

CAREGIVER CHRONICLE

Connections for Caregivers

Complementary Programs to Support Caregivers

By Danielle Greenberg

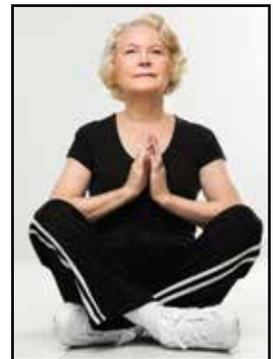
Being a caregiver can be very stressful in all aspects of one's life. Caregivers are tasked with many different roles in order to provide the necessary care for their loved one. Whether it is

housekeeping, nursing or many of the other important responsibilities of a caregiver, they are always put in a stressful state of mind.

As a caregiver, it is important to find time for self care while you are caring for someone else. Several programs, which

complement each other, have made it easy to manage stress and remain

actively involved with the person who needs care. Among those programs are Tai Chi, mindfulness and yoga.



A Message From Cheryl Robinson

When I reviewed this issue of the Caregiver Chronicle, I thought about what stress reduction, self-care and peace of mind meant. It seems that we are always searching for ways to reduce our stress, and yet I often hear there is just no time to add one more



thing into our busy lives. The techniques introduced here are convenient, easy and ones we can learn to do at home. A five-minute break is all that may be needed to practice some mindfulness, which is essentially being aware of our present moment and breath. Tai chi movements which are gentle and flowing, center our body and mind. Yoga uses poses and breathe work to help us to slow down, tune in to our bodies and release tension. These tech-

niques of deep breathing, focusing on a pleasant thought in the moment, calming the mind and stretching into a yoga pose can help increase restfulness and even boost the immune system. And as Tom Rinkowski reports in his article, there are at least 10 other ways we can practice self-care that are inexpensive and readily available to us. I admit to lighting an aromatic candle at times and occasionally enjoying that piece of dark chocolate.

Taking care of ourselves can also include taking care of business, like formalizing advance directives and considering an addition to our care team through non-medical help. So, I hope you can take just a few moments in the next month for yourself. Self-care is such an important stress reduction technique: one that can enhance our peace of mind. Namaste!

Social Worker Paul Donovan practices mindfulness meditation, being aware of your present moment in a non-judgemental state of mind, and yoga for therapeutic benefit.

"These practices can help reduce stress, help burnout and reduce compassion fatigue," he said.

The specific meditation that Donovan practices and teaches has been researched and studied by Shands, and had very positive results. The program is called *EnCare*, and it is not only for caregivers, but for patients as well. If a caregiver is less stressed, it puts the patient at less risk, said Donovan. These meditation methods allow both the caregiver and the patient to relieve their

Cheryl Robinson, LCSW

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Complementary Programs

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stress and make for a safer environment for all.

Combining that with Tai Chi will go a long way to relieve stress. Tai Chi makes you feel more peaceful, calm and relaxed, as well as improving balance and flexibility – all essential tools for a caregiver. Additionally, Tai Chi can make one more alert and mindful. The series of slow physical movements can leave you feeling like all your muscles have been exercised.

Tai chi is an ancient Chinese tradition that, today, is practiced as a graceful form of exercise practiced for its physical, mental, emotional and even spiritual benefits. It is used to prevent various health issues as well as to heal them when they occur. Its movements are gentle, usually slow, but extremely powerful. Its power comes from focusing the mind, body and breath in each movement. Tai Chi does not involve watching a newscast or listening to your Walkman while working out on an exercise machine – full focus is given to the movements or patterns that are being performed. In practicing Tai Chi, a major focus is on relaxation – the more relaxed and calm you are the greater the benefits.

A Tai Chi for Seniors class and a Gentle Motions class are offered at the Crown Pointe Senior Healthcare Center on Thursdays. Contact Paul Gebhart for more information on which class would be best suited for you (352-379-6124).

As for yoga, a sequence of body stretches and poses with controlled breathing which promotes health, balance and general wellness, it is available in two forms at the Senior Recreation Center. There's more traditional yoga geared to seniors, as well as chair yoga for those who need to sit. Like traditional yoga, chair yoga is designed for increased flexibility, decreased pain, relaxation and enhancing a sense of well-being. For more information contact the Senior Recreation Center at (352) 265-9040.

