

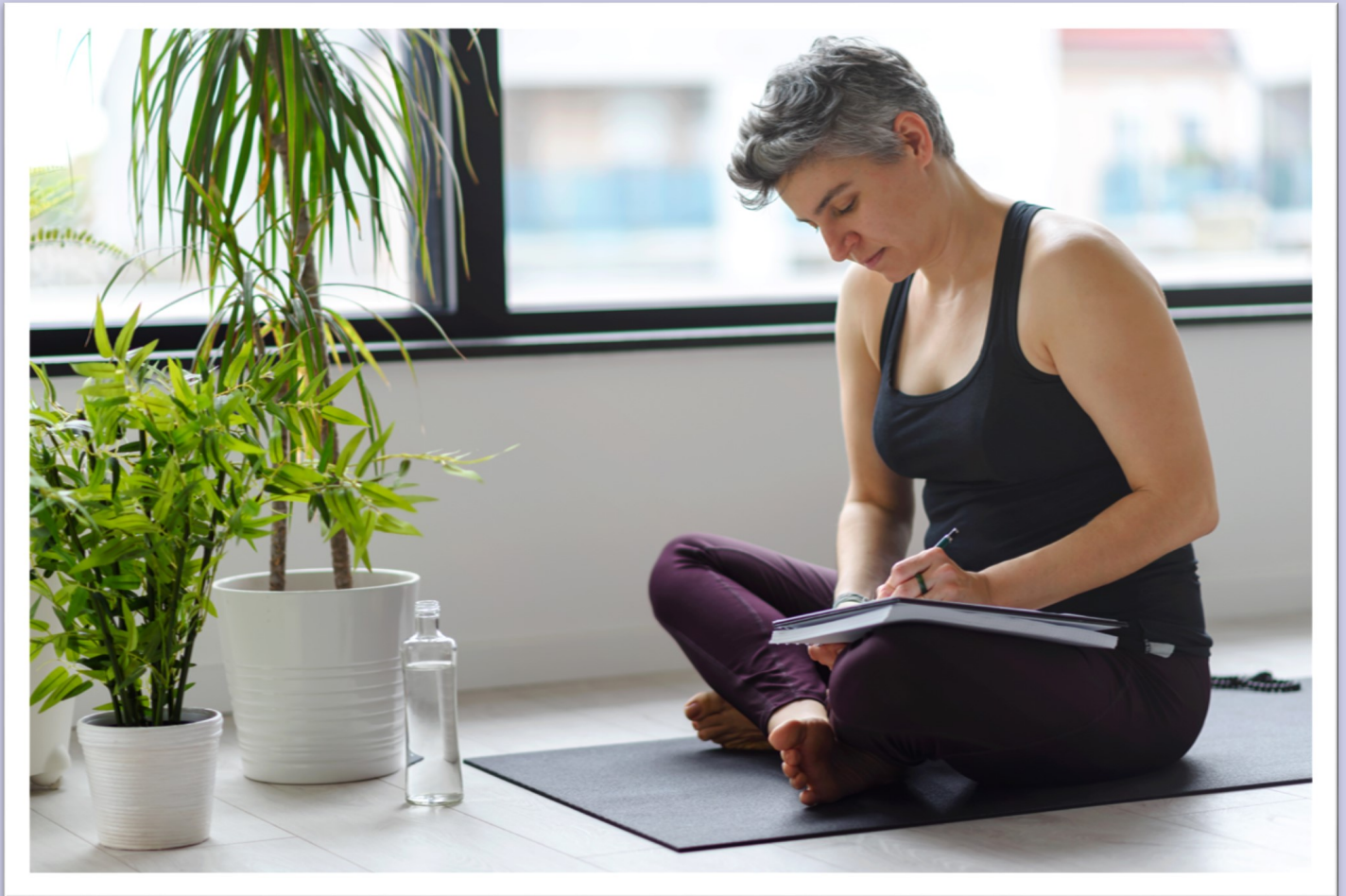
Caregiver Chronicles

January 2020



Caring for Caregivers

AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF DANE COUNTY
2865 N SHERMAN AVE, MADISON, WI 53704
608-261-9930
[HTTPS://AAA.DCDHS.COM/](https://aaa.dcdhs.com/)



One of the greatest tragedies in life is to lose your own sense of self and accept the version of you that is expected by everyone else.

K.L. Toth, Author

Happy New Decade!

