

50+ FUTURES Planning

An Educational Series for
HOWARD COUNTY EMPLOYEES

A partnership between Office on Aging and Independence
and Coalition of Geriatric Services (COGS)



Caring for the Caregiver

Kathy Wehr
Howard County Office on Aging and Independence
Caregiver Support Program Manager

Andrea Bendig, MSN, BSN, RN, CM, DN
BrightStar Care
Director of Nursing

This session will include a fact sheet to include in your planning series notebook.

Objectives

- Discuss perspectives on caregiving, and the importance of maintaining a caregiver's physical and mental well-being through self-care.
- Explore effective communication styles and approaches to better navigate caregiver situations.
- Prevent isolation and ill health for our loved-ones and ourselves by exploring ways to plan ahead for various caregiving situations.
- Discuss ways to avoid crisis by planning in advance.

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.

Rosalyn Carter

If you have met one caregiver, you have met
one caregiver...





A **caregiver**—sometimes called an *informal caregiver*—is an unpaid individual (for example, a spouse, partner, family member, friend, or neighbor) involved in assisting others with activities of daily living and/or medical tasks.





43.5 million caregivers provide unpaid care to an adult or child in the last 12 months.

34.2 million Americans provide unpaid care to adults over 50 years in the last 12 months.

15.7 million adult family caregivers are caring for someone with Alzheimer's Disease or a related dementia.

In 2015 it was recorded that 470 billion in care was provided by informal caregivers.

Be honest with yourself...

- How do you feel mentally and physically?
- Are your needs being placed on the back burner?
- Are you trying to do it all?
- Are you still doing things that are pleasurable to you that you did before your caregiving began?

Reminder:
Take
Care of
Myself

SELF CARE IS NOT SELFISH !!!!!

Definition of Self-care:

The practice of taking actions to preserve or improve one's own health.

or

The practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness.

Steps to help you maintain your health and well-being

- Recognize your warning signs early. It is easier to recover from stress if we make changes earlier than later.
- Are the signs physical such as headache, muscle aches, fatigue, or are they mental signs such as anger, frustration or even depression.
- Identify what you can and cannot change.
- Taking steps to reduce stress gives you a sense of control.

Caregiver stress is influenced by many factors:

- Whether your caregiving is voluntary or involuntary.
- Your relationship to the care recipient.
- Your coping abilities.
- Your caregiving situation.
- Whether support is available to you.
- Your relationship to others involved in care.
- Life in general!



And always remember...



Your care may be super, but you are human!

Results of neglecting stress

- Increased health problems.
- Disrupted relationships.
- “Burnout.”
- Depression.
- Decreased quality of care.

Changes you can make

- Change your situation.
- Change your perception by obtaining education about the chronic condition or disease.
- Change your response.





I GOT THIS.

Positive Self-talk VS Negative Self-talk

Positive self-talk is a powerful tool that helps reduce stress. Negative self-talk increases stress.

Steps to changing negative self-talk

- Write down self-defeating thoughts.
- Change those thoughts to positive statements.
- Adopt a glass $\frac{1}{2}$ full mentality.
- Communicate your thoughts and concerns to someone you trust.

Barriers to taking action

- Can't think of what to do.
- Time.
- You think it is easier to do it yourself.
- Choosing a difficult activity.
- Postponing stress reduction.



Good Communication is Key



Good Communication...

- Prevents misunderstandings.
- Builds relationships as relationships can often change.
- Increases chances of being heard.
- Reduces stress and frustration.
- Enhances problem solving.

“I” vs “You” Messages

Assertive (“I”)

Aggressive (“You”)

Asks for help

Demands wants/needs

Values others’ needs

Focuses only on self

Respects others’ rights

Violates other’s rights

Builds relationships

Destroys relationships

Express your feelings

Feelings are...

- A normal response to a situation.
- Relative.
- Changeable.
- Outgrowth of our perspective.
- A tool for self-understanding.
- Opportunity to reflect and response.

Feelings are neither good nor bad, they just are.

Signs of emotional distress

- Loss of pleasure in activities you have always enjoyed.
- Pervasive sadness.
- Appetite changes.
- Sleep difficulties.
- Fatigue/loss of energy.
- Abnormal restlessness.
- Decreased concentration or decision making.
- Low self-esteem.

Managing our emotions

- Identify emotions.
- Accept emotions.
- Express emotions.
- Examine your emotions.
- Respond to your emotions.
- Seek professional help if needed.



Tools of Optimism

- View set-backs as temporary.
- View misfortune as specific, not universal.
- Seek solutions to problems.
- View mistakes as opportunities.
- Give yourself credit.
- Recognize beliefs are not facts.
- Practice positive self-talk.

Crisis



**Success
strategy**



Things that can help you minimize your stress!

- Make a list of individuals that can help and ask for help.
- Make a list of needs which would help the care recipient and you the caregiver so that when people say “what can I do to help” you have a ideas ready. Say yes when people offer.
- Create a safe environment at home.
- Maintain an up-to-date medical record, including medication list.
- Educate yourself about your loved-ones condition.
- Share the care!
- Create a group calendar or other communication method to make it easier for family and friends to help.
- Include care recipient in decision making whenever possible.

RESPITE, RESPITE, RESPITE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

It is crucial for caregivers to have time for themselves. Options to taking a break.