It is extremely important for caregivers to manage their stress in healthy ways and learn how to deal with the difficult circumstances. These programs and others are great ways to learn how to cope with the tough situations that caregivers often face.

Calendar of Events

Becoming a Savvy Caregiver

Savvy Caregiver Training is a free six week training course for persons who are caring for family members and friends with dementia and/or Alzheimer's Disease.

Wednesdays: 1:30 – 3:30 pm, beginning Sept.3 in Starke

Thursdays: 1:00 – 3:00 pm, beginning Sept. 4 in Gainesville

Mondays: 1:00 – 3:00 pm, beginning Sept. 8 in Trenton (at Ayers Rehab)

Class size is limited to 15. Register by calling Tom Rinkoski at (352) 378-6649, extension 126, or via e-mail to rinkoskit@agingresources.org.

Community Coalition for Older Adults

Second Friday of the month, Senior Recreation Center, 5701 NW 34 St. Contact Shirley Bloodworth at sgblood@bellsouth.net for information.

www.skipeveritt.com

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www.caregiverchronicle.com.

We also have a Facebook page.

Check it out at

www.facebook.com/CaregiverChronicle.

Like the page to get notices about events and activities between our print issues.

From the Desk of Sam W. Boone, Jr.:

Your Legal Documents

By Sam Boone

Editor's Note: This is part of a series of columns that will be presented in this newsletter by Sam W. Boone, Jr., a local attorney whose primary practice areas include elder law, estate planning, probate and trust administration. It is hoped that the information will be valuable for caregivers and family members dealing with issues related to elder law.

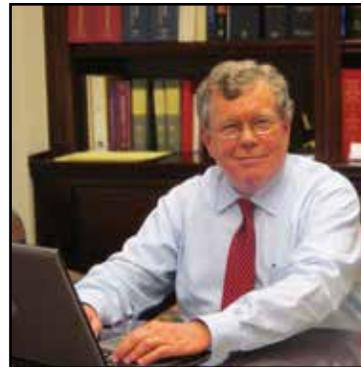
In the earliest issues of the *Caregiver Chronicle*, I wrote about the importance of having a Durable Power of Attorney (DPOA), as well as several other critical legal documents. It's never too soon to repeat that message. Time and time again I see families that have not prepared for the legal ramifications when a loved one becomes unable to make important legal and medical decisions.

Let's start with the DPOA. A detailed and comprehensive DPOA is a crucial element when dealing with issues related to disability and aging. It's extremely important for the DPOA to be as concise as possible. We often see very general documents that cause more problems and may not even be legal.

One thing to be aware of is that in Florida the DPOA becomes effective as soon as it is signed, not when the person becomes disabled. So it is important that you select someone with whom you are in agreement or have the DPOA held in escrow. The DPOA must be very specific, and the powers granted must be initialed. General, broad powers will not be recognized.

Some of the significant benefits of having a DPOA are: providing the ability to choose who will make decisions for you rather than having the court decide; avoiding the necessity of a guardianship; providing family members with an opportunity to discuss wishes and desires and preventing questions about your intent; allowing agents to talk to third-party service providers.

Equally important to having a DPOA is making sure there are medical advanced directives. A Designation of Health-care Surrogate and Living Will allow you to choose who will make decisions for you in the event of incapacity. And if you have a loved one in a senior-living facility, it is important to find out if the facility will honor your family member's wishes when it comes to performing CPR.



M o r e recently we wrote here about POLST (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment), which is just now gaining a foothold in Florida. POLST is designed to complement advance directives, listing the

types of treatment that are wanted or not wanted. It is a program that includes education, training and a quality improvement process. Be sure to ask your physician about whether they have adopted this protocol.

And of course the most common, but often neglected document one should have is a will. Many people, especially those who don't have large estates, believe they don't need a will. But that's not the case. Sitting down with a lawyer and completing a will is the best way to ensure your wishes will be fulfilled – and to avoid leaving anything up to the courts.

Sam W. Boone, Jr. is a Gainesville-based attorney practicing elder law and estate planning. He is past-president of the Academy of Florida Elder Law Attorneys. To learn more about elder-law issues, go online to [www. http://boonelaw.com](http://boonelaw.com), or call (352)-374-8308.

