

Eldercare Answers

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The Power of Gratitude - What Are You Grateful For?



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Someone recently sent me a note that said, "There are no words to express my gratitude" and I began to think how true that sentiment is at certain times. I remember writing these same words to others as well.

With the tragedies in Boston and Texas and most recently in Oklahoma, we saw so many heroes that deserve our feelings of gratitude. Those of us who could only watch from a distance wished that we could convey our gratitude, but we struggled to find a way other than just thinking: "Thank you for being there to give your hands and hearts to those in need."

What is an "Attitude of Gratitude?" I believe it is being thankful every day for whatever blessings are in our lives and then lifting them up in a positive way – perhaps through prayer or just "mindfulness."

Possessing this Attitude of Gratitude is actually a gift you give to yourself because when you are always thankful for something – even on those hard days- gratitude diminishes the power of the negative in your life.

I sometimes find myself wondering why I said "yes" to something since it was an added stress. But after the event or action, I am actually grateful for having the experience of meeting new people or stretching myself to learn something new to share with

others. If there is one gift I possess that gives me the most pleasure, it is the ability to empower others with information that increases their quality of life and reduces their stress.

I am pleased to have chosen a career that gives me this opportunity when I am counseling, doing Care Management or providing family education. However, with our gratefulness or a simple "Thank You!," all of us can extend ourselves in little ways that can really turn a day around for a stranger, friend or family member. All of this adds to an Attitude of Gratitude.

Years ago, I read a book called *Sleeping with Bread: Holding What Gives You Life*, (Linn, Fabricant and Linn) that started with a story of children during World War II in England. These children who were found in the streets and brought into shelters after the bombings were given a loaf of bread in their arms and they slept better. The bread gave them something to be grateful for instead of feeling the fear of the unknown. It provided a balance that, even in the midst of such chaos, there could be something to be thankful for.

For some of my clients dealing with various anxieties, I have suggested that, before going to bed each evening, they think about something they were grateful for as well as something that was a negative about their day (if we are honest, every day has both). Sometimes the good is as small as a cup of great coffee and as bad as a bad cup of coffee. Some days

can seem so dark (such as when dealing with pain or the stresses of caregiving) and we struggle to find the positive. Likewise, some days are so pleasant it is hard to find the negative.

An evening ritual, when done faithfully, helps us gain a better perspective on life. When we are in challenging places, it forces us to stretch, to see that flower blooming or the baby smiling and to know that every day has its ups and downs. Visualize something positive just before sleep and this practice will change your life and health for the good.

So, when I say there are no words to express my gratitude to you, it means the feeling is so deep and coming from a place so special in the depth of my being that I hope it reaches into your heart with a touch that has no words – but puts a smile on your heart.

I end with a "Thank You!" for being our clients, our professional partners or our community leaders. Together we can change the world to be a better place with just a few small words of kindness and a grateful spirit.



**Attention!
Bay Area Family
Caregivers**

Upcoming Event in
San Francisco at
The
Commonwealth
Club.

Eldercare Services Founder, Linda
Fodrine-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC, will
give a talk on *The Elephant in the Room:
Difficult Conversations We All Should
Have*

More Info and to register:
<http://tinyurl.com/pspgmln>



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

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

Community Classes

Walnut Creek

**Alzheimer's: 101 & Alzheimer's: 102
For Families Experiencing the Challenge**

**3rd Friday of every month from 10 AM to Noon
(Class topic alternates monthly)**

1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595

Cost for Classes:

\$10 per person/\$15 per couple or 2nd family member

Proceeds to benefit the Alzheimer's Association

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 Thursday of every month from 5:15 to 6:45 PM

Glen Park Library, 2825 Diamond St., **San Francisco**

Cost for Support Groups: None

Support Group Registration: Not required

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



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