

November 2017

Caregiver Chronicles



Caring for Caregivers

AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF DANE COUNTY
2865 N SHERMAN AVE, MADISON, WI 53704
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[HTTPS://AAA.DCDHS.COM/](https://aaa.dcdhs.com/)



November is National Family Caregivers Month

**Every day, over 578,000 family caregivers
in Wisconsin work hard to help with the needs
of their loved ones.**

Caregiver Chronicles

Thank you, Family Caregivers!

During the month of November we shine light on the extraordinary work of family caregivers. Nationally, unpaid family caregivers provide \$500 billion per year in services, and the value they offer is incalculable, both to those they care for and society at large. While the tasks and logistics of caregiving can be both challenging and stressful, many caregivers also find it beneficial and rewarding. Jane Mahoney, Older Americans Act Consultant for the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, recounts the positive potential in her article on *The Rewards of Caregiving*, p 3.

Although, for many, there is reward in the opportunity to provide care for loved ones, it doesn't change the fact that caregivers have higher stress levels than non-caregivers and are more likely to suffer health problems. Add stress brought on by the holiday season, and November can begin a challenging time of year. There is no lack of material for caregivers about self care and nurturing. We remind caregivers they will not be able to provide care for others when overextended, and that pacing themselves for the long haul is important. But how to begin when you're already overwhelmed? Last year, Deanna Truedson McKillips, Palliative Care Social Worker at Agrace, wrote a piece adapted from Sherri Snelling of [Caregiving Club](#). Deanna suggested a system of recharging and renewal was a great way to stick to a New Year's resolution. This year, I thought it might be useful to consider starting before the winter season and holidays rev up already hectic schedules. Take a look at the [Healthy Monday](#) reset strategy and see if it introduces some doable self care to the holiday season that can continue into the new year. Deanna's article, *The Self-Care Promise We Make to Ourselves*, is on p. 5.

In my day-to-day work, I have come to appreciate family caregivers more and more. The sacrifices can be enormous, but so much is tempered with love and kindness. I feel extremely fortunate to see the best in my fellow human beings on a regular basis. However, my colleagues and I also notice and appreciate more must be done society-wide to support family caregivers. In *Families Caring for an Aging America*, a new report by the National Academy of Sciences, the situation is described in no uncertain terms:

Family caregiving affects millions of Americans every day, in all walks of life. At least 17.7 million individuals in the United States are family caregivers of someone age 65 and older who needs help because of a limitation in their physical, mental, or cognitive functioning. **As a society, we have always depended on family caregivers to provide the lion's share of longterm services and support (LTSS) for our elders. Yet the need to recognize and support caregivers is among the most significant overlooked challenges facing the aging U.S. population, their families, and society.**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane De Broux".

Jane De Broux
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The Rewards of Caregiving

November is National Family Caregiver Month, a time to acknowledge and celebrate caregivers. You often hear about the challenges, frustrations, and stress of caring for someone, but caregiving isn't without rewards. Take some time to consider the ways your life has been enriched by your caregiving journey.

Caregiving offers you a chance to give back to someone important in your life.

If you are caring for a parent, the help you give them now is a way to honor them for caring for you when you were a child. When caring for a spouse, it can be a thank-you for the love they have given you through the years. Providing care is a way of telling the person they are valuable, that you love them, and will always be there for them.

Caregiving encourages you to spend more quality time with your loved one.

Looking at photo albums, reminiscing about earlier times, reading aloud, watching old movies, or just being together become precious ways to enjoy time together. Slowing down enough to simply be together gives you the opportunity to get to know each other better, often resulting in newfound respect and understanding.

Caregiving can get you in touch with your family history.

Spending time together listening to childhood stories opens a door to the past and gives you a new understanding of how your family was shaped by history. Relish these stories.

Caregiving gives you an opportunity to learn new skills.

You learn about the medical condition that affects your loved one and how to maneuver through the maze of health care providers. And you learn to be assertive, speaking up to advocate for your loved one.