This New Year we say goodbye to a whole decade and move forward into the 2020s. It seems appropriate to take stock and think about how we want to proceed moving forward. In this issue's feature article, "Skip the Resolutions and Set New Year's Goals" (page 3), I suggest that caregivers chuck the resolutions (the word resolution itself means finding an answer once and for all by solving a problem) and aim for the enjoyable, helpful, and even peaceful in manageable steps. Caregiver Specialist Jane Mahoney's article, "Caregivers Have Rights, Too!" (page 6) also provides encouragement to turn some attention to self-care and to involve yourself in your own life. By acknowledging that for some caregivers the commitment is the equivalent of another job, the necessity for respite or vacation becomes clear. Once clear needs are identified, it is much easier to implement the appropriate resources to address them.

The Dane County Caregiver Program has goals for 2020 as well. The Dane County Caregiver Alliance, comprised of professionals who have direct interest in supporting caregivers, is in the process of creating materials to help caregivers with planning for themselves and their care partners. The Caregiver Program also has a commitment to beefing up general educational offerings for caregivers with new options coming online later this year.

In addition to programming in the works, *Caregiver Chronicles* will feature more articles to educate caregivers on a variety of topics. This month Dane County Dementia Care Specialist Joy Schmidt shares "Helpful Tools for People Living with Memory Loss" (pages 4 – 5). MIPPA (Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act) Program Specialist Leilani Amundson writes a regular "Monthly MIPPA Moment" with important information on cost-saving benefits and preventive services. This month, she explains the *yearly wellness visit* available to individuals on Medicare who are enrolled in Part B (page 7). And, if you haven't tried them before, consider a free Caregiver Teleconnection Learning Session (page 8). If the live timing doesn't work for you, you can access sessions on the website on demand.

Other resources for caregiver education include the *Powerful Tools for Caregivers* class series beginning on January 16 in Stoughton (page 9), and a free training for guardians in March (page 11). For those who want a more expansive opportunity to support people with dementia, the upcoming "Train the Trainer" course teaches volunteers to help others engage with and effectively serve individuals with dementia (page 10).

Last, but not least, mark your calendar for the 5th Annual Dementia Friendly Breakfast with special guest, Kathy Evers, The First Lady of Wisconsin (page 10).

For more information on caregiver education, support, and resources, please contact me via phone or email (in the signature below). It is a busy time of year for the program, but you will receive a response to address your needs. Happy New Year to All!

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

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



Caring for Caregivers

608-261-5679
debroux.jane@countyofdane.com

Skip the Resolutions and Set New Year's Goals

Most New Year's resolutions are discarded pretty quickly. Studies have shown that less than 25% of people remain committed after 30 days. Yet there is value in setting goals to make things work more smoothly and to be sure you are living in a way that is true to yourself rather than always fulfilling the needs and expectations of others.

This year, I encourage caregivers (myself included) to begin by taking some time to think about the quote from the cover of this issue before setting New Year's goals. Caregiving is a role often defined by the expectations of other people – the person you're caring for; other family members and friends; and medical, legal, and human services professionals. Take a little time to focus on your needs and what you might like to bring into your life as you look ahead to a new year and a new decade. Think about how you can practice self-kindness, open yourself to new solutions as the caregiving landscape changes for you, and reach out for help when you need it.

A list of goals might include:

Committing to something enjoyable

This could be anything from scheduling a daily walk or setting aside time to read a good book to taking on a fun project like learning to knit, recreating a dish from your favorite cooking show, playing an instrument, or setting up a regular lunch date. If you also need to widen your social circle you can accomplish both by taking it a step further. Join a knitting circle, book group, cooking class, local chorus, or a pickle ball, golf, or bowling league. Commit to one thing and schedule it. Carving out time that feels good and reflects your authentic self is critical to your health and well-being.

