

COMPASSION IN SELF-CARE



for those caring for a loved one with dementia or other chronic conditions

Wyoming Dementia Together

On the Road Dementia support

Pinedale – Jackson – Dubois

Scott Veatch, Dani Mandelstam, Carol Taylor

From dawn until dusk

The 36 hour day
Walk a mile in my shoes
Fading memories of what was
Vivid images of what may come
Living in loss, anticipatory grief
The power of love, commitment, grit

Stress and Resiliency

Stress

- ▶ symptoms, reactions (emotional, behavioral, physical, psychological)
- ▶ defense mechanisms (denial, projection, displacement, rationalization, distortion),
- ▶ depletion
- ▶ fight/flight/freeze

Resiliency

capacity, adaptation, reframing, asset based, creative, responsive, has self-knowledge



Capacity Inventory



Care mastery – AKA coping mechanisms, lifelong skills/attributes/experiences, resiliency tools, using available resources, being responsive, just say YES !!

Care burden – compassion fatigue, barriers to support resources, breakdown of care system, limited skill set, reactive, limited insight or lack of ID personal needs

The journey of a thousand miles

As a family care partner, how do you:

Consider yourself a care priority !

Name and give voice your needs

Identify what can be delegated to another?

Determine what you are willing to delegate?

The power of discernment, clarity

Needs or wants

The greater good

Be prepared

REPRISE: The power of colored index cards

Marathon not sprint

Choose wisely

GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO BE HUMAN



It's OK to feel frustrated, angry, resentful or hurt. These are normal feelings.



And you may lose your patience or not handle situations as well as you think you should.



The sadness of grief and loss is often a constant companion.



Being a care partner is hard work and can feel very lonely or stressful.



Practice forgiveness frequently and liberally

UNDERSTAND YOURSELF AND YOUR NEEDS



SELF-KNOWLEDGE
CAN BE OUR BEST
PROTECTION
AGAINST
COMPASSION
FATIGUE.



IDENTIFY WHAT YOUR
PHYSICAL,
EMOTIONAL AND
SPIRITUAL NEEDS ARE
*(OFTEN MORE DIFFICULT
THAN IT SOUNDS)*



CONSIDER HOW YOU
CAN GET THESE
NEEDS AND OTHERS
MET.

IDENTIFY ACTIVITIES THAT HELP YOU FEEL BETTER

Knowing your needs is helpful.

Creating options **now** for fulfilling them is often easier and more accessible than when you're feeling defeated, tired or hopeless.

(pink index card treatment)

During those times, it may be hard to recall anything that is positive or hopeful so thinking about it ahead of time is a good practice.

List at least 5 “moment in time” self-care practices



CRAFT YOUR DAYS, CONSIDER YOUR TIME, ASSIGN PRIORITIES ~ *in pencil*

- ✓ Your time is precious and limited.
- ✓ Keeping notes, texting yourself, using recurring lists (groceries, medical supplies, weekly or monthly commitments, medication management, etc.) may help
- ✓ Create templates for daily checklists, logs, to-do's
- ✓ Planning and prioritizing, with flexibility, can often minimize stress, crises and may provide a feeling of having some control or progress.



CRAFT YOUR DAYS (cont.)

As you re-read and work with your notes,
see if there are other ways to save time and energy for yourself
by combining activities, delegating something to another person,
prioritizing what needs to be done now and
what can wait.



Just Say YES!

Practice saying “yes” !
NEVER turn away a genuine offer of support.
Consider asking for assistance with certain tasks.

Care for the Care Partner – You !



**5-minute getaways
creating ideas**



Taking time



**Practicing energy
conservation**



**Receiving with grace
and appreciation**



Be kinder to yourself



Just say yes !

Consider all services and resources for you to access and utilize



Consider speaking with an OT or PT not only for your loved one, but for yourself as well. Have them observe you doing some daily care tasks; they may have suggestions for enhanced safety, energy conservation, simpler techniques and methods



OTs and PTs can be a wealth of information about community services for meditation, yoga, stretching and strengthening as well as massage therapists, counselors and others



Learn of support groups in your area or on-line.

So now what ?

Start today, start now

Celebrate accomplishments

Practice forgiveness

Try one new approach or idea

Connect with other “club members”

A loving reminder for all

from dear Ralph Waldo Emerson

Finish this day and be done with it.

You have done what you could.
Some blunders and absurdities, no doubt,
have crept in:
Forget them as soon as you can.

Tomorrow is a new day
You shall begin it serenely and with too high a spirit
to be encumbered with old nonsense.

CELEBRATE YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS!!



Acknowledge and reward yourself for reaching goals, or making progress on projects or looking back over a “good” day.

Consider keeping a gratitude journal or verbally in the evening.

Pamper yourself, toot your own horn, schedule an extra respite day.

Bugle like a proud elk!!

Go out with a friend for lunch or dinner, attend a community event.

***Celebrate you –
you’re worth it !!***

Questions

