



5 Things

Newsletter



Corley Caregiver Consulting, LLC

Hello friends and a warm welcome if you're new here!

Happy Summer to You!

It's warming up here in Ohio. I hope where you are you're staying cool and enjoying time in nature, with friends, with family or even alone to regroup and renew.

As with every newsletter, I'm back in your inbox to share 5 things that have helped me on my caregiving journey over the past month. I do this in the hopes one of them will be a golden nugget of help, support or entertainment for you in your own journey.

I invite you to email me if you have found resources, routines or ideas that work for you. I'd love to include them. My goal is to make this newsletter more than just a one way communication. I believe we all have something to learn from each other.

Now on to our 5 Things for this month!

1. Simple Solution to a Shower Safety Concern

If you're familiar with my caregiving story, then you know my husband is a disabled Veteran. Over the past few years, he's been struggling with balance issues following a concussion in 2018. One of the scariest times for him during his daily routine is showering. If he's going to fall, we would hedge bets that's

where it will happen.

We have plans of remodeling our bathroom, but that takes time and money and we need a safety solution now. So as a stop gap measure we discovered this really cool tub bench that is saving the day!



I can't say enough good things about this bench. In fact, my only complaint (actually it's more of a grumble) is that it takes up a bit of space in our small bathroom, BUT we make it work in spite of that.

Here's what I love about it:

- Assembly is super easy. No tools needed. (I don't need complicated instructions requiring tons of tools. Give me simple! I literally had this together in 5 minutes).
- It's easy to adjust the overall height.
- You can move the grab bar to either side based upon the shower head positioning in your shower. (Genius engineering design!!)
- The bench extending over the edge of the tub makes it a perfect place to sit then transfer into the tub without fear of falling. (No need to step over the side

of the tub and run the risk of tripping or falling)

- The seat has quite a few holes in it to allow for water drainage.
- The 2 legs that sit in the tub have large suction cups to prevent slipping.

This has been such a game changer for both of us. My hubby is more secure in the shower and I have less worries about him falling. While it might not be a permanent solution for us, it definitely makes a difficult task in daily life so much easier.

Makes a difficult thing in daily life a little bit easier - doesn't solve, but it does resolve concerns, worries, etc.

These are available from several different manufacturers. Just do a Google search for "tub bench" and all your options and pricing should pop right up!

2. Thoughts on Self Care

Self care is such a huge part to thriving in a caregiving situation. Everyone throws that word around so much that quite often things get muddled as to what it means, what it should look like, etc.

I saw this quote a couple of weeks ago and it really resonated with me.

"Self care takes effort. It doesn't just happen."

While we might not know what self care needs to look like for each of us, we need to realize that it needs to be part of our regular routine. The body and mind need to be maintained. I heard it described this way; "Similar to a garden, without effort, weeds will pop up and overtake everything."

As caregivers, our days quickly get filled with "weeds": appointments, cleaning, shopping, laundry, crisis management, family squabbles, new diagnoses, bills to pay, paperwork to chase, yard work, or any other myriad things.

Without proper boundaries and routines (weeding), these tasks (weeds) will take over our day to the point where we become overgrown (no time for anything else).

If we visualize our day as a garden, and give value to self care over the "weeds", then we can reap the benefits of making time to feed ourselves. With a bit of consistent weeding and making space in our day, the results can be

beautiful.

3. How Relationships Impact Your Resilience

I believe one of the most life-changing skills you can learn as a caregiver is resilience.

The Oxford dictionary defines resilience as:

“The capacity to understand or to recover quickly from difficulties”

“The ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity”

I don't believe we're automatically born resilient. It is a skill that is learned and honed over time. Depending on your life experiences, you may learn this skill earlier in life than others. Regardless, everyone is a constant work in progress when it comes to resilience.

When we hear the word “resilience”, we immediately sense it's an inside job. It has to be fostered within us. Resilience comes from bouncing back from difficult situations. It takes recognition of the difficulties we've experienced and how we've grown. With that recognition over time comes the wisdom that we have done (and can do) hard things. We are capable and can make our way through whatever difficulty is placed before us.

What if I told you some of the people in your life might actually be able to help you on your journey towards becoming more resilient?

This article: [**“The 7 Types of People You Need in Your Life to be Resilient”**](#) describes how each of these 7 types can help you in your journey.

I invite you to think about the 7 types of people called out in the article, then list out who in your life fits into these categories. You may have more than one person for each category. If so, that's great. I encourage you to think broadly in terms of the people in your life. Don't limit yourself to just “friends”. What about the acquaintances you talk with from time to time? Maybe you have a neighbor you see once a month randomly. That random conversation could actually fill one of these “types”.