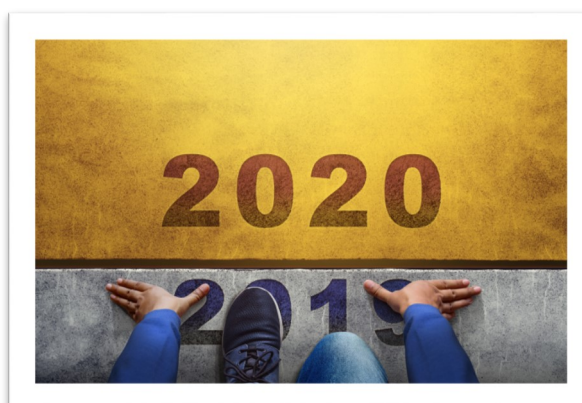
Delegating and asking for help

Delegating and asking for help ensures that you can keep your commitment to doing something for yourself. Can someone visit with your care partner while you attend your class, group, or practice? Is there a family member, friend, or neighbor who wouldn't mind regularly taking over a chore that would free up some time for you? If there isn't anyone who comes to mind, brainstorm with professionals at local resources to see what's available. Contact the Dane County Caregiver Program, the ADRC, or your local senior center or coalition for programs and referrals.

Planning for your Care Partner's future

There may come a day when you are no longer able to provide care due to your own limitations or because your care partner's needs are too advanced to handle. Research available options knowing that doing so can save time and stress in the future and can bring peace of mind now. And, difficult as it may be, determine who would provide care if anything interfered with your ability to do so. Designate that person as the alternate to care for your loved one in your will. Contact the Dane County Caregiver Program and the ADRC for assistance and referrals.

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



Helpful Tools for People Living with Memory Loss

As we say in our field, “If you’ve met one person with dementia, you’ve met ONE person with dementia.” Everyone is unique, and this is no different for people living with dementia. One thing that I have found helpful over the years in caring for people with memory loss is that we have to be creative and open-minded to new ideas. When a new challenge arises, we may need to “throw away” the box rather than just “think outside of it.”

We must consider who a person with memory loss has been in the past and what their challenges are now. Maybe they aren’t able to recognize what is happening and we need to problem-solve for them. It could be they are forgetting the day of the week and what is happening today so they repeat themselves because they forgot the answer. We can continue to respond in the same kind, compassionate way we have been or we can acknowledge they worry that they will miss something and reassure them we will help them get there on time. We might purchase items that help this person including a white board for recording the date and daily activities and place it on the refrigerator. Similarly helpful items available for purchase include a clock that shows the date and day of the week in large, bold numbers and letters.

Another issue for people with memory loss is feeling anxious. They feel soothed by our reassurance but also can be helped further with activities that provide stimulation or comfort. Some of these items include therapy dolls that smell and feel almost like a real baby in weight and size. I have found these can comfort people from early- to late-stage dementia, depending on the individual. Many times, it is the family members that struggle more with this as Mom was not one to carry dolls and they worry about her dignity. I understand and agree that we need to remember this person is an adult that should not be treated like a child, but there also comes a time when comfort measures become necessary. I believe therapy dolls, for those who find comfort in them, are just the thing. There are also busy muffs and blankets and sensory objects that can help a person with memory loss remain calm and comforted.

(continued on page 5)



Assistive devices for people with memory loss include special reminder clocks, alarms, and special dolls and toys to provide comfort and purpose.

(continued from page 4)

In addition to comfort and calm we need to think about keeping our family members with memory loss safe and there may be items you haven't learned about or considered. There are door alarms, bed alarms, bed rails, GPS devices, and more. One caregiver found placing tape on the floor helped her husband find the bathroom; another found a simple device for the toilet that decreased her husband's behavior of flushing the toilet repeatedly. If you are caring for a loved one with dementia, consider reaching out to the Aging & Disability Resource Center of Dane County and the Dementia Care Specialist to talk about your specific situation and what tools there might be to help.

Anxiety and worry is routine for those living with dementia and memory loss. Our goal is to help those living with dementia feel safe and understood and those caring for them to find joy and peace in knowing they are providing the best they can. **Contact the ADRC at 608-240-7400 if you would like to learn more.**

—Joy Schmidt, Dementia Care Specialist
ADRC of Dane County

Caregivers for people with Alzheimer's or dementia can apply for a Dane County Caring for Caregivers Grant to help pay for assistive devices including therapy dolls and toys. Contact Jane De Broux to learn more at 608-240-7400 or debroux.jane@countyofdane.com.

ARTS MEMORY CAFÉ

Don't let memory challenges prevent you from enjoying life



What is a Memory Café?

A Memory Café is a social gathering place where individuals with memory loss, mild cognitive impairment, early Alzheimer's, or other dementias, can come together with family and friends in a relaxed environment to visit, share common interests, and enjoy refreshments.

The Arts Memory Café meets monthly offering unique arts-related programs that are stimulating and fun. There is no cost to attend the Memory Café. To participate call ahead for more information or just come! If assistance is needed, please have someone accompany you.

