

## Covid-19 : alternatives to caregivers ' Cafe « Cafés des Aidants® »



Since the start of the health crisis, Caregivers' Cafes, these places and times for discussions and meetings between caregivers have been suspended. Some support structures for Caregivers' Cafes have decided to adapt them by offering an alternative to carers to continue to support them during this particularly complicated period. These alternatives, in the same format as the Caregivers's Cafes, take place by videoconference.

This is the case, for example, of the Café des Aidants d'Odéon in Paris set up by the Maison des Aînés et des Aidants. The animators of this café, Laure Vezin and Camille Bourguignat, explain to us "The date of our face-to-face coffee was approaching and we did not want to leave caregivers without solutions (for some, we knew, the Café des Aidants was the only space sharing and help in their situation). We thought of caregivers, whose loved one is in EHPAD, or those who are confined to a distance, or those who live with their loved one. All different situations and this is what we wanted to address, the experience, the exchange, the support between peers in this exceptional period. This coffee seemed obvious to us! "

These digital caregivers' cafes are clearly proving their worth since other dates.

Présence 30, the supporting structure for the Cafés des Aidants du Gard, has also set up these Cafés des Aidants 2.0. Participants confirm the success of this alternative through numerous positive testimonies: "Very productive and constructive, it's great. We make other acquaintances, only positive! ", " We can still see each other, we can still speak up "or" It's not bad at all, it's good to see new faces at last! "

**What does this initiative consist of (frequency, duration, etc.)? Was it designed in the same format as the Café des Aidants? And how many meetings have you planned?**

**Maison des Aînés et des Aidants et Accueil de Jour Saint Germain - Cafés des Aidants d'Odéon :**

"The format: 2 hours instead of 1:30 because we had planned a time to manage the technical aspects of the connection, for some it was the first time that they used a video conference tool! And for our part, we weren't yet ready! We had to adapt according to the medium used: computer or smartphone. We had previously defined a maximum number of caregivers of 8 people, and chose to speak to caregivers we already knew (having participated in at least one Café des Aidants) because it seemed easier for us to experiment, the fluidity of the exchanges and the group dynamics. We have planned two initiatives on the duration of containment, and a third one during the week of containment. »

## were the difficulties (digital, identification of caregivers, participation, etc.) in the implementation of this initiative?

### **Maison des Aînés et des Aidants et Accueil de Jour Saint Germain - Cafés des Aidants d'Odéon :**

*« We were only able to invite carers whose email address we had, therefore equipped with a computer or a smartphone.*

*We lost time during the first connection because the code did not work. But after a few minutes everything was back to normal. »*

### **Présence 30 - Cafés des Aidants du Gard :**

*« We encountered difficulties in learning connection for some caregivers, we had to test the connection individually with each before the Caregivers' Café. There is a real digital difficulties with some people. But we want to support them in bringing digital into their daily lives.*

*We make 2 caregivers's café in the early afternoon and one on Sunday evening but in the afternoon the wifi is very much used which creates a bad connection. We plan to postpone appointments at the end of the afternoon from 5 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. to avoid these connection problems.*

*It is necessary to take the time to accompany some towards the use of digital tools but that does not prevent the implementation of the action and the exchanges. It is necessary to integrate this latency time. But nobody is discouraged to participate! »*

## What themes did you talk about?

### **Maison des Aînés et des Aidants et Accueil de Jour Saint Germain - Cafés des Aidants d'Odéon :**

*1 - confined caregivers: let's talk about it?*

*2 - deconfinement, we talk about it (theme chosen by the participants of the first initiative)*

### **Présence 30 - Cafés des Aidants du Gard :**

*The themes tackled are diverse! They are very much focused on confinement, relational difficulties, particularly family difficulties during confinement, in particular for parents of children with disabilities.*

## What is the feedback from caregivers on this action?

### **Maison des Aînés et des Aidants et Accueil de Jour Saint Germain - Cafés des Aidants d'Odéon :**

*We had 5 participants who were very happy to meet or meet, because some knew each other. And what a pleasure to be left with a convivial background (parasol, for those who were in the countryside, gardens...). The exchanges were fluid and the participants were able to express themselves by exchanging with each other, which was the desired objective. We were there in support for animation, reminders etc.*

*We had requests to repeat the experience, that's why we proposed a second date.*

### **Présence 30 - Cafés des Aidants du Gard :**

*We welcome 3 caregivers for each caregivers's Café.*

*Often caregivers introduce the rest of their families, play music ... It creates other things, other relationships.*

*It's very enriching on a human level. We received messages of thanks for the implementation of this initiative even by people who did not participate. Also on the part of professionals, there is an atmosphere of solidarity.*

### **Caregivers' feedback :**

*"It's not bad at all, it's good to see new faces at last!" "*

*"there are limits in the tools, but delighted to share this time of exchange, it feels good"*

*"It was useful for me because of my situation"*

*"Very productive and constructive, it's great. We make other acquaintances, only positive! "*

*"This allows more availability"*

*"It does not replace the human contact of the Café, but it is easier to participate in the case of a professional activity."*

*"Very positive! "*

*"It's interesting, it changes."*

*"We still see each other, we can still speak"*