



**Eldercare  
Services**

EXPERTISE MATTERS

Accredited by The Joint Commission



# January 2015

## NEWSLETTER

### ABOUT OUR FOUNDER

Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC, is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She has been a Professional Care Manager since 1984. She founded Eldercare Services in Walnut Creek, California in 1989. Now a full-service care management company that employs highly-skilled Professional Care Managers and over 250 employees, Eldercare Services has been providing Bay Area families with Care Management, Home Care Services, advocacy, counseling, support groups and education for over 25 years.

*Linda Fodrini-Johnson*  
MA, MFT, CMC  
Founder &  
Executive Director



## Marriage Survival: 6 Tips for the Caregiving Spouse

Caring is a gift of love, obligation or default because there is no one to share the care. With family care often also comes exhaustion, frustration, anger, depression, or disappointment at the same time as loving concern.

In our wedding vows, most of us promised to care for our partner in sickness and in health. The legal system has mandates for spouses to care for an ill spouse as well. So, the question is "How do I provide all the care my partner needs without burning out?"

Today, we are living longer lives and the good news is that men are living longer, too. As a result, many more couples are living into their 90's together with one helping the other or both helping each other.

Here are six tips for providing care for both the ill spouse and yourself.

1. Promise to "share the care." That means asking for specific help from family or friends. Don't just say I need help...Be specific in what you need. For instance, "Can you sit with Fred while I go to lunch with my friend?" or "Can you kids spend the weekend with mom so I can go fishing with the boys?"
2. Promise to do one "self-care" renewing activity for yourself each day. Devote an hour to reading your favorite novel, an hour at the gym, getting a massage, or buying yourself flowers. You pick the activity but at the end of each day recall what you did for renewal.
3. Learn to do "mindfulness" activities. These are things that allow you to be in the moment and not worry. Breathing exercises, meditation, prayer, yoga, and walking with a focus on enjoying nature around you are good examples of mindfulness.
4. Learn to forgive yourself. You are not perfect so if you lose your patience - forgive yourself before going to bed. If it is recurring - join a support group to get ideas from others who are in the same boat as you.

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5. If you find yourself overly anxious or sad and blue, talk to your doctor about a referral for counseling and or medication.

6. Find activities you can do with an ill spouse – such as walks, or reading poetry or even the sports page to one another. Plant a window box, fold clothes. Do something you can say “thank you” to the other. Remember, when you are being helped no one ever seems to acknowledge you for anything, and you feel like a burden. Look for opportunities to include the other in meaningful activities.

In care communities they have three shifts of 8 hours each. If you are doing more than 8 hours in any one day or 40 hours in any one week of caregiving, you might be putting your own health at risk.

Seek out support systems that can help you design an affordable plan that meets your values. This planning could come from Counseling Services or a Professional Care Manager ([www.caremanager.org](http://www.caremanager.org)).

**You are as important as medication to your partner – value you, care for you and find joy in every day.**

## CAREGIVER SUPPORT SERIES



### Caregiver Survival 101: Caring for Someone with Dementia – Reducing Your Stress

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2015  
5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Riding the roller coaster of dementia care? If the emotional ups, downs, & loop-di-loops are making your head spin, our Caregiver Survival series is for you! Topics include:

- The major challenges of dementia care
- Responses and reactions to reduce your stress
- Self-care activities and mini-support group
- Resources for coaching and support

No Fee. Advanced registration required.

*Class intended for family caregivers or those dealing with the challenges of aging.*

To register for class, call:

**866.760.1808**

or email:

[o@eldercareanswers.com](mailto:o@eldercareanswers.com)

Location:

**ELDERCARE SERVICES**

1808 Tice Valley Blvd.  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

### Caring for an Aging Family Member

2ND THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH  
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

#### MONTHLY SUPPORT GROUP

Addressing the fears of Alzheimer’s disease and other issues associated with aging.

No Fee. No registration required.