Third Thursday of each month

Start date: January 17, 2019

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Madison Museum of Contemporary Art

Education Room

227 State St., Madison

Contact Dementia Outreach Specialist Noreen Kralapp for more information at 608.661.0463 or noreen.kralapp@alzisc.org.



alzisc.org • 888.308.6251

Offered in partnership with:



Caregivers Have Rights, Too!

It happens gradually. She needs a little help balancing the checkbook and there are bills on the counter not getting paid. The layer of ice on roads and sidewalks leaves you nervous about a fall so you stop for her groceries and accompany her to appointments. You notice that her floors are dirty and there is a laundry basket of clothes waiting to be washed. You do more and more for her and soon find yourself making daily phone calls or visits to help. Without making a conscious decision to do so, you have become a caregiver. Your mother could not live at home alone without your help.

The next things you notice involve your own life. When was the last time I had lunch with my friends? When did I start eating fast food so often? I love going for walks, but how long has it been? And, why do I feel so grumpy, angry, and frustrated? The answers are enmeshed with the new “job” that you didn’t realize you had.

Caregiving is like another job. You may choose to do it and truly want to do it. But when you put your own life and needs on the backburner you can run into trouble. Caregiving can consume your time, thoughts, and energy and it can chip away at your physical and emotional health. But don’t dismay, you can be a healthy caregiver! You have rights as a caregiver and acknowledging and adopting them will keep you healthy and allow you to better provide care to your loved one, too.

If you are a caregiver, please know that you have the right to:

- Take care of yourself without any feelings of guilt.
- Continue having a life of your own—one that does not include your role as a caregiver. Make it a priority to keep doing things you love knowing that you are also doing all you can for your care partner.
- Feel and express the strong emotions that caregiving produces. It is normal to feel anger, fear, loss and depression. Acknowledge these feelings and find someone to talk to about them.
- Refuse feelings of guilt that may be put upon you by your care partner or others. Do not allow yourself to be manipulated by guilt or other negative feelings.
- Accept the positive feelings—appreciation, love, forgiveness, gratitude—bestowed on you by your care partner and others who see your difficult task. Caregiving is hard work and you should feel happy and proud of what you’re doing.
- Seek help from others, whether from friends and relatives or paid help. No one can do it all. Accept help in order to maintain your own life and individuality. *You will need this life to return to when your days of being a caregiver ends.*

If you need help finding resources for home care services, support groups, or other caregiving issues please contact Jane De Broux at the Dane County Caring for Caregivers Program.

—Jane Mahoney, Older American’s Act Consultant–Caregiver Support Specialist
Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources



Monthly MIPPA Moment: New Year, New Wellness Exam

MIPPA (Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act) has a goal of educating older adults on Medicare's cost-saving benefits & preventive services.

If you're new to Medicare, a *Welcome to Medicare* preventive visit is covered during the first 12 months you are enrolled in Part B. The visit includes a review of your history as well as education and counseling on preventive services including certain screenings, shots, and referrals for other care if needed. However, if you've had Part B for longer than 12 months, you can get a yearly *wellness visit* to develop or update a personalized prevention plan based on your current health and risk factors.

You should pay nothing for the *Welcome to Medicare* visit and the yearly *wellness visit* if your doctor or other health care provider accepts Medicare assignment. If additional tests or services are performed during the same visit that aren't covered under the preventive benefit, you may have to pay a coinsurance and the Part B deductible may apply. It is important to note the yearly *wellness visit* is not the same as a physical. Medicare does not cover a routine annual physical.

The yearly *wellness visit* can also include a cognitive impairment assessment to rule out signs of Alzheimer's disease or other dementia disorders, reducing risks and increasing quality of life by addressing symptoms early. You can help fight Alzheimer's disease with a screening!

For information on Preventive Services call MIPPA Program Specialist Leilani Amundson at 608-240-7458.



