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# Newsletter

APRIL 2017

## *Are you prepared? Families provide 80% of all care!*

We prepare for earthquakes, end of life events, natural or man-made disasters but seldom do we prepare for a role the majority of us will play soon or in the future, a family caregiver. Somehow, we think it won't fall on us, or we believe all the family members that needed care are now gone. But, it might be you that needs care and what have you done to see that the care you receive meets your values and desires?

For those of you who have cared for an aging family member that lives nearby, you know the time and energy it took to give them a safety net and quality of life. You might have gone down many paths that led to nothing and cost you much in time, energy and stress. Knowing how to approach "care" needs and to find the best solutions often takes a team or experts if you don't want to spin your wheels, increase your stress, decrease your health and energy.

If you had to provide care from a distance – the added drama, worry and expense of flying for every hospitalization probably cost you not only your airfare but time away from your career and family. Even after you settled the presenting situation you returned home wondering when the next call would come because maybe your family member resisted all suggestions for "helpers" and/or "services."

Many adults I have met over my career have retired early or given up careers to be the primary caregiver – costing them lost wages, retirement benefits, etc. But, they did this out of love or what they thought was a necessity.

How does one prepare for this journey of "family caregiving"? First is what do you know of the potential family member's health, financial and support systems before they need care? Do you have a list of valuable information everything from current medications to the names and contacts of doctors and friends?



### **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 28 years.

#### **MONTHLY AFFIRMATION:**

*"I rest easily knowing I have knowledge to be a good caregiver for others and myself."*

When the phone rings at 2:00 AM from your mom – 3 hours away with vague complaints are you ready to problem solve or do you pack up and make your way to their home? And, then what? Even if you arrive and she is still in some distress what are your plans?

We can't always be prepared for everything in life... but the knowledge of having an aging family member, or spouse with health care needs means we will need some support and guidance in the near future. Being as prepared as possible before an "event or crisis" can give you peace of mind and reduce overall stress.

Professional Care Management is a place to start – individuals and families can meet with a professional who has a background in social work, counseling, nursing or related educational fields. They should be a member of the National Association "Aging Life Care Association" because they follow a standard of practice and a code of ethics. Membership demands experience plus education, and those in the "Professional" category of membership have passed an examination so that you know they can assist you. Their training and expertise in medical advocacy, housing options, home care management, entitlements, legal documents, quality of life issues are what make them skilled at working with families where "Alzheimer's or related" issues are primary.

You can receive a 30-minute free call with a Professional Care Manager at the VillagePlan.com. You can also call our office, and we will be able to schedule a consultation with you or make a home visit to assess needs.

The Care Manager will help you plan for those "what ifs" and design a plan of care for now or the future. They will help you prioritize what needs addressing now and reduce your stress level. They will connect you to resources that fit the budget and needs of the elder and their family members.

Another option is to attend one of the many classes we offer on the aging process to be aware of options and choices. I teach many classes in the community all year round. You can join our mailing list and attend these classes free. The Lamorinda Village is another excellent organization for older adults and their families that focus on local support systems and has a low monthly membership fee with an emphasis on "Staying in your own home".

Doing your homework before a crisis is your "hedge fund" against being overwhelmed and having your life taken over by a crisis of care that needs answers, resources and lots of time. Your love will always be needed but stepping into a role you're not prepared for could be costly.

The cost for a one-hour consultation is about the same as it would be to see a therapist for one hour – it is a small fee to give you a plan that could save more than one life.

## Upcoming Events

### Positive Aging

FRIDAY APRIL 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017 • 2:00PM-3:30PM

**Aging is a Journey. As we walk the path of aging, how can we inject new ideas for positive, hopeful, expansive and intriguing lives?**

**Presented by: Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC, Founder of Eldercare Services**

- Where does your Joy come from?
- What are you Grateful for?
- Would you like to Impact the lives of others?
- Finding Balance—Learning to be more Optimistic.

*\*No fee, but advanced registration is required. Visit [EldercareAnswers.com](http://EldercareAnswers.com) for registration information.*

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### Location of Events:

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

### TO REGISTER

Call: [866.760.1808](tel:866.760.1808) or

Email: [info@EldercareAnswers.com](mailto:info@EldercareAnswers.com)