

Caregiver Chronicles

October 2016



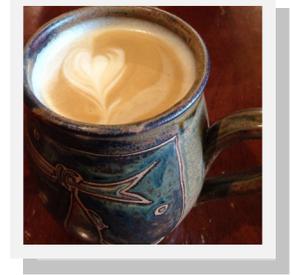
AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF DANE COUNTY
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608-261-9930
[HTTPS://AAA.DCDHS.COM/](https://aaa.dcdhs.com/)



*The trees are about to show us
how lovely it is to let the dead
things go.*

—Maya Elious

Readying for the Winter Season



October is often a gorgeous month in Wisconsin, when we enjoy crisp sweater weather, football games, stunning autumn colors, and Halloween fun. We also anticipate a dramatic change in seasons, knowing Winter isn't far off. Gardens yield the last of the harvest, and all manner of prep for cold and snow make a difference in how we get through some of the most challenging weather. Fall, in general, is a season of preparation for literally dark times. As caregivers, preparedness also makes a difference in how we move through challenging situations. Jane Mahoney of Greater Wisconsin Area Aging Resources, Inc., describes her transition to caregiver for her parents along with the benefits of having difficult discussions *before* there is a crisis in her article on page 3.

Of the 17.7 million caregivers in the US today, some are already in crisis and face serious risks to their own health and wellbeing. The Dane County Caregiver Program has small grants, support groups, education, and respite options for those who meet eligibility requirements. The goal, however, is to keep as many caregivers as possible from getting to a point of crisis or burnout. The first meditation class tailored to the needs of caregivers, and *Powerful Tools for Caregivers* classes are in progress, with additional classes planned for the future. Both programs are proven to reduce caregiver stress and improve the quality of life for caregivers.

Since half of the 17.7 million caregivers in the US are employed while providing care to an older adult, we are currently offering the *Adult Children and Employed Caregivers Learn & Support* groups at the Aging and Disability Resource Center (located on the NorthEast side of Madison), and in Verona at the Verona Senior Center. To serve these caregivers, many of whom are not yet connected to aging resources, the groups provide an introduction to available services; educational presentations on hot topics for caregivers; and an opportunity to discuss, ask questions, and connect with other caregivers. The hope is to help expectant caregivers and those in the early stages to prepare for the road ahead. (See the flyer on p. 6 for upcoming topics.)

Wherever you are in your caregiving journey, preparing can only help with the rough times, and free you to appreciate the good times. We're here to help.



Jane De Broux
Caregiver Program Coordinator
Dane County Area Agency on Aging



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Preparation Pays Off for Caregivers

In the years I worked as a Caregiver Coordinator, I talked with caregivers about home safety, caregiver burnout, self-care for the caregiver, and ways to prepare for the future. During that time, I also watched my father's health decline and, in turn, watched my mother become a fulltime caregiver. As I visited with my mother about various things related to caregiving, I slowly realized that I, too, had become a caregiver. Once I accepted this role, I decided it was time to start paying attention to the many things I had encouraged other caregivers to do, most importantly, getting legal paperwork in order. I had never actually talked to my parents about their healthcare wishes, whether or not they had a will or powers of attorney, where they stood financially in case someone needed nursing home care, or what type of insurance they had. I decided to start addressing these issues with my mom whenever we visited my parents in South Dakota.

When I was only in the role of daughter, a trip to visit my parents was like a mini-vacation. Mom would have a pan of caramel rolls waiting along with other favorite foods. I would kick back on the couch and let the grandparents play with my kids and just enjoy the visit. When I added "caregiver" to my role, the visits began to have more purpose than just a relaxing time. I began to talk with my mother about the not-so-fun topics of estate planning, advance directives, and long term care. I discovered first hand that it is a lot easier to encourage other people to do these things than to actually do them yourself. I returned from these visits tired, frustrated, and a bit sad. Caregiving truly is a stressful thing.

Over the past year, I learned a lot about my parents. I now know that they have healthcare and financial power of attorney (POA) papers in place. I know the names and locations of all their insurance policies. I know their wishes regarding healthcare and end-of-life issues and I helped them start inquiring about financial assistance in case there is a need for long term care. Discussing these topics was not fun, and there were many times I wondered if I was making a big deal out of nothing. I thought it might be easier to just wait until we really needed the information and figure things out at that time.

Last week I got that dreaded call—my dad was admitted to the hospital with pneumonia and chronic heart failure. I made an emergency trip to South Dakota to help my frantic mother. As I was driving across southern Minnesota, I thought about the things we would need—POA papers, insurance policies, and answers to questions about resuscitation. I was so relieved that Mom and I had taken the time and effort to go over all of these things earlier. Dealing with the decisions and emotions of Dad's current situation was stressful enough by itself. I could not imagine the added stress of having to fumble through files searching for legal documents or not knowing anything about how to finance a nursing home placement.