Caregiving helps you recognize your own support systems.

You may be surprised to find neighbors, co-workers, relatives and friends reaching out to help you on this journey. Accept their help and take pleasure in how they enrich your life.

Caregiving can help you become more compassionate and loving.

You may not think you have the ability, patience, or personality to be a caregiver. Rising to the challenges of caregiving helps you to recognize your own strengths and abilities, often building up your inner, spiritual self.

Caregiving leads you to plan your own future.

Discussing and planning end-of-life issues with your loved one can guide you to be better prepared for your own future and give you a deeper understanding of your own values and beliefs.

As you celebrate National Family Caregiver Month, be sure to recognize the rewards you have experienced on your journey. You may find that caregiving benefits not only your loved one, but you as well.

—Jane Mahoney

Older Americans Act Consultant, GWAAR

Caregiver Self-Care Online

Three Easy Beginner Tai Chi Videos for Older Adults

Click the link above to access videos of beginning tai chi classes you can try at home. These three videos for older adults teach simple exercises—no equipment is needed.

Tai Chi is a gentle form of exercise that has been proven to help with prevention of falls and improve balance. Studies also show that it helps strengthen legs and improve cardiac endurance, flexibility, immune system functioning, and more. It's equally good for caregivers and recipients.

When using the videos, it is important not to push too hard when trying something new. Viewers can adapt to their needs by trying exercises using a walker or chair as needed. Flexibility is key to getting the most from exercise.

—[DailyCaring](#)



Be sure to check out [Resource Wise](#), newsletter for the ADRC of Dane County.



***Connecting People with the
Assistance They Need***

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

Call (608) 240-7400

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

Website: www.daneadrc.org

Email: ADRC@countyofdane.com

The Self-Care Promise We Make to Ourselves

If you are one of the 65 million Americans who are caring for a loved one—that moment to put the world on “pause” and get a break never seems to happen. As the holidays approach, self care often retreats yet further to the back burner.

When it comes to caring for an older parent, a chronically ill spouse, or a child with special needs, we know that caregivers are at risk for adopting bad habits such as smoking or drinking, for not getting enough sleep, for not having the time to eat or exercise right, and for not taking enough time to focus on themselves—whether it is a coffee date with a friend, a pedicure, a movie, or other things that can bring a smile to our face. This is why my wish for all caregivers this holiday season is to make a promise to yourself that you can keep. Make it simple. Make it just about you. Here are some tips on how to get there:

Make a plan. The desire to improve something is not enough. You will be more successful at achieving your goal if you have steps for how to get there. It is about the changes you will take to reach that goal. Breaking a big goal into small increments is key.

Track your progress. Tracking instills a sense of mini accomplishments on the path to your goal. It also helps to talk to someone who is invested in seeing you be successful. Having a friend or other support person who can be your cheerleader in celebrating your milestones towards the goal can help keep you going.

Commit to your goal. Keep it simple (one resolution is better than two or three) and treat occasional slips as temporary setbacks on the path to reaching your goal. Change is a marathon and you have to commit to it, but don't be a taskmaster. Be kind to yourself if you have a bad day and start fresh the next day after a lapse.

Try Healthy Monday

Healthy Monday, <http://www.healthymonday.org/>, is based on the scientific research and support of prestigious universities such as Johns Hopkins, Syracuse, and Columbia. According to the research, since most Americans feel Monday is the day for a fresh start, beginning a new routine on a Monday makes you more successful at whatever you want to achieve. It is part of our cultural DNA—Monday is the start of the work week and the school week and we're fueled by renewed energy to after a nice weekend respite.

Each Monday offers an opportunity to renew our promise to ourselves. For caregivers, use each Monday as a time to ask yourself “What have I done for me lately?” Acknowledge the time you have chosen to renew yourself and make plans on how you will recharge in the coming week, whether it is five minutes or five hours. Check in with yourself every Monday and take time for you. It may make all the difference.

