

5 Things

Newsletter



Corley Caregiver Consulting, LLC



Happy Halloween, Friends!!

Halloween may be a kid's holiday, but, as an adult, I hope today gave you more treats than tricks or at least no scary surprises!

October is officially done in just a matter of hours, which means pumpkin spice everything will be fading away until next year. I hope you indulge until your heart's content (if that's your thing!).

I don't know about you, but once we pass Halloween, I shift into holiday mode! Many people I know dread the holidays, but I love them! There's an energy in the air that I just love. It's truly my favorite time of the year.

As with every newsletter, I'm back in your inbox this month to share 5 things that have helped, inspired or lightened the emotional load of my caregiving journey over the past month. I do this every month in the hope 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.

1. The Realization that Something's Gotta Give!

In the weeks leading up to October's arrival, I was overwhelmed. Pulled in too many directions. Too many things on my calendar to do. With only slight glimpses of time when I could come up for air, I'm was in a constant state of fatigue mentally, physically and emotionally. Add to that all the hatred, and ugliness in the world right now and I could feel myself becoming an emotional mess. I was raw nerve, frustrated and never felt like I had enough hours in the day.

Times like this ebb and flow in my life and I recognized that's what was happening. I also recognized this was part of a bigger problem. I'm collecting too much "stuff". Physical, emotional, digital, mental and must do's are all piling up and they're collectively a toxic effect on my spirit.

I woke up one morning with a tension headache which tells me I didn't relax while I slept the previous night. I also woke up to a day where I didn't have to go anywhere. That was a first for me in weeks! I grabbed my coffee, sat down at my desk and calmly realized something's gotta give! I have been collecting and "doing" for so long it's effecting how I do (or don't do) the things that carry the most importance to me.

I'm sure you can relate. You get an idea and jump right into it. You have that push that it needs to be done right now, as soon as possible. It can't wait. That's where I've been for the past few weeks mentally. I've been generating ideas to expand my reach for helping caregivers and when I get those ideas I push myself to execute them right away. It's tough because I get excited about the idea and I know how many people can use the help. That makes me push to get it moving and in doing so, I set unrealistic levels of to-do's for myself within my own caregiving routine.

It's also the mental and societal noise that's brought me to a chaotic place within myself. I crave stillness, quiet, less incoming information and less mental hum.

So one morning, I started taking steps to cut "stuff". I began unsubscribing from emails that create visual clutter when I see them, unfollowing podcasts I haven't listened to in months, and most importantly, giving myself permission to slow down. I typically work at things like there's a huge rush and there isn't. I'm quick

to fall prey to the idea of go-go-go. It's our culture in the US that sneaks into our consciousness telling us we must be doing and creating!

Since having that realization earlier this month, I feel myself accepting the permission I gave myself to slow down and do less. I am focusing on doing less of the unnecessary minutiae so I have bandwidth for the important areas of life - the areas that fill my cup rather than drain it.

I am not an expert at this. I am a work in progress, but today is a huge step for me as an over-functioner. Permission is one of the most difficult things we can give ourselves as caregivers. It can't come from others. It needs to come from within. So much of caregiving and thriving in this crazy life is about working from within ourselves. It's an inside job.

2. Protect One Day of the Week

This idea ties into the one above. In addition to focusing on doing less, I've also returned to something I used to do, but fell out of the habit of doing. I'm making a conscious effort to protect 1 day each week. I'm protecting it from being filled with running errands, excessive noise (in all its forms), work, and outside influence.

Instead, I'm using that day for things that take a slower pace and are things I want and need to do that get pushed aside regularly. One of my favorite things is to wake up without an alarm. That's magic for me, so I make sure to include it on my "protected" day.

I should share that I'm still in motion on this particular day, but it's motion on my terms and not what I feel like I have to be doing. You can do the same and make it whatever you need it to look like. There's no wrong way to do it as long as it's a recuperative day for you.

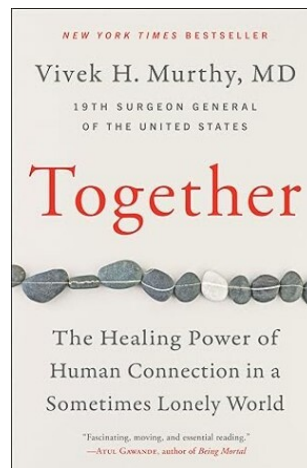
Sometimes being busy doing things that are weighing you down can be just as uplifting as days doing nothing. I don't enjoy doing nothing. I do not find it to be energy giving. That's just me. I can be still for a bit but I don't enjoy an entire day of being still. Again, no wrong way to do this, but I share that because for me it's an uplifting day. I feel lighter after it and have energy to keep moving forward with life.

Take a moment and think, what would your protected day look like? What would make you feel lighter?

