

GROWING TEEPA'S MESSAGE

*Rachel Voelkers In Oklahoma Working To
Plant Her Own Garden Of Dementia
Knowledge.*

Contributed by Amanda Bulgarelli

"Isn't she too young?!" They wonder.

"Why would she want to do this work?" They ask.

As our very first PAC Certified Coach from Oklahoma, Rachel Voelkers raises lots of questions as she works tirelessly to assist in changing the culture of dementia care. Although Rachel is young, she has a deep passion for care and is working to share her knowledge and experiences with others through her coaching for skills by scattering as many seeds as she can. She has had many successes with building her own care skills for those living with dementia, and now is working to help others grow a different perspective by volunteering in a memory care unit and working to educate and support a local support group. She recently assisted a woman who was down and feeling helpless with her husband's hallucinations related to his living with Lewy Body Disease. After working with Rachel to see how she could use Teepa's techniques to be in the moment and go with the flow, the woman called Rachel refreshed and rejuvenated with this new-found skill. When Rachel meets someone for the first time, they walk away feeling as if they have a new friend, the relationship ALWAYS comes first for her.

The relationship that moved Rachel to this cause was powerful and described here, in her own words. "Around seven years ago I was involved in a situation involving a close friend who had dementia and I knew at the time when things were not handled correctly that there just had to be a better way. Then one night, I came across some of Teepa's videos on Youtube and I knew this was what I had been searching for. Since then, I have watched all the videos of her that I can get my hands on, as well as attending Teepa's presentations whenever possible. This year, I also had the opportunity to participate in her Coach training. I just recently became the leader of a local Alzheimers support group where I am sharing the insights that I've learned from Teepa. I have been able to put the the PAC techniques to practice and have seen first hand how well they work and can hardly wait to learn more from Teepa and her team so I can continue to grow in my own awareness, skills, and knowledge. I enjoy being able to connect with people in a way that is meaningful to them as well as seeing the spark when people finally get it when learning how to make a difference in the lives of people living with dementia"

Here is the local publication encouraging attendance at Rachel's support group:

Rachel Voelkers will be leading a series at the Alzheimer's Support Group in watching and discussing the DVD, Accepting the Challenge, by leading dementia expert, Teepa Snow. Teepa is an occupational therapist with over thirty years of clinical, teaching, and research experience as well as first hand caregiving interactions. These varied experiences have led her to develop Positive ApproachTM to Care techniques and training models that are now being used by families and professionals working or living with people with dementia throughout the world.

Teepa has a very engaging way of communicating with her audiences. She is a much sought after speaker who is enlightening, entertaining, and energetic! Her teaching style is extraordinarily unique in that she is able to accurately demonstrate and model for her audience the struggle and challenges dementia creates for all parties involved. Teepa's care strategies and techniques utilize what is known about brain function and how the disease progresses with therapeutic approaches to foster positive outcomes and altered task expectations that match the retained abilities of those living with dementia.

Rachel has had the privilege to learn from Teepa in a variety of ways and is currently pursuing certification as a Positive Approach™ to Care Coach which will allow her to coach people in learning and using the skills that Teepa teaches. She has attended several of Teepa's presentations and seeks out ways to learn all she can so she can help caregivers as well as those living with the disease. She says, "I have seen these techniques work in real life situations, and I want to share the hope that I have found so that others' lives will be made easier. This disease is hard enough! Let's make it as good as it can be and learn to find moments of joy as we journey together through the path of dementia."