



November 2012

Holidays: Is this the time to bring in Home Care?

The shopping has started, recipes are being exchanged, party invitations have been sent and plane reservations were made to visit your son at college for Christmas. The phone rings and it is your 81 year old Dad, exhausted from caring for Mom, who has dementia - and it is a week before Thanksgiving!



Linda Fodrin-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC, is the Founder and Executive Director of Eldercare Services and is a Fellow and a Past President of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care

“Yikes” you say to yourself – not now, can’t we wait until after the holidays to deal with this? Yet, someplace in your heart and soul you know that if you don’t help Dad now, you will have two parents who need help.

We are all distracted at this time of the year with its joys, celebrations and opportunities to connect with those we have had so little time for most of the year. But, with about 25% of all Americans caring in some way for aging family members, we realize that we are on-call for that crisis, even during the holidays. Of course, it is something we have not planned for or envisioned and we realize that we don’t get to choose the timing.

As home care services providers, we often get more calls over the holidays because out of town children see that their parents need more support. Or the spouse, who is the primary caregiver, wants to enjoy some holiday time with friends or family and needs respite care for a partner that requires oversight and/or direct care.

The call is usually asking for “Mary Poppins” and yes, we have her, and we have “Superman” and “Wonder Woman,” too - but often they are on assignment or have taken the holidays off to visit family in another area. At Eldercare Services, we will do everything we can to make a match based on skills and interests of both parties – but it can be more challenging when these lovely care providers are also pulled between work and family celebrations. The magic

that happens in our care staffing team during the holidays amazes me – we see their “extra heart,” - trying to ensure that the clients have the best holidays possible and good care at the same time.

I often hear from families, “We were waiting until January because we know there is a shortage and we only want someone trained and skilled for Mom.” But, at Eldercare Services we make every effort to hire only those we would place with our own parents – every time! And we provide the professional support to assure the best fit.

It makes a lot of sense to start caregiving / home care at this time, especially for spousal caregivers – because there are more social invitations. Spouses, you can use this as your reason for bringing in “Peter” or “Naomi” to sit with your partner for a while when you are gone. This is the beginning of relationship building with the caregiver and once the holidays are over, you can continue with a few hours twice a week and extend the hours gradually, as needed.

Likewise, many adult children give their parent the gift of a “Personal Assistant” to help around the house, wrap those gifts, and assist with the cooking or run errands once or twice a week. Because a good match was made and we have Professional Care Managers, both add to the overall quality of life and to a reduction in stress for everyone by assisting with a

strategy for success: the goals of more healthy meals, exercise, medications being taken on time and/or appointments kept with medical providers.

I have created a list called “Visiting Aging Parents during the Holidays” that will give you more tips to help in your conversation and observation of your parents over the holidays. For a copy, please email or call our office at Info@EldercareAnswers.com or (866) 760-1808 and we will get it to you right away.

“Expertise Matters!” The professionals at Eldercare Services are skilled at helping families find the right amount of care and finding ways to introduce help so that care that is necessary is also successful. We are connected to like professionals all over the country, so if you are visiting parents on the East Coast or the Pacific Northwest, we are more than happy to connect you to someone we know who has the same level of expertise in making the Holidays peaceful, even when in-home care is needed.

I continue to find great joy in empowering individuals to live in the moment and share the care. May you and your family find peace in the Season and may all of us be thankful for the many blessings we have and for the extra support when it is needed.

Eldercare Services provides Counseling, Support Groups, Home Care and Care Management to aid Family Caregivers. If you or someone you know could benefit from time off or self-care, give us a call at (866) 760-1808 or email us at Info@EldercareAnswers.com.

National Memory Screening Day

Eldercare Services is participating in National Memory Screening Day on Tuesday, November 13, 2012 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm in Walnut Creek and San Francisco. To make an appointment or for more information, please call our office, toll-free at (866) 760-1808 or email Info@EldercareAnswers.com.

Eldercare Services works with Seniors and their families in Walnut Creek, Alameda County, San Francisco, Marin County and the Tri-Valley, CA.

Visit us on the web at www.EldercareAnswers.com for more information.

Community Classes

Walnut Creek

What You Wanted to Know About Dementia But Were Afraid to Ask

3rd Friday of every month from 10 AM to Noon

1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595

Cost for Classes: None

Class Registration:

Please call at least 3 days ahead

For more information regarding classes and support groups, visit us at www.EldercareAnswers.com or call (925) 937-2018 or email us at Info@EldercareAnswers.com

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: None

Support Group Registration: Not required

More Info: (925) 937-2018 or (415) 469-8300



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