By Deanna Truedson McKillips, adapted from a blog by Sherri Snelling, a nationally-recognized expert on how to help caregivers balance self-care while caring for a loved one. Ms. Snelling is the former Chairman of the National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC), the leading caregiving advocacy non-profit organization, based in Washington, D.C.





TELECONNECTION

www.caregiverteleconnection.org



Free Telephone Learning Sessions

Call. Learn. Share.

Date	Time	Topic
Wednesday, November 2nd Thursday, November 16th Thursday, November 30th	1:00 pm Eastern 12:00 pm Central 11:00 am Mountain 10:00 am Pacific	Lucy Barylak, MSW as "Dear Lucy" In honor of National Caregivers month, Caregiver SOS wants to recognize and honor all of the work that family caregivers are doing. Caregivers will have the opportunity to call in and ask questions, make comments and express yourself regarding the issues you face as a caregiver. You can submit your questions or comments by email or phone.
Monday, November 13th	1:00 pm Eastern 12:00 pm Central 11:00 am Mountain 10:00 am Pacific	The Holidays and Caregiving with Zanda Hilger, LPC This is an annual session where you will learn practical ways to prioritize the demands of the holidays when you are a caregiver. Tune in to listen and share your experiences, getting help from other caregivers to find ways to enjoy the holidays while taking care of a loved one. ***Sponsored by the North Central Texas Caregiver Teleconnection***
Tuesday, December 5th	12:00 pm Eastern 11:00 am Central 10:00 am Mountain 9:00 am Pacific	Coping with Caregiver Stress with Tam Cummings, PhD. Therapists estimate dementia family caregivers suffer the highest levels of anxiety and depression of any group of caregivers. In this practical presentation, Tam covers the signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety, and their physical impact on caregivers. She also teaches and practices with audience members a number of proven, easy techniques to control and relieve stress.
Monday, December 11th	1:00 pm Eastern 12:00 pm Central 11:00 am Mountain 10:00 am Pacific	Keeping your Sense of Humor: the Brighter Side of Caregiving with Zanda Hilger, LPC Research shows that laughter and humor helps manage stress and has many health benefits. You may feel pretty "humorless" at times when errands pile up, you spend hours waiting in doctors' offices and you're just exhausted. Listen in to hear some of each other's stories as well as get resources to help lighten up your caregiving. ***Sponsored by the North Central Texas Caregiver Teleconnection***

Happy Holidays and a Happy new Year!!!



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A program of the WellMed Charitable Foundation

Register online at www.caregiverteleconnection.org or call 866.390.6491 Toll Free

*****Registration required at least 24 hours in advance*****



www.caregiverteleconnection.org



Free Telephone Learning Sessions

PRESENTS

Lucy Barylak, MSW as “Dear Lucy”

Wednesday, November 2nd

Thursday, November 16th

Thursday, November 30th

12:00 pm (Central Time)

In honor of National Caregivers month, Caregiver SOS wants to recognize and honor all of the work that family caregivers are doing. The Teleconnection program will take a lead in honoring caregivers throughout the month of November by offering a new program called “Dear Lucy”. “Dear Lucy” is Lucy Barylak, MSW, who is a respected expert in working with caregivers and is a great resource in finding the answers you need.

We want to hear what you have to say! It is a chance for you to ask questions, make comments, and express yourself regarding the issues you face as a caregiver. It is as easy as 1, 2, 3...

1. Identify any questions, thoughts and ideas you have about your caregiving role or experience
2. Submit your questions, thoughts and ideas to **caregiverteleconnection@wellmed.net** or **866-390-6491**
3. Call in to hear “Dear Lucy” answer your questions or discuss the topics you submitted. To honor confidentiality, no names will be used.

Please remember that no question or idea is too small! So let's hear what you have to say. You never know, what you have to share may make a difference in someone else's life as well.

