

Eldercare Answers

March 2009



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It's the time of year families start to plan their vacations. A stumbling block for many families is what to do about Grandma when she seems to need more and more attention and care.

These questions spring up especially if there has been a change of status in the past year and the adult children have had to increase their level of attention and care to the aging family member.

Having a healthy balance in life means it is important to focus on the activities and events that give your life meaning while you are caring for another. That back packing trip you have been planning in the Rockies for the past three years, or that high school reunion on the East Coast that you have been counting on attending, don't have to be taken off the calendar. It is actually important for you to care for yourself by attending special events or sticking to your vacation plans when caring for or overseeing an elder's care. If you do balance caregiving with self-care, you are less likely to suffer from frustration, depression or burn-out.

Aging Family Responsibilities & Vacation Planning

As Geriatric Care Managers we often hear family members who are going on vacation say they feel guilty when they go off to have fun and leave their elder behind. We often hear, "How can I go away when Mom needs me?" or "There is no one else she trusts." My reply is, if you don't care for yourself, just like a battery needing to be recharged, you will run out of energy, feel resentment and care out of obligation, frustration or anger, instead of from a place of love.

If the elder is frail and will be left at home, we recommend a system of checks and balances be set in place. Professional Geriatric Care Managers often act as substitute family when the adult child is traveling and can provide the peace of mind that both the adult child and elder may need for the "what if's of longer lives". At Eldercare Services, we provide short-term Care Management when family is out of town – checking on the elder, providing personal assistants for care as needed and assuring a skilled professional response 24/7 to any emergency.

When one of our clients needs oversight, we alert all of the

professionals on our team. Depending on the client and family's needs, we can either contact the family or act in their absence, as planned before the trip, if there is a crisis. Often families use us for 24/7 live-in care for a parent while they are gone, sometimes with a weekly check-in by a Care Manager if needed.

Travel can be fun, renewing and, if vacations have been part of your life for years, it can be crucial to survival as the caregiver. If this is a value of yours, keep it in your life knowing there are support resources in the community, such as Eldercare Services, to oversee your parent and give you peace of mind.

If you or someone you know can benefit from our services please call us toll free at 866-766-1808

Vacation Check List

1. Practice self-care— keep your plans
2. Decide if your parent(s) will join you
3. Contact a Professional Geriatric Care Manager to help you plan care while you are away



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Walnut Creek, CA 94595



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Community Classes

Walnut Creek

Caring for an Aging Family Member

Friday, March 13, 2009 from 9 AM to 3PM

Preparing for the Elder Care Journey

Saturday, March 28, 2009 from 9:20 AM to Noon

Dementia– In the Thick of It

Friday, April 17, 2009 from 9 to 11:30 AM

Families Dealing with Dementia

Friday, May 15, 2009 from 9 AM to Noon

Dementia– Middle of the Road

Tuesday, June 16, 2009 from 6 to 8:30 PM

Class Registration: Please call at least 3 days ahead

Support Groups

When concerns for aging family members are part of every day life, or when they interfere with work, your health or other relationships, you need to join a support group.

Caring for An Aging Family Member

2nd Thursday of every month from 7 to 8:30 PM

1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595

1st Tuesday of every month from 6 to 7:30 PM

605 A Chenery St., San Francisco, CA 94131

Cost for Support Groups and Classes: None

Support Group Registration: Not required

For more information regarding classes and support groups, please call (925) 937-2018, (415) 469-8300 or email us at

info@EldercareAnswers.com

Eldercare Services has offices in Marin, San Francisco and Walnut Creek, CA.

Visit us on the web at <http://www.EldercareAnswers.com> for more information.