As it turned out, all those unpleasant conversations and planning for the future really did pay off. Regardless of how uncomfortable it was to talk to my mom about advance directives, end-of-life decisions, and personal finances, I was glad I was bold enough to do so before the crisis hit home. Dad survived the pneumonia but was too weak to return home to Mom. We placed him in a nursing home for rehabilitation with hopes he could eventually move back. Time will tell whether or not this will be possible. As for now, my dad has adjusted beautifully to life in a memory care wing of the local nursing home and my mom struggles with loneliness and guilt. Ahh, the life of a caregiver.

*—Jane Mahoney, OAA Consultant—Caregiving Specialist
Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources*

Can't Make it to a Support Group? Try Family Caregiver Call-In



*Caring . . . It's not the
hard part of caregiving.*

When someone you love needs care, it's natural to want to be the one to provide it. But when caregiving becomes difficult, talking with people who understand can help. Find support by joining the Family Caregiver Call-In. You'll talk with caregivers and experts and find resources to help you better care for your loved one—and yourself.

Family Caregiver Call-In

It's FREE and easy to participate.

Step 1: Call **(800) 472-8008** to reserve your spot on the call and to get the call-in phone number.

Step 2: Dial in on the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 1:00— 2:30 pm.

For more information, contact Lynn Scheinoha toll-free at the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of the Lakeshore: (877) 416-7083.



Caregiver Support for Veterans

*Madison VA
Hospital
Room B-2055*

Caregiver Day Off: Fri. Oct 28, 2016

**Free classes for
Caregivers of Veterans
Or
Vets who are Caregivers**

9am-12pm
Managing Stress

1pm-4pm
Utilizing Technology

CLASSES and refreshments provided in partnership with the Easter Seals National Veteran Caregiver Training Program. Please come to this event. Take one or both classes. RSVP is necessary to save your space in class.

To RSVP call **608-256-1901**, ext. **11485**. Leave a message to include:

- **YOUR NAME** and your Veteran's name
- **PHONE NUMBER** you can be called back at
- **LUNCH is included If you attend BOTH CLASSES**

For more information, please contact:
Margaret Flood, LCSW
Caregiver Support Program at the
William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital
2500 Overlook Terrace, Madison, WI
#608-256-1901 ext 11485



Learn & Support Group for Adult Children & Employed Caregivers

NEW! Thursday Evenings This Fall **Adult Children & Employed Caregivers** **Learn & Support Group**



- Are you providing care for aging parents and need to know where to find resources?
- Are you a family caregiver for an older adult trying to find balance with your work life?
- Are you a member of the “sandwich” or even the “club sandwich” generation trying to balance care for older adults and your own children?
- Are you anticipating the time when your older adult parent or relative will depend on you?
- Are you coping with challenging family dynamics in caring for aging family members?

We know you're pressed for time more than ever, so we created a new format for the group. Come early for a light supper followed by expert presentations and time to discuss, ask questions, and connect with other caregivers. (No cost, no registration required.)

Light Supper 5:30—6:00 pm

Presentation and discussion 6:00 –7:00 pm

Verona

Verona Senior Center

108 Paoli Street, Verona

For more information : 608-845-7471

Email: kim.veronasc@gmail.com

September 15

Welcome! Intro to Program and Resources

October 6

Aging & Disability Resource Center Resources

October 20

Elder Law

November 3

(presenter topic by group request)

November 17

(presenter topic by group request)

December 1

(presenter topic by group request)



North/East Madison

Aging & Disability Resource Center

NorthSide Town Center

2865 N. Sherman Ave

For more information: 608-261-5679

Email: debroux.jane@countyofdane.com

September 22

Aging & Disability Resource Center Resources

October 13

Elder Benefits Specialist Program

October 27

Caregiving Resources for Veterans

November 10

When to Stop Driving and How to Talk About It

December 8

(presenter topic by group request)



Online Resources

[How to Identify and Minimize Caregiver Burden](#)

AgingCare.com

“Many family caregivers feel that they are powerless to change their situation and turn a blind eye to their emotional, physical, and even financial difficulties. However, this denial only provides a cozy little space for burnout to take root and grow.” <http://bit.ly/2cBRhhT>

[This Is Everything That's Wrong With Caregiving In America Today: Public policy lags woefully behind today's reality](#)

The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine just published [a very sobering look at the state of family caregiving in the U.S.](#) Here are some of the things the group found.

<http://huff.to/2dmWPld>.



*Don't get worked up over things
or people you can't change. It's not
worth the anger build up or the
headache. *

Control only what you can.

Let go.

The Aging and Disability Resource Center of Dane County (ADRC)

The ADRC offers free, unbiased information and assistance on resources and services for older people and adults with disabilities. Staff provides information to all callers regardless of their income, assets, age, or disability, and they help callers identify options, solve problems, and plan for the future.