3. What I'm Reading

Part of my self care routine is reading. I love it! Whether it's a traditional book or Kindle, I love to read right before bed. I read fiction sometimes to break things up, but I love a good personal development, inspirational or life skills topic that shifts my perspective and can be readily applicable to my life and outlook on the world.

This month, I've been reading the book "Together - The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World" by Vivek Murthy, M.D. (the former Surgeon General).



You might be wondering why I chose this topic or how I choose what to read. I like to read about topics that directly resonate with me or that spark my curiosity. In this case, my interest is twofold.

My first reason is because loneliness is an enormous problem in our world, especially for the elderly, disabled and their family caregivers. Second, if I'm honest, loneliness concerns me personally as I get older. With the pace of the world ever increasing, I'm concerned that at some point I'll be left behind too. I don't think I'm alone in that feeling, either.

Loneliness is a trigger for me because as a shy kid growing up, I struggled to have friends. I was a sensitive kid, easily hurt, often bullied and I struggled to connect. It wasn't until I became an adult that I truly connected and made some life long friends. As many of us do, I carry that trigger from my childhood and make efforts to thwart it before I find myself sitting in that reality.

It breaks my heart to think with all the people on this planet, there are people who are lonely. Not just occasionally lonely, but rather chronically so. The fast pace of the world pushes us apart rather than creates opportunities to connect.

While social media has its benefits, it's not the same as direct in-person human connection. We're so busy we don't make time for each other. Time slyly passes and we drift apart.

I'm about halfway through the book as I type this and have learned so much about the fundamentals of loneliness. Some reason are cultural, which I find fascinating. If you find the topic curious, I'm really enjoying this read so far.

4. Friendship Tea

I know it's only October, but as I mentioned above, I'm creeping into holiday mode. I am one of those people that starts brainstorming gift ideas for my loved ones way in advance. That's the most difficult part of the holidays for me. I started jumpstarting this part of the holidays about 10 years ago and haven't stopped since. It's been a game changer at taking the stress out of my holiday season.

I have several friends who don't really need anything for Christmas, yet I don't want to neglect gift giving just because of that. We all have everything we need or want so we've taken to given homemade gifts for each other. Last year included my much loved beer bread (that only comes out once a year).

This year, I'm back in that mode again and have been experimenting with some hot tea recipes I've found on Pinterest. I've settled on Friendship Tea. I've made a batch (for quality control, of course!) and have really enjoyed it.

Find the Friendship Tea Recipe [here](#).

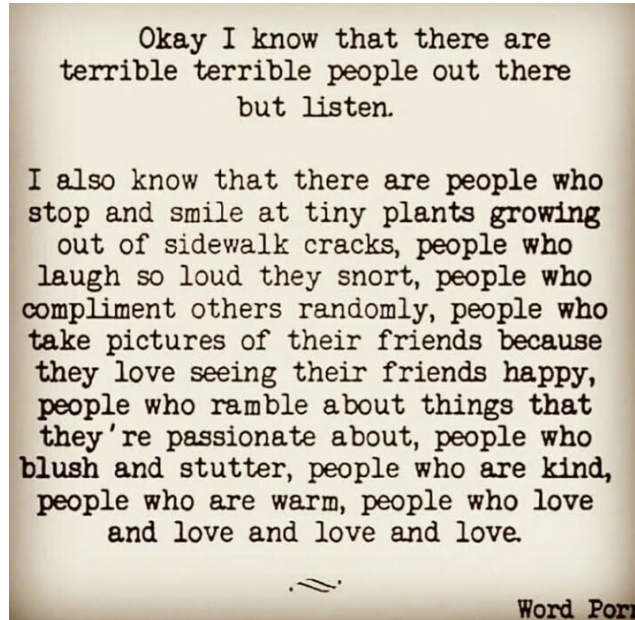
The ingredients have been easy to find, it's easy to make and smells amazing!

5. Remembering Good People Exist

The state of the world and our country is tenuous, at best, right now. The news is full of heartbreaking stories of hate, violence, death, destruction and devastation. As a sensitive person, I have to limit how much news I let in. It breaks my heart and I end up carrying a ghostly heaviness and sadness with me. Add that to the everyday frustrations and overload and it's just too much.

When I reach that point, I feel like everything is going to "hell in a hand basket"; no one cares about anything; hatred runs rampant and I'm all alone in my attitudes and beliefs. The world feels small, dark and smothering for a person who's spirit is one that chooses to spread light.

I saw this quote many years ago and have saved it because it's something I sometimes needs to hear. Maybe you do too.



I don't know about you, but I fall into many of these. If you do too, then we are an army of 2! It's a tough world we live in, but I encourage you to fight to stay in the light, my friend. Stay in the light.



Until next 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 and encourage them to subscribe!

If I can support you in your own caregiving journey, please message me. I'd love to hear your story and offer you a safe space.

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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