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

Open 7:45 am—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



www.caregiverteleconnection.org



Date	Time	Topic	A LEADING VOICE FOR CAREGIVERS
Tuesday, January 7th	1:00 pm Eastern 12:00 pm Central 11:00 am Mountain 10:00 am Pacific	Boundaries In Caregiving: Preventing & Avoiding The Martyr Syndrome with Jennifer L. Fitzpatrick, MSW, LCSW-C, CSP <i>Despite their good intentions, many caregivers unintentionally take on too much, putting their own health and well-being at risk. When caregivers develop "the martyr syndrome" and are reluctant to look for or accept help, the consequences can be devastating. Join us for this interactive discussion on how to set limits in caregiving while still providing excellent care for your loved one.</i>	
Monday, January 13th	1:00 pm Eastern 12:00 pm Central 11:00 am Mountain 10:00 am Pacific	Safeguarding a Digital Estate: What Caregivers and Older Adults Need to Know with Tena J Burrell <i>Cyber-attacks are launched at us every day. How do you know if you or your care receiver has been "hacked?" Learn five ways to boost your security against ID and credit card theft. **Sponsored by the North Central Texas Caregiver Teleconnection**</i>	
Tuesday, January 14th	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	Entendiendo la demencia con Nestor H. Praderio <i>Una descripción general de los síntomas clave de este síndrome. Aprenda sobre los tipos y causas de la demencia. Comparta su reacción inicial al diagnóstico y cómo se está adaptando al papel exigente de un cuidador.</i>	
Wednesday, January 22nd	12:00 pm Eastern 11:00 am Central 10:00 am Mountain 9:00 am Pacific	Experience Conscious Breathing with Dr. Cynthia Hazel <i>Did You Know - Breathing is the only autonomous bodily system that you can control. Psychologists say that conscious breathing is effective for the reduction of anxiety, depression, and stress. In this session you will learn about the ins and outs of conscious breathing and its stress reduction properties. You will be guided through a conscious breathing exercise.</i>	



A program of the WellMed Charitable Foundation

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



I don't think of myself as a caregiver.

I'm his daughter. He needs me. And because he needs me, I know I need to take care of myself. Powerful Tools helped me do that.

There's a Powerful Tools for Caregivers workshop starting soon near you!

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is Coming to Stoughton!

Thursdays

**January 16 - February 20, 2020
1:00PM - 3:30PM**

**Stoughton Hospital
East Conference Rm.
900 Ridge Street
Stoughton, WI 53589**

Cost: \$25; includes snacks and book

To register call: 608-235-8426



Caregiving is rewarding.

But it can be challenging too.

Caring for someone with an injury or illness — such as dementia, cancer, heart disease, Parkinson's disease, stroke or others — can be physically, emotionally and financially demanding.

Taking care of yourself is important.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers (PTC) can show you the way!

What is Powerful Tools for Caregivers? And why should I take it?

Powerful Tools focuses on **your** well-being. The class meets once a week for six weeks and has been studied and shown to help family caregivers:

- Reduce stress, guilt, anger, and depression and improve emotional well-being
- Manage time, set goals, and solve problems
- Master caregiving transitions and be part of decision-making
- Communicate effectively with the person needing care, family members, doctors, and other helpers
- Find and use community resources





alzheimer's 
association™



Dementia Friendly | Train the Trainer Course

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9TH, 2020 | 9 AM – 11 AM
Aging & Disability Resource Center of Dane County
2865 N. Sherman Avenue, Madison, WI 53704



**LIMITED
SLOTS ONLY**

Reserve Your Spot NOW!

We appreciate your commitment as a volunteer trainer in your community and as a Dementia Friendly Champion spreading this initiative. Get equipped to train others how to engage with and respond effectively when serving individuals living With **dementia** and their families.

PRESENTER



Joy Schmidt
Dementia Care Specialist
ADRC of Dane County

Email schmidt.joy@countyofdane.com to register

SAVE THE DATE; PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS



5TH ANNUAL DEMENTIA FRIENDLY BREAKFAST



Wednesday, February 12th, 2020 | 8:30 - 10:30 AM
Tennyson Senior Living | 1936 Tennyson Ln, Madison, WI 53704



The First Lady of Wisconsin
Mrs. Kathy Evers



This is to celebrate the achievements accomplished during 2019 and to present the Dementia Friendly Impact Report.



Save the Date

March 10, 2020 -
GUARDIANSHIP TRAINING

Are you currently a guardian? Do you work with individuals who are under guardianship? Then this **FREE** training is for you!

Alliant Energy Center 8:00am-11:30am
1919 Alliant Energy Center Way
Madison, Wisconsin

Coffee will be provided.

Sponsored by, Dane County Department of Human
Services Adult Protective Services



Caring for the Caregiver Program

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Save paper and reduce postage costs

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

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