Open 7:45 am—4:30 pm Monday through Friday



Call (608) 240-7400

Visit the ADRC office, 2865 N. Sherman Ave,
Madison

Appointments are not necessary

Website: www.daneadrc.org

Dementia-specific Education and Support

alzheimer's  association®

Community Education Calendar

Legal & Financial Planning Part 2

Tuesday, October 11, 2016

6:00—8:00 pm

Sun Prairie Library, 1350 Linnerud Dr, Sun Prairie

Caregiver Stress: Take Care of Yourself

Tuesday, October 11, 2016

6:00—7:00 pm

Monona Public Library, 1000 Nichols Rd, Monona

Staying Independent in Your Home

Tuesday, October 25, 2016

6:00—7:00 pm

Monona Public Library, 1000 Nichols Rd, Monona

Questions?: Call 1-800-272-3900



For more information, contact ADAW
608-232-3400

Dementia-specific Support Groups

Support groups give you an opportunity to be together with others in a caring and understanding environment.

Adult Children Support Group

Meets first Wednesday of each month

6:00—7:30 pm

Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin, 517 N. Segoe Rd, Madison

West Madison Support Group

Meets first Thursday of each month

10:00—11:30 am

Covenant Presbyterian Church, 326 S. Segoe Rd, Madison

Men's Caregiver Support Group

Meets second Thursday of each month

9:15—11:00 am

Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin, 517 N. Segoe Rd, Madison

Fitchburg Support Group

Meets second Thursday of each month

10:00—11:30 am

Fitchburg Senior Center, 5510 E. Lacy Rd, Fitchburg

Young Onset Support Group (caring for a person with dementia under age 65)

Meets second Saturday of each month

9:00 am—12:00 pm

Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin, 517 N. Segoe Rd, Madison



Powerful Tools for Caregivers Class

Wednesdays, October 5 – November 9, 2016
5:30 – 7:15 pm

Bethel Lutheran Church
312 Wisconsin Avenue
Library Media Room
Madison, WI 53703

One of the greatest challenges of being a family caregiver is maintaining one’s own physical and emotional health. **Powerful Tools for Caregivers** is designed to provide caregivers with tools to increase self care and give them confidence in handling difficult situations, emotions, and decisions.

Topics include tools designed to help a caregiver:

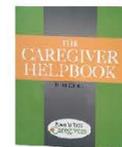
- Reduce personal stress
- Communicate feelings and needs
- Use community services
- Deal with emotions such as anger, guilt, and depression

Instructors:

***Siv Goulding** has been a Powerful Tools for Caregivers leader since 2008, and has 20 years professional experience as a case manager and counselor to older persons in Central Illinois. She currently volunteers with the Dane County Caregiver Alliance, has had personal caregiver experience with a parent and in - laws, and now cares for her spouse. She facilitates three caregiver support groups in Wisconsin.*

***Diane Wiedenbeck** has been a Powerful Tools for Caregivers leader for about 15 years, and has been a family caregiver. She participated in the Dane County Caregiver Alliance and currently serves on the RSVP of Dane County Board as Vice President and Cottage Grove Triad Chair.*

Cost of the class \$10, and includes a copy of The Caregiver Helpbook (a \$20 value).



TO REGISTER fill out this form and submit it with a check for \$10 (payable to Dane County) by September 26, 2016.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ Zip _____
 Email _____

MAIL to:
 Howard Thomas
 Area Agency on Aging of Dane County
 2865 N. Sherman Ave.
 Madison, WI 53704

Relationship to care recipient: _____
 (spouse, parent, friend, neighbor, etc.)

Registration limited to 12 participants

If you have questions, or need the \$10 registration fee waived in order to attend, please contact: Jane De Broux, Dane County Caregiver Program Coordinator at 608-261-5679 or debroux.jane@countyofdane.com.



Healthy Aging: Mind, Body & Spirit



Monday, October 31

10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Monona United Methodist Church

606 Nicholas Road, Monona

East Madison Monona Coalition of the Aging and Monona United Methodist Church invite you to a day of:

- Howling Good Fun—singing, laughing and exercising
- Frightfully Important Information—nutrition and health

Wear comfortable clothes and shoes that are suited to walking. All who are aging are welcome, including people using walkers and wheelchairs! !

RSVP by Monday, October 24

To ensure enough food for lunch, please RSVP to Monona United Methodist Church (608-222-1633) or East Madison Monona Coalition of the Aging (608-223-3100) by Monday, October 24.

Free event. Free will offerings will be accepted.



Caring for the Caregiver Program

AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF DANE COUNTY

2865 N. Sherman Ave.
Madison, Wisconsin 53704



Phone: 608-261-5679

Fax: 608-240-7402

Email: debroux.jane@countyofdane.com

Save paper and reduce postage costs

Please let us know if:

- You are willing to receive the newsletter via email
- You are no longer interested in receiving the newsletter

Contact:

Jane De Broux

608-261-5679

debroux.jane@countyofdane.com