all caregivers know about support groups? You aren't only receiving the assistance of the other caregivers and the group leader. Support group leaders are themselves supported by the experienced staff and the extensive information resources of the Alzheimer's Association.