



Newsletter **MAY 2016**

Fifty Miles or a Thousand Miles: Parents at a Distance

In our society, we often move from the area where we grew up and away from our parents. This change can present more dilemmas for adult children as their parents become more dependent or resistant to assistance.

Many families travel to spend holidays or vacations together, but as parents age, they often avoid travel and as adult children become more involved in their own careers or their children's lives, visits are less frequent. This presents another problem, which is observing small changes before they become a crisis.

Caring for aging parents is challenging enough when you are local, but becomes a greater stressor when you are at a distance, and that often leads to feelings of guilt or helplessness.

In support groups, we often hear from families concerned because of the changes they see when

visiting their parents. There can be a reluctance to hire help or to share the truth of their health or finances with their children. Reluctance to share is not to be confused with hiding the truth, but more of a feeling of not wanting to burden their children because they know how busy their lives are. At other times, parents fear they are losing control and faced with an over active adult child who wants to become the CEO of their lives.

This reluctance is more evident in couples that see it as their duty and responsibility to care for a spouse, even though they are exhausted and often suffering from health or stress-related illnesses themselves. Depression is present in many caregiving spouses and needs to be treated at the very least.

What can the adult child at a distance do? →



About Our Founder

Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She has been practicing professional care management (now called aging life care) since 1984. Linda founded Eldercare Services, a full-service care management and home care company in 1989, which now employs over 200 caring people. Eldercare Services has been providing Bay Area families with care management, home care services (caregiving), advocacy, counseling, support groups and education for 26 years.

MONTHLY AFFIRMATION: *"I have all the information and a support system to meet any crisis that might present itself."*

I have listed some ideas to make your visits productive as well as added some resources to help when you can't be there at the drop of a hat.

- Have a family meeting before a crisis. When your parent/s are well. I call this a meeting to prepare for the "What Ifs of a Longer Life". Be sure to include all the siblings as well as your parents.
- Hire a Professional Care Manager/Aging Life Care Expert™ to be your eyes and ears to oversee and advocate during any crisis. The Village Plan™ (www.VillagePlan.com) can give you 30 minutes of free consultation with a professional and then arrange for a local Care Manager to be the professional in your back pocket for those emergencies that come up in the middle of the night or during an important life event.
- Gather information: Names and numbers of medical providers; an updated list of medications, and copies of all legal documents – especially the Advanced Health Care Directives. Do you have access to monies? Could you pay the bills if you needed to? Be sure to have the names of close friends and neighbors and make sure they have your contacts as well.

If you are working with a Care Manager, find a local support group you can attend (you are always welcome to the Eldercare Support Group in the SF East Bay). These groups give you lots of support and ideas and are most often free of fees.

Caring from a distance can become a constant stressor if you don't have a plan for that "What If"! Once you have the information you need and an experienced professional who becomes your "quarterback" – when that call comes you can throw the ball to the Care Manager to assess the situation. They will get back to you if you truly need to come or if the situation can be handled without you having to travel a great distance.

Families have told me over and over again, these past 30 years that they would not have survived all the crises, big and small problems without the teamwork and advocacy of a Professional Care Manager that they could depend on 24/7 year round.

Upcoming Events

Dementia – The Road Map from Diagnosis to Family Care

WEDS. MAY 18TH, 2016, 5:30PM - 7:00PM

- What is dementia? Where is it diagnosed?
- Understanding the progression
- What does a Family need to do to prepare for the journey?
- Protecting Dignity and Reducing Stress in all family members

** No fee. Advanced registration required.*

TO REGISTER

Call: [866.760.1808](tel:866.760.1808) or

Email: info@EldercareAnswers.com

Caring for an Aging Family Member

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

Addressing the fears of Alzheimer's disease & other issues associated with aging.

Anyone caring for another is welcome to this group. We focus on caring for you with suggestion to make the journey of care less stressful at the same time as finding solutions for challenges of delivering care.

** No fee and no registration required.*

Location of Events:

Eldercare Services, 1808 Tice Valley Blvd.,
Walnut Creek, CA 94595