10 Simple Self-care Ideas for Caregivers

By Tom Rinkoski

Caregivers don't get much time to relax and unwind, let alone take care of themselves. When caregivers do find time, they rush toward household chores that have been put on hold. This revolving door feeds exhaustion and stress instead of helping us to ready ourselves for the next time we're needed.

Here are 10 simple ways caregivers can practice self-care. They are designed to be low-cost and easy-to-do in those brief moments that caregivers get throughout the day. One may not work for you, but another might. Or maybe, some of these ideas might spark your own. Try one or two out. Be good to yourself. You deserve it.

1. **Take a brief walk.** More caregivers mention this option than any other. It can be moving in fairy circles around your back yard, or sauntering down the block. Just enough to clear your head and bring a smile back to your face.
2. **Eat a piece of chocolate.** Buy yourself some quality chocolate (you deserve it). My favorite is really dark chocolate. When you are given the gift of five minutes, unfold the wrapper and eat it in small pieces. Go slow. Savor the taste. Let the chocolate work its magic inside you, then let your outside reflect that goodness.
3. **Hand massage.** Keep a bottle of special lotion that you particularly like ready. When the clock strikes find a comfy chair and softly massage your own hands. Move gently, feeling your muscles, inviting them to loosen their grip. Go up your arms, if it feels good. If you really want to have fun, massage your feet.
4. **Color.** Buy yourself a new box of crayons, or some really good chalk. I like coloring to music myself. Don't try to make anything at first, just return to playing with the colors without any specific agenda.
5. **Watch Funny You Tube Videos.** Power up your computer and ask the search for something really funny – Abbott and Costello or maybe those

cute baby, kitten or puppy videos. Laughter is a healing thing. Use a headset, cover the volume of your laughs if you feel it is necessary. Laugh deeply.

6. **Breathe.** You can do this inside or outside, in your closet, or in front of the bathroom mirror if it helps. Personally, I lay down on my bed. Breathe intentionally from your diaphragm, emptying your lungs when you exhale. Imagine it as cleaning of your system. Practice.

7. **Read.** Have a favorite book or magazine at the ready. A good novel is usually able to be picked up wherever you left off. Having a comfy chair helps. Sometimes I read and eat nuts at the same time!

8. **Close Your Eyes.** You may not have time to take a quality nap. But there is nothing like “shutting it out” for a while. Find a comfortable spot. Don't squeeze your eyes shut, gently bring down your lids, offering a temporary goodbye to the stress. Set a timer, if it helps you to relax and enter your imagination freely. This is not brainstorming problems time, but flying time!

9. **Aromatherapy.** This might be burning a scented candle or incense. There are some smells – like lavender – that can be relaxing in and of themselves. Find the smell that takes you away. This could also be the smell of freshly baked chocolate chip cookies, or brewed coffee!

10. **Snuggle or Hug.** Snuggle with your cat or dog, or maybe a baby if one is around! Take a walk and hug people. Hugs and hellos that emanate from inside have been known to change the atmosphere. I have been known to call friends and ask them to come over for a hug and cup of coffee. It works wonders.

Tom Rinkoski is the Caregiver Coach for Elder Options in North Central Florida assisting people who are offering care to friends and families with dementia.

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* Lite refreshments and various door prizes will be available *
This event is open to the public and FREE to attend.

For additional information
@ 352-519-4425
or visit us on FaceBook at www.Facebook.com/GainesvilleSeniorHealthFair



Join Us Saturday, October 25th for the Walk to End Alzheimer's at Westside Park
Registration 8:00am
Opening Ceremony & Walk 9:00
Visit alz.org/walk or call Michelle Drinks at 904-281-9077 for more information



Join us as a Superhero Guest in appreciation of what you do!
8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Nov. 6
in the ballroom at The Village, 8000 NW 27 Blvd.
Limited to 60 caregivers.
Contact Tom Rinkoski (352) 378-6649 ext. 126
or rinkoskit@