To register please call:

(866) 390-6491 Toll Free

Email:

caregiverteleconnection@wellmed.net



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Holiday Survival Tips for Families Coping with Alzheimer's



The holidays are just around the corner. Families are gathering for Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, and Christmas, sharing laughter and happy memories. But for families coping with Alzheimer's, the holidays can be bittersweet times, filled with stress and frustration. Festivities can agitate, confuse, and over stimulate persons with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Meanwhile, caregivers can feel anxious, frustrated, and lonely – leading to stress and depression. Join the Alzheimer's Association for Holiday Survival Tips for families coping with Alzheimer's.

Tuesday, November 14th at 10 a.m.

Stoughton Hospital

900 Ridge Street, Stoughton

Bryant Health Education Center (lower level)

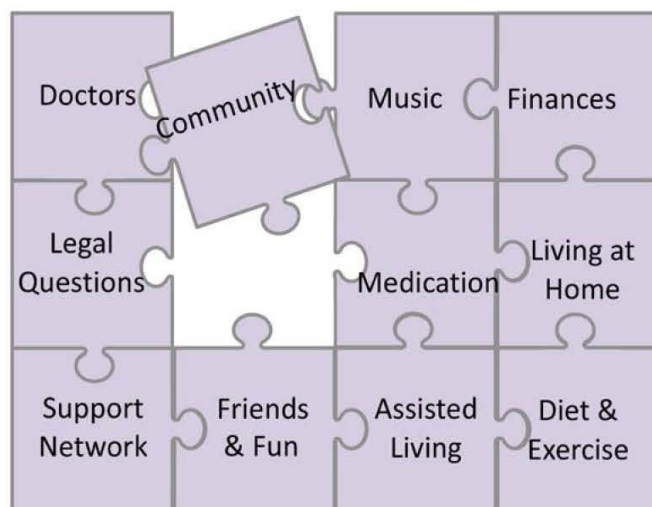
Sponsored by the Stoughton Dementia Friendly Coalition & Partners

alzheimer's association®
THE BRAINS BEHIND SAVING YOURS.™

Stoughton Hospital
Trusted care. Close to home.

Living Well with Dementia

Free Community Resource Fair Organized by Dementia Friendly Middleton



**Sunday, Nov. 19, 2017
12:00 - 5:30 PM
Middleton Performing
Arts Center
2100 Bristol St., Middleton**

Keynote Presentation

**12:30 - Aging Together:
Dementia, Friendship, & Flourishing
Communities**



Susan H. McFadden, Ph.D., is Professor Emerita of Psychology at UW Oshkosh. In 2011, Susan co-founded the **Fox Valley Memory Project** which aims to create a dementia-friendly northeast Wisconsin. She has been a TimeSlips trainer for many years, and volunteers at a local memory café.

Resource Fair

Advocates * Attorneys * Bank & Financial Advisors * Home Health Services * Care Communities * ADRC * Alzheimer's Association * Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance of WI & more!

Panel Discussions

1:15 - Doctoring Well

Dr. Nathaniel A. Chin, WI Alzheimer's Disease Research Center * **Jane Ellen Donovan**, community member * **Jesi Hirsch**, RN, Patient Advocate * **Dr. Lara Salyer**, DO Functional Medicine * **Patricia Wilson**, Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance of WI

2:15 - Being Active & Independent

Paulette Glunn, Northwest Dane Senior Services * **Lynn Holly**, community member and caregiver * **Bonnie Nuttkinson**, Alzheimer's Assoc. * **Maureen Oostdik**, Stephen Ministry Leader, St. Luke's * **Jill Schonenberger**, Middleton Senior Center



3:15 - The Care Continuum

Marion Chapin, Senior Helpers * **Kelly Dubois**, Attic Angel * **Angelo Johnson**, Heartland Hospice * **Jennifer Krause**, Heritage Senior Living * **Tracie Tooley**, Interim Healthcare

