

THIS MONTH

Mastering “Time” as a Family Caregiver: Seven Tips for Success!

Do you feel like you can’t possibly manage, let alone master, your time when the person you are caring for needs so much of you? Are you worried that if you start to reclaim some of your time for yourself you won’t be able to avoid feelings of guilt or anger? December is a month of lots of demands on time with many.

Learning to care for yourself or helping someone you care about take care of themselves could be the most valuable gift of the season. It can and has saved lives. In the end, it increases the quality of life for the person receiving the care because they see that you are happier and giving from a cup that is measured and balanced.

The transition from over caring to balanced care is not easy. It is a journey of self-discovery as well as a process of self-preservation. It is also a transition for the care receiver that may or may not be well received.

The care receiver could be a spouse, parent, partner or friend. They are usually someone you love greatly but providing care can be complimented by a variety of factors:

- You may be the only one in the person’s life who can provide care for them and if they were not the most lovable person to you previously, that can cause a psychological burden.
- Care receivers might be experiencing dementia which makes reasoning impossible. The decision-making falls to you or to the adult children of that person needing care. If you have legal authority, you need to step in and secure a safe environment for them.
- Aging family members may not like strangers which could cause them to be manipulative in getting your attention. I have heard stories of adult children dropping everything in their lives and flying across the country for something that sounded serious only to find the parent lonely or in need of care they were unwilling to pay for or trust.

About our Author



Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She has been practicing professional care management since 1984. Linda founded Eldercare Services, a fullservice

care management and home care company in 1989. Eldercare Services has been providing Bay Area families with care management, home care services (caregiving), advocacy, counseling, support groups and education for 30 years. Linda is excited to be part of the Home Care Assistance family in order to expand the reach of Professional Geriatric Care Management with excellence in home care delivery.

MONTHLY AFFIRMATION

“I practice being grateful for what I have in my life daily.”

I have a few tips for you to start to gain control of your time in the caregiving role and I am going to list them in sequence to what I feel is most important.

1. **Schedule time that helps.** Start with once a week for one or two hours. Choose something that help you relax like a long walk, a massage, or lunch with a close friend. Promise yourself you will do it and be accountable to someone.
2. **Practice mindfulness.** Schedule at least 10 minutes a day on a daily relaxation exercise. It could be just 5 minutes a day in the morning and evening focused on your breathing.
3. **Create a plan.** Choose a day each week to look at the week ahead and put your tasks in writing. If you are taking mom to a medical appointment on Wednesday, you might want to send the doctor a note on Tuesday about your concerns or observations and since that office is next to the pharmacy order refills to be picked up that day as well.
4. **Define roles.** Everyone on the care team should have roles and responsibilities so you don't waste time duplicating activities. Maybe one person is the shopper, the other coordinates caregivers and one member takes mom or dad to all medical appointments.
5. **Prioritize.** What must be done today and what could be put off another week? Make that list and know what you can move down or eliminate. It gives you a sense of accomplishment when you tick off the must-do items from the list.
6. **Handle items only once.** When you pick up something, take it to where it belongs instead of dropping it in another room.
7. **Organize.** If you or your family member tend to clutter that leads to lots of wasted time searching for things. Clutter in our environment also causes us to be overwhelmed and uses energy. Use a professional organizer to get you started if you need to!

Your love is limitless but your physical and emotional energy is not. Mastering time that brings you renewal and energizes your body and mind will keep you healthy.

If you are struggling with self-care challenges, call us at (925) 937-2018 and we will connect you with one of our Aging Life Care Professional Care Managers.

Caring for an Aging Family Member

2nd THURSDAY of EVERY MONTH
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

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

No Fee and No Registration Required.



Happy Holidays



Call us at **925-937-2018** to learn more.

Eldercare Services is now a division of Home Care Assistance, giving you the combination of great expansive caregiving and professional guidance.

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