

Caregiver Corner

... Ideas and information for people caring for others 778-2411

Caregiving: How to Get the Whole Family Involved (Adapted from Journeyworks Publishing)



Is one person in your family overburdened with providing and/or arranging care? Would you like others to become more involved? The tips below are ideas that may help:

I. Hold a Family Meeting

- ✓ Call a meeting of all involved parties to discuss the situation.
- ✓ Hold the meeting in a neutral location and try to eliminate distractions.
- ✓ Make up an agenda before the meeting and distribute it to everyone so that people come prepared.

II. Tips for Decision Making

- ✓ If the person being cared for is able, give them a say in how things are done.
- ✓ Everyone involved should have a chance to be heard and their opinions should be respected.

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III. The goal should be to give support to the Primary Caregiver

- ✓ Give the Caregiver credit for the work they are already doing.
- ✓ Try and offer solutions and give support at the same time.
- ✓ If possible organize and divide tasks among multiple parties.
- ✓ Make lists of needs and identify who is able and willing to do which ones.

IV. For People Not Helping

- ✓ Try and find out why.
- ✓ People may need to be directed as to what needs doing and how to do it.
- ✓ When there are disagreements, try and talk through the issues and come to an agreement.

V. Long Distance Caregiving - If you live far away:

- ✓ Ask how you can help
- ✓ Offer emotional support to the local caregivers.
- ✓ Offer financial assistance if you are able
- ✓ Call and get regular updates on the situation.
- ✓ If you are able, travel and give local caregivers a break.

Involving the whole family can help make things easier and better for everyone.

If you need help organizing the family meeting, consider attending our evening session on **Family Meetings, March 12th** at the **Broome West Senior Center, 6-7:30pm**. Call Andrea for more information at 778-2411.

Or check out our website page at www.gobroomecounty.com/caregivers and click at the bottom of the page there are additional resources including a handout called "Guide to Organizing a Family Meeting."

Caregiver Chat to Discuss Tips and Tricks for Engaging Your Older Person



The February Caregiver Chat will host Rosemary Mahon, Community Service Representative with Home Instead Senior Care. Rosemary will offer tips and hints on how to get your older person engaged in meaningful conversations and activities. Her talk will also include effective communication techniques for everyday conversations; actual activities to try with your older person, and the importance of tapping in to all five senses. Time will be available for general caregiver discussion.

The Caregiver Chat will meet **Monday, February 4th, from 1-3PM at the Stay Healthy Center** which is located in the Oakdale Mall near Sears. Chat is an informal discussion group for people who are concerned about an older friend or relative. The group is coordinated by Judy Bobinski, Caregiver Services Case Manager. You are welcome to bring your lunch and a beverage with you and enjoy the company of other caregivers.

Call Judy with questions at 778-2411.

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Crock Pot Cooking to Make Meals Easier

This month our Evening

Discussion Group will feature a

workshop on Crock Pot Cooking. Our speaker will be Michele Constable from Cornell Cooperative Extension. Learn how to use a crock pot to give your family delicious healthy meals and yourself more time.

This session will be on **Wednesday, February 13th from 6 - 7:30 PM at the Cornell Cooperative Extension on Upper Front Street**, with convenient and easy parking. The session will focus on the food safety issues involved with crock pot cooking. We will discuss cooking techniques for making simple one dish meals which will allow you to come home to a hot meal after a long day at work. We will sample two or three crock pot entrees.

Pre-registration is required. Call at 778-2411 with questions or to register.

Options for On-Line Users Support Group

A few years ago Caregiver Services started an online support group. We do have a few users; however, we believe

that we can better meet the needs of caregivers by linking them to more active chat rooms.

Thank to all of you have used the online support and offered advice and comments to other caregivers. We are officially discontinuing our on-line support group but we encourage you to Checkout:

www.caregiving.com/support/html/group.htm

They offer 13 different online support groups. One is for new caregivers, a group for "veteran" or long time caregivers, a men's group, a group for those that are grieving, a young adult group and more!





Lots of Helping Hands

(From the National Family Caregivers Association September 2007 Newsletter)

If you are looking for a simple way to reach out to friends and family for help caring for your loved one check out

<http://www.lotsahelpinghands.com/> an easy to use private group calendar designed to help organize your helpers from everything to delivering meals or rides and errands to help with daily living tasks. It also offers photo galleries, message boards and other ways to communicate with friends and family.

Disaboom

Disaboom.com is a brand new web site created for adults and their family caregivers living with physical disabilities. Join their community and find valuable resources, health information, reviews and jobs in your area at www.disaboom.com.

Tip Sheet Developed by Local Experts

The best advice on how to handle caregiver stress comes from talking with other caregivers. Judy Bobinski did just that. The participants at the December Caregiver Chat started a list of tips on how they handle stress. Caregiver Services will be developing a tips sheet with all this great, practical and personal advice.

If you have a tip or a suggestion of how you as a caregiver keep track of information, keep yourself emotionally healthy, coordinate respite or other needed services, write Judy an email and we will include it on the tip sheet. Judy's email is jbobinski@co.broome.ny.us. or call her at 778-2411. We will be posting this resource to the gobroomecounty.com webpage as well.

Understanding Guilt

(Adapted from an Article in United Health Services Family Ties Newsletter.)



Guilt is the emotion we feel when we think we have done something we are not supposed to or we have not done something we should have done. It is an emotion experienced throughout our lives. Even children feel guilt. It is a natural and basic emotion.

Guilt is both a bad feeling and an effective teacher. We want to avoid the bad feeling, so most of us learn to follow rules. This is how behavior is shaped. Guilt helps us to learn right from wrong. Even adults have rules to follow. Adult rules are usually called laws. Some rules are inappropriate even for adults and we act childishly because we don't know any differently.

Guilt is overcome by examining situations as they occur. In each situation ask yourself why you feel guilty about it? Is it true guilt or is it from habit? By analyzing each situation you can eliminate unnecessary bad feelings.

Legal Issues for Caregivers



Estate Planning is the process in which you effectively transfer wealth to your family or other beneficiaries. You need to decide what technique you will use to carry this out. The techniques include wills, trusts, or joint property. In deciding whether to use a will or a trust you need to decide which one is consistent with your needs and desires. It may be necessary to consult with an attorney to help you.

A will is a written document executed in accordance with certain legal formalities by which a person disposes of his or her property upon death. A will does not take effect until the

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person's death. A will covers everything that is owned when you die. In a will you can specify who will receive what. Wills usually require probate by a court which can be costly especially if it gets contested.

One way to avoid probate is to use a trust. A trust is a written document executed with certain legal formalities to transfer certain property to a trust which is owned by a trustee. A trust takes effect as soon as it is finalized. There are two types of trusts. A revocable trust is one in which things can be changed, added, or terminated as needed. An irrevocable trust is used to protect property and in which nothing can be changed.

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Joint Property is owned by more than one person. This includes joint tenancy in which people are co-owners, in trust for property which is held until a later time, or payable upon death ownership.

A will is a public document. A trust is private. It is hard to challenge a trust and it is not put on record, so there is no probate needed. If a person dies without a will, a trust, or a joint property agreement then they are said to die intestacy.

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Your February 2008 "Caregiver Corner"

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