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Thelma's Place: The Ever Changing Mind

Thelma's Place is an innovative and creative adult day program for people with Alzheimer's disease and other dementia illnesses. One of the most exciting programs offered at Thelma's Place is the Ever Changing Mind™ (ECM). This is a specialized brain training program for people with mild cognitive impairment or early symptoms of dementia. The intent of the ECM is to provide not only intellectually interesting activities for the participants at Thelma's Place, but to also provide targeted exercises to help encourage the brain to build neuronal pathways to help maintain intellectual and cognitive functions. The first class will begin in January 2009.

The program is divided into six separate sessions which will focus on exercises to maintain cognitive health and abilities, basic neurological principles, the physiological changes that can happen with dementia illnesses, and how to compensate for these difficulties. The participants will receive a workbook that includes all the teaching materials and classroom and homework exercises to help them build healthy cognitive habits. The workbook is written in clear and simple language to enable the participants and their families to both understand the course content and to incorporate the activities and exercises into their daily lives.

Because the program is designed as an educational and a brain training program, we encourage the participants to come with a family member to help the entire family understand not only the program, but to also benefit from a deeper understanding of the disease process and how to help the participant work with the homework assignments.

Prior to the first session and after the last session, each participant will be evaluated to determine special areas of concern and to see if there has been any improvement as a function of the course. The results of the evaluation will provide the participant and the family with "snapshot" of the participant's cognitive abilities to help them understand how to better cope with these diseases. The evaluations will measure the cognitive areas that are the focus of the ECM course which are also the most commonly affected by Alzheimer's disease and dementia illnesses. Aspects of this evaluation are usually included in larger, comprehensive cognitive screenings and can provide a picture of what the participant's strengths and limitations are at the time of the testing.

If you are interested in learning more about the Ever Changing Mind™ program, please contact Niki Umbenhower at 503-266-5100.