

Caring and the Caregiver

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Iona Senior Services

- 42 year old organization that helps older adults and their families as they experience the challenges and opportunities of aging
- Care Management, Counseling, and Support
- Educational programs
- Nationally recognized adult day program that operates Monday- Friday from 8 a.m. -5 p.m. and provides respite for caregivers and mental, emotional, physical, and social stimulation for older adults

Today's Goals

- Understand the practical and emotional issues related to caregiving
- Understand the challenges and joys of caregiving
- Understand the importance of self-care as a caregiver
- Learn about available resources for caregivers

Check-in

- How many people have been a caregiver for a loved one?
- How many people are currently a caregiver for a loved one?
- How many people have concerns about the possible roles that they will need to play as a caregiver in the future for a loved one?

Who Is a Caregiver?

- “There are only four kinds of people in the world: Those who have been caregivers; those who are currently caregivers; those who will be caregivers; and those who will need caregivers.” --

Rosalynn Carter

About Caregivers

- There are approximately 40.4 million unpaid caregivers of adults ages 65 and older in the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics, November 2015)
- Adults ages 45-64 are most likely to be caregivers
- An estimated 66% of caregivers are females
- Financial help provided for essentials and/or luxuries
- Transportation help- driving to appointments and much more
- Coordination help- dealing with insurance, doctors, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, legal issues, housing issues, etc.
- Emotional support and companionship

About Caregivers Continued...

- Direct care (personal care)- assisting with Activities of Daily Living and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (ADLs and IADLs)
- Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) are everyday personal activities that are fundamental to caring for oneself and maintaining independence
- These activities include: bathing, transferring to/from chair, wheelchair, bed, climbing stairs, walking, eating and dressing
- Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) are activities related to independent living
- These activities include: housework, food shopping/food preparation, driving and using public transportation, managing medications and finances and talking on the telephone
- Miscellaneous help- ANYTHING that is done for safety, quality of life , health and happiness

Caregiving Challenges

- Assisting with ADLs and IADLs
- Keeping healthy and appropriate boundaries and limits
- Balancing family and work roles
- Managing time
- Managing stress levels
- Physical, emotional and financial demands
- Health care issues/concerns

Caregiving Challenges Continued...

- Expectation to do things for which you have NO training
- Lack of privacy
- Sleep deprivation
- Being afraid to ask for help
- Depression and Isolation

Caregiving Joys

- Caregiving can bring you closer to the one you are caring for
- Caregiving can help you spend more quality time with your aging loved one
- Caregiving can get you in touch with your family history
- Caregiving can sharpen your organizational and multitasking skills
- Caregiving can bring you a deeper sense of your own values

Caregiving Joys Continued...

- Caregiving may help you recognize your own support systems
- Caregiving can make you more compassionate and loving
- Caregiving can help you plan for your own future

Tips to Find Joy

- Learn about about the available resources in the community
- Take a caregiver respite daily
- Know that the person you are caring for is trying to manage day to day
- Learn as much as you can about the diagnosis and disease
- “Always be kinder than you feel.” (Bob Demarco, Alzheimer’s Reading Room)

What is Self-Care

- At its essence, self-care involves being aware of your own physical and psychological needs, knowing what brings you joy, what helps you feel rested and balanced, and what contributes to your overall sense of well-being and vibrant health. (Corrie Woods, author of *The Woman's Field Guide to Exceptional Living*)
- Caring for yourself is one of the most important and one of the most often forgotten things you can do as a caregiver. When your needs are taken care of, the person you care for will benefit as well
- Benefits of self-care include: the likelihood of a longer, happier and healthier life, the capacity to be a better caregiver, improved relationships and a strong foundation from which to live a joyful and fulfilling life

Signs that You Need Self-Care

- A feeling of being pulled in too many directions
- Feeling overwhelmed and exhausted
- Resenting the person you are caring for
- Finding yourself unable to focus on a task
- Feeling depressed
- Becoming accident-prone
- Isolating yourself from others
- Forgetting what your needs or interests are

Ways You Can Take Care of Yourself

- Take regular breaks
- Exercise daily
- Eat a balanced diet
- Don't neglect your own health
- Get enough sleep
- Stay connected with friends
- Laugh often
- Calm your mind and body

Ways You Can Take Care of Yourself

Continued...

- Focus on the positive: Positive thinking is good for your mind and body
- Watch out for signs of burnout
- Join a support group
- Go easy on yourself: You don't need to be superwoman or superman
- Be clear about what you can and cannot do: Know your limits and stick to them
- Learn to pace yourself
- Plan ahead as much as possible and have contingency plans
- Know your stress triggers and avoid them when possible
- **BE GOOD TO YOURSELF**

Resources

- DC Office on Aging Lead Agencies:
- East River Family Strengthening Collaborative
Service area: Ward 7
202-534-4880
www.erfsc.org
- Family Matters of Greater Washington
Service area: Ward 8
202-562-6860
www.familymattersdc.org
- Iona Senior Services
Service area: Ward 3 and parts of 2 and 4
Information and Referral –
202-895-9448
www.iona.org
- Seabury Resources for Aging
Service area: Ward 5
202-539-8701
www.seaburyresources.org
- Ward 6: 202-397-1725
Terrific, Inc
Service area: Ward 1
202-387-9000
Service area: Part of 2: 202-595-1900 and Part of Ward 4: 202-882-1824
- American Association of Retired Persons (AARP): www.aarp.org
- Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org
- www.caregiver.org/fact-sheets
- Caregivers Action Network (CAN): www.caregiveraction.org
- Eldercare Locator: 1-800-677-1116: www.eldercare.gov
- DC Office of Aging: 202-724-5622: www.dcoa.gov
- Family Caregiver Alliance: www.caregiving.org
- The National Family Caregiver Association: www.thefamilycaregiver.org/about_nfca
- www.familycaregiving101.org
- www.pbs.org/caringforyourparents.com

Questions and Answers

Thank you!

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