4:15 - Legal & Financial Planning

Dan Chippeaux, LJP Financial Services * **Tim Horkan**, US Bank * **Dera Johnsen-Tracy**, Horn & Johnsen SC * **Abigail Musselman**, Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Dane County


Contact: Stacy Austin-Li, dfccmiddleton@gmail.com or 608-515-8663
<https://tinyurl.com/dementia-friendly-middleton>




Caregiving Around the Clock

The theme for National Family Caregivers Month November 2017 is
"Caregiving Around the Clock"


Caregiving can be a 24-hours a day/7-days a week job. Caring for a senior with Alzheimer's or a child with special needs can be non-stop. Providing care around the clock can crowd out other important areas of life. And you never know when you will need to rush to the hospital or leave work at the drop of a hat. What challenges do family caregivers face, and how do they manage them day and night?




Morning: Getting off to work. The average family caregiver is a working mother of school-aged children. Mornings become a tricky balancing act of getting the kids ready for school, making sure your loved one has what they need for the day before getting yourself out the door for work.




All Day Long: Managing medications. Up to 70% of the time, the family caregiver – not the patient – manages the medications. The more serious the condition, the more likely it is that the family caregiver manages the medications for the patient. This means ensuring your loved one is taking their medication correctly and maintaining an up-to-date medication list.




During the Workday: Juggling caregiving and work. Six out of 10 family caregivers work full- or part-time in addition to juggling their caregiving responsibilities at home. And most of them say they have to cut back on working hours, take a leave of absence, or quit their job entirely.



Evening: Family time and meal time. Ensuring that you get proper nutrition will help you maintain strength, energy, stamina, and a positive attitude. Nutrition is as important for you as the caregiver as it for your loved one. Caregiving affects the whole family.



Late at Night: Taking time for yourself. Late at night might be the only time you get a few minutes for yourself. Make sure you take time to rest and recharge. The chance to take a breather and re-energize is vital in order for you to be as good a caregiver tomorrow as you were today.



The Middle of the Night: Emergency room visits. Have you ever had to take your loved one to the emergency room in the middle of the night? Be prepared ahead of time with what you need to know and what you need to have with you.

During **National Family Caregivers Month**,
we recognize the challenges family caregivers face when their loved ones need

Caregiving Around the Clock!

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See live links on page 11.

Morning: [Getting off to work.](#)

All Day Long: [Managing medications.](#)

During the Workday: [Juggling caregiving and work.](#)

Evening: [Family and meal time.](#)

Late at Night: [Taking time for yourself.](#)

[Rest and Recharge.](#)

The Middle of the Night: [Emergency room visits.](#)

[Be prepared.](#)



Winter Falls Prevention Tips

With winter comes sleet, snow, and ice, and many reports of people falling as a result of winter weather. These falls can be serious, leading to long-term health problems and time away from work and other activities. Here are a few tips to stay safe from falls in winter weather:



- Wear proper foot gear with good traction. Consider boots made of non-slip rubber or neoprene, or wear ice cleats on your shoes for icy conditions.
- Take smaller steps when walking. Walking like a penguin-- flat-footed, short steps pointing your feet out slightly-- helps spread your body weight and maintain your balance.
- Keep your hands free. Wear gloves so you can keep your hands out of your pockets to help you balance. Avoid carrying heavy loads or children that may cause you to become off balance.
- Test out potentially slick areas by tapping your foot on them first. If you must walk up or down hill, consider walking along its grassy edge for better traction.
- Be extra careful when getting in or out of your car. Hold on to your door or car as you get out to give you extra support.
- Remove snow immediately. Keep your steps, walks and driveways free of ice by frequently applying ice melting granules. This prevents formation of dangerous ice patches.
- Check out falls prevention classes in your community to help you improve your balance and strength to avoid falls.

From *News You Can Use*, Public Health Madison & Dane County

Caring for the Caregiver Program

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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

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