The “types” that help me the most are:

- * Those who make me laugh (I'm super serious when I lock into daily life sometimes)
- * Those people who help me see a new perspective when setbacks happen
- * Those who encourage me.

I learn something from each of these people and each of our shared experiences. Over time, I see how I've done hard things and made it through to the other side. It's in those moments when I realize I'm much more resilient than I gave myself credit for.

4. A Word about Patience

Ah, patience. That's such a tough one. I feel as though caregivers have to tap into that more than the average person. We need patience with our caree, ourselves, family members, time, organizations, businesses and infinitely more! The list is truly endless. I mean gravity tests my patience some days when all I do is drop things!

This month the healthcare system has been testing our patience. We've waited 6 weeks for an MRI for my husband to hopefully diagnose the chronic headaches he's had for the past 5 year since his fall. Then there was waiting on test results, which took 10 days. Now we wait for a specialist appointment which could take months.

Some days I manage it better than others, but today is not that day. I'm feeling surges of frustration, and irritation at the slow speed of life in times like these. The overlooked diagnosis by all the medical professionals we've been seeing for the past 5 years. Watching him suffer on a daily basis with the pain. Realizing he's had 5 years taken away from him, from us.

It's in those moments of how different life should have been that I take pause. Yes things could have been much different, but we still have blessings to count and so many things to be grateful for. I don't say that with a cheery Pollyanna hat on. I say that from a realist's point of view....yes I can stay angry, but what good does that serve. It does nothing to anyone else except me. Anger, frustration, all the feelings change nothing about the situation. That's the bottom line.

Now I'm not suggesting you swallow those feelings. What I'm suggesting is you let those out and then move forward. Don't stay in that dark place. That's when tapping into those feelings become counterproductive.

I saw this image about patience last week and I've been trying to focus on it as I dial down my own frustrations.

p a t i e n c e . . .
the calm acceptance
that things can happen
in a different order than
the one you had
in mind.

The other thing I rely on in times like these is to remind myself that the emotions I'm feeling are temporary. Being impatient isn't helping our situation at all. It's only stressing my body and mind. Being calm, vigilant and proactive will serve us best in the long run. I will move beyond these feelings. This dark place is not forever.

Is this an easy place to reach mentally? No. It's a constant discussion I have with myself as I self talk my way into a new way of thinking. It takes practice on a moment by moment (and sometimes second by second) basis to retrain myself. That makes all the effort worth it.

5. Dinner Prep Dance Party

After that heavy subject, we're going to shift gears to something I started doing on the spur of the moment. I like to call it Dinner Prep Dance Parties.

My sister and I are children of the 80s. Well, we were born in the 70s, but 80s music is the soundtrack of our childhood. She was recently listening to an 80s channel on Pandora in her room, which is right off the kitchen. I was prepping dinner and before I knew it I was singing and dancing around like no one was watching.

I had such a good time cutting loose that it dawned on me....I haven't done this in a long time. Like, so long ago I can't remember when it was. I felt so good! It was like a burst of sunshine in my soul. Before I knew it, dinner was done and I felt renewed in spirit.

So now I ask you - what's the soundtrack of your childhood? When was the last time you indulged in listening to it and cut loose and danced like no one was watching? Even if only for a few minutes, I honestly believe this could be an amazing addition to your self care routine. Let's face it....our lives as caregivers are filled with serious, stressful and monotonous tasks at times. The last thing we often think to do is infuse fun and that's quite often what we need the most.

Ideas and Takeaways for the Month Ahead

- How
can
you
thin
"weeds"
in
your
daily
life
to
make
more
room
for
self
care?
- Who
are
7
people
in
your
life
that
attribute
to
your
resilience?
Spend
more
time
with
those
folks
on
a
regular
basis
either
in

person,
via
Zoom
or
phone
calls.

- Dust
off
old
records,
CDs
or
tap
into
online
music
libraries!
Let
go
and
just
dance
while
cooking,
doing
the
laundry
or
just
for
the
sake
of
dancing!



That's a wrap for this month, friends.

If one piece of information here supports, empowers, or makes you feel less alone in your caregiving journey, I am beyond thrilled.

As you implement any of the ideas, please share that with me. I'd love to hear from you! I certainly don't have all the answers, but together we get stronger and smarter.

If you know someone who would enjoy this newsletter, please share it! The more the merrier!

Also, if I can support you in your own caregiving journey, please message me. I'd love to hear your story.

I'm always here to remind you that you are not alone and you can do difficult things.

Wishing you peace in all that is and strength to keep you moving forward.

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