- In-home respite.
- Adult day centers.
- Volunteer companion programs.
- Join a support group.
- Engage friends, parishioners, neighbors and family.

Plan for financial and health-related security.

- Review bank and financial arrangements.
- Inquire about the care recipient's medical coverage, and any long-term care insurance.
- Look into Social Security and pension benefits.
- Manage family financial planning.
- Plan for care options now, and in the future.
- Prepare legal documents.



Gathering Important Documents

- List of contact numbers, both emergency and non-emergency.
- Physician(s) contact information.
- Medical records.
- Medication list.
- Allergy list.
- Advanced Directives, Health agent record and MOLST.
- Insurance documents.
- POA document.

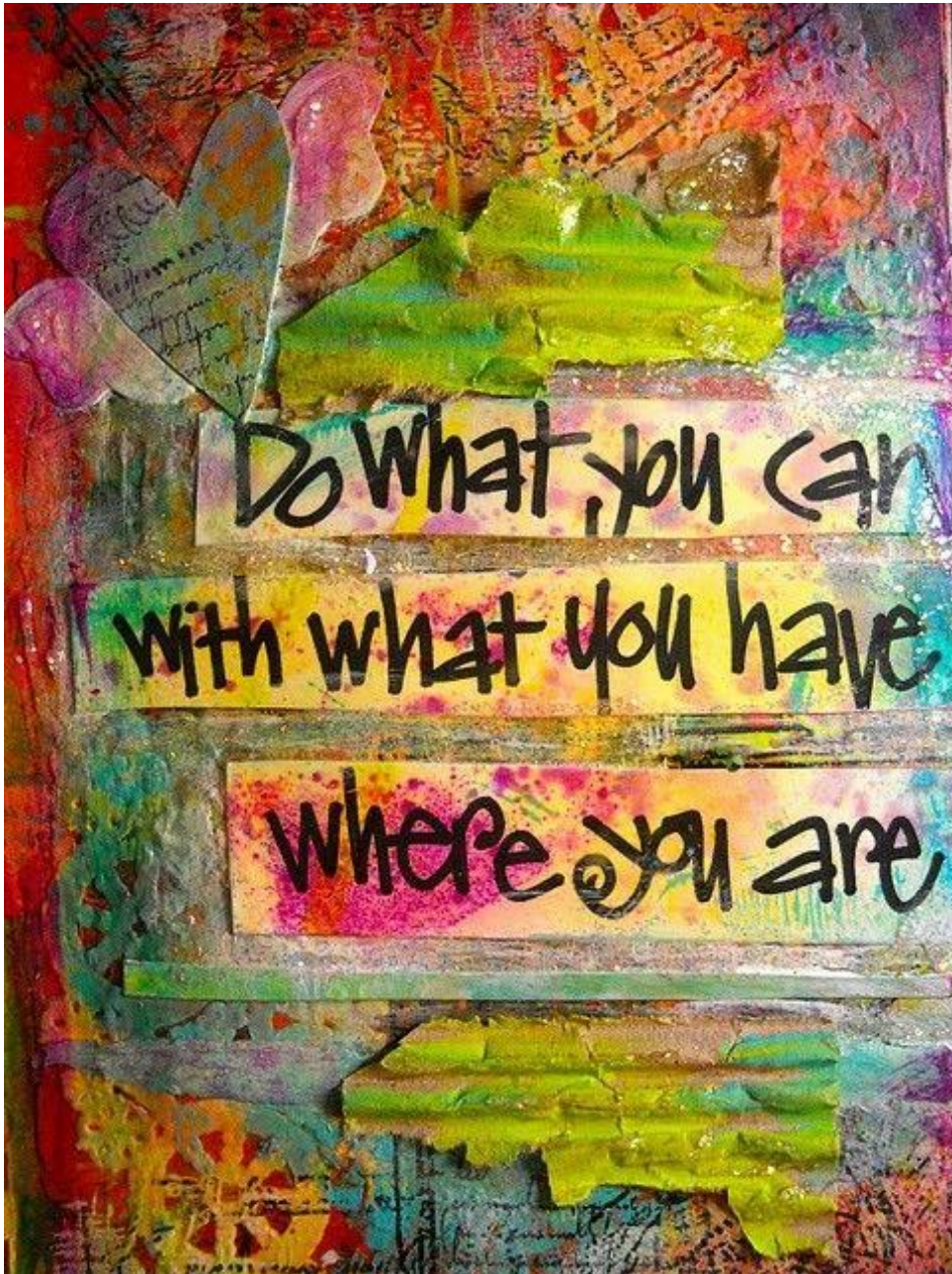
Family Meetings

- Family meetings can be a great way of keeping everyone in the loop and avoiding miscommunication.
- Involve the care receiver.
- Include everyone involved in care.
- Plan an agenda in advance.
- Consider a facilitator if needed.



Exploring caregiver benefits

- Employee assistance counseling programs.
- Flexible work schedule/teleworking.
- Job sharing.
- MFLA.
- Time banking.
- Support groups.



Do what you can
with what you have
where you are

Taking care of the caregiver

- Avoid burnout.
- Ask for help.
- Take breaks.
- Take care of your own health.
- Get enough sleep.
- Don't let go of your own life.
- Maintain your relationships with others.

Find
Your
Joy



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Thank you!

We want *YOUR* feedback!

Please complete the survey provided.

For more information visit

www.howardcountymd.gov/aging or

www.cogsmd.org