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Useful Resources

Alzheimer's Association – www.alz.org/cnfl/index.asp

Elder Affairs – www.elderaffairs.state.fl.us/index.php

Comparing health plans, nursing homes, etc. – www.floridahealthfinder.gov

SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) www.floridashine.org

Medicare – www.medicare.org

State of Florida – www.myflorida.com

National Institute on Aging (free publications) – www.nig.nih.gov

Caregiving – www.parentgiving.com

Respite locator – www.respitelocator.org

Caregiving – www.rosalynncarter.org

Driving – www.thehartford.com/talkwitholderdrivers/driversatrisk.htm

United Way – Alachua, Bradford & Putnam counties – www.unitedwayncfl.org

National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Management - www.caremanager.org

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How a Little Help Can Go a Long Way

By Sally Dalhem

When it comes to staying at home with a loved one who needs assistance or just some extra socialization, a good plan should be developed for all parties involved. Sometimes loved ones need help at almost all hours of the day and it can be difficult when you have to go to work and do things other than take care of a family member.

Although the idea at first might receive some resistance, getting an in-home caregiver, even for a short amount of time can go a long way. Private-duty, in-home caregivers can provide assistance with everyday tasks such as bathing, dressing, preparing meals, going grocery shopping and assisting your loved one in any way needed. This will allow the family member a little time themselves.

The help an in-home caregiver can provide a family is valuable to everyone involved in the situation. Caregivers are flexible and can come in

whenever you need them. Appointments may be a couple hours a day to simply run errands, or someone who is going to stay through the night so you can get some sleep.

The first step will be to make sure that your family member is comfortable with the idea of having someone in their home to assist them. Once services are started your family member should feel at ease. After a short adjustment period, having a caregiver will go a long way in assisting your loved one and giving you piece of mind. Our experience has shown that even as little as eight hours a week of assistance can help keep seniors at home where they belong.

Sally Dahlem is the co-owner of Home by Choice, which is a licensed home-health agency that specializes in private duty care. She has more than 25 years of experience in Gainesville healthcare services including home care, skilled nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

Our Caregivers Are Always There For You!



John Markham and Sally Dahlem

Owner/Operators with more than 30 years of combined experience in homecare, assisted living administration, skilled nursing facility admissions, case management and medical equipment sales.

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Caregiver Support Groups

Alz Place/Harbor Chase
3rd Thursday of the month at 9am
Open to all caregivers
Contact Robyn at 352-375-3000 for address

Alterra Clare Bridge
3rd Thursday of the month- 6pm
4607 NW 53rd Ave, Gainesville, Fl 32653
Contact Gail at 376-5151

The Cancer Center at NFRMC
Heart of Healing Support Group/Meditation
Tuesdays 12-12:30pm
Call Joanie at 386-853-0162

Community Cancer Center
Living With Cancer Supports
www.ccnf.com for more information

Community Cancer Center
Lake City Support Group
2nd Wednesday every month 11am - 1pm
4520 W.US Hwy. 90, Lake City, FL 32055
For more information call 386-755-0601

Haven Hospice
Bereavement Supports
Call 692-5123 for more information

Hospice of the Nature Coast
Wings Community Education Center
Grief Support Group- High Springs
Call 386-454-1338 for more information

Lake Area Caregiver Support Group
4th Tuesday of the month from 1-2:00pm
Melrose Senior Community Center
307 SR 26, Melrose, FL 32666
Call 352-475-5347 for more information

Park of the Palms
2nd Monday at 2pm in the Library
Contact: Gail Haynes RNC - 352-246-5601

Park Meadows Health and Rehab Center
3250 SW 41 Pl, GV
Call the Alz Helpline at 1-800-272-3900 for
more information

Senior Healthcare Center at Spring Hill
3rd Tuesday of the month- 2:30-4:00pm
3720 NW 83rd Street, Gainesville, FL 32606
Contact Flory at 336-3050

NF Mind Matters Stroke Support Group
4th Thursday of the month from 1-2 pm
South Tower, 4th floor Conference Room-
NFRMC
Call 1-800-611-6913 for more information

United Church of Gainesville
1624 NW 5th Ave, GV
3rd Tuesday of the month from 7-8pm
Open to all caregivers
Contact Lynda at 352-219-3023

VA Caregiver Support
Mon-Fri- 8am- 11pm, Sat. 10:30-6pm
Call 1-855-260-3274