



**A problem shared is a problem halved
Come along, have a chat and a coffee/tea/biscuits**

When: Every Monday (except bank holidays) between 6pm and 8pm – drop in anytime or stay for the whole two hours

Where: Herts Fire and Rescue Training Centre, Longfield site, Hitchin Road, Stevenage SG1 4AE in the Control Centre at the back of the site.

For: Carers, relatives and friends of people with dementia. You are welcome to bring the person who is suffering from this dreadful illness if this would help you

AI's Cafe is an informal group of diverse people brought together by the trauma of Dementia. We meet regularly to provide support, share experiences and form friendships. This is what differentiates us from the professionals; and is extremely valuable. The group may include sufferers themselves, relations, friends, bereaved relatives and friends, we are an independent group, not affiliated to any related society or organisation such as The Alzheimer's Society, Dementia UK, Age UK, etc. It is our very strength that we are not, but are people who have first-hand experience of Dementia & Alzheimer's, we know what it is like and are willing to discuss this with others.

The Monday evening is not "facilitated" or directed, it is left up to the group to decide the course of conversation. Topics are generally wide-ranging and certainly there is light hearted discussion in addition to more serious issues. It sometimes happens that an individual wants a more private "one-to-one" and this is easy to accommodate. We try to ensure that when a new-comer arrives they are welcomed and briefed on what goes on and the purpose of AI's Cafe.

In addition to the standard Monday meetings we hold social events, such as meals out.

We hold a database of group contacts, and will be gathering details from newcomers if they are happy to provide this information. This allows us to make contact easily and quickly for routine administration arrangements and also alert "non-regulars" to special events such as socials.

We act as a conduit, signposting appropriate resources. We hold data on various bodies and sources of information, e.g. websites, email addresses, and we could from time to time invite speakers to attend to address specific topics that would be of interest to the group. People coming to AI's Cafe often hope to be offered instant or unrealistic solutions. We hope, with this handout, expectations may be modified and new-comers will understand the true value of what our group is offering.

For many people AI's Cafe provides the chance to go out once a week to a social gathering with or without the person they are caring for; and it helps them to work through issues and problems related to the route march of dementia.

For more details contact: Norma Warden on normwarden@hotmail.co.uk; Isobel Dunkley on isobeldunkleyo509@gmail.com; or Jan Burt on jan@grannyjanny.co.uk