



[www.TeepaSnow.com](http://www.TeepaSnow.com)

## Facing My Brick Wall

by Mary Lee, CDP,  
PAC Lead Outreach Coordinator  
Support Group Facilitator – Greenville Area

One of the interesting things about working for PAC, is that the load of offering support to others and being of service, is shared. Every team member has value in their contribution to all that we do. Our contributions are based upon abilities and interests, so no one gets a *free pass* due to an attitude, belief that I can't do that, or it's not my job!

Much like all things in life, you can seek help, you can partner up, you can use technology, or you can struggle for a bit to try something on your own... So, this month, it was my turn to write an article for our monthly on-line Journal. I decided to try it on my own, to create something unique, to write something... and then I found I was coming up blank. It felt like I hit a brick wall in front of me, and I wasn't sure how to get around or over it. So rather than reach out to other PAC team members, I opted to do more research and take a look at what other care partners have said about facing the challenges of FTD (Frontotemporal Dementia) and care support.

Lo and behold, as I sought out information, I found a terrific article written by a caregiver. It was actually shared out on the Association of FTD website, and yet, I certainly hadn't run across it earlier. So, rather than try to create something, as the article served the task at hand, I coached it up to Teepa. If I received permission from the author, maybe she would just let me use this instead of writing something.

Instead Teepa suggested I share my struggle with the new and unfamiliar task I was assigned. Again, like all things in life, it is wise to use the resources in front of us, adapt them to our situation, and share what we've learned. So how does this apply to caregiving? Well, the author is a daughter reflecting on a moment she had when caring for her mother living with FTD. Her words, ingenuity, and sense of humor resonated with me bringing back memories of caring for my mother. She and I laughed a lot. It's not that dementia is funny, but laughing is good medicine and can ease the tension. For instance, here's an excerpt from the article...*I'm losing my patience. I've tried negotiating, I've tried explaining, heck, I've even tried some bribing ("If you put on your pants, we can get ice cream!"), but it seems like she will never get in those pants. I reach for the last tool in my bag of tricks: The Hokey Pokey!*

The Hokey Pokey? Really? As caregivers, we've found ourselves in similar situations so whatever works...right? Teepa teaches us arguing and forcing the issue gets you nowhere. Music and rhythm are powerful tools and great ways to connect. Moments of joy are essential for every human being. Smiling and laughing is good therapy.

**Moral of the story:** Positivity and laughing makes you a better caregiver. And remember, there's always a window, even if the door seems closed, or you hit a brick wall!

[Click here](#) to read full article by daughter, Nicole Savini

View Mary's bio [here](#).