



Weekly Newsletter

-June 20,2023

NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Events

July
11

New Harmony
Support Group
New Harmony
Library

6-7pm

June
26

Zoom support group
1:00 pm



Caregiver Self-Care

By: Lucas Benson - Write On Wellness

The rigors and difficulties of caretaking for a loved one cannot be overstated. Anyone familiar with the realities of caring for those in need of full-time care understands how destabilizing it can be. The idea of self-care is often met by primary caregivers with scorned laughter and a 'who's got the time?' shake of the head, but we are only as good to others as we are to ourselves. Without a solid foundation, or at least one with resiliency and minimal cracks, we can never give the quality of care our loved ones deserve. Thankfully there are those who have walked this path before us, and they have gleaned bits of wisdom that can serve to help even the most time crunched caregivers among us.

If we consider taking care of ourselves as foundational to the care we provide for our loved ones, then it makes sense to build from our own inner foundation. By cultivating a positive mindset towards our goal of self-care we take the first crucial step by simply allowing ourselves to accept that we too need care to function. Often times the first hurdle can be feelings of guilt or shame in choosing to put ourselves first when those in our care are so obviously in need. But ignoring our own self worth comes with the potential cost of burnout, illness and mental turbulence of our own, rendering us less capable of being there for those that depend on us. Johns Hopkins recommends performing this Self-Care Assessment, then using your answers to take an inventory of how you perform well in caring for yourself, and more importantly areas where you could focus on improving your self-care approach. The assessment gives a great overview of areas that are considered to be of most help to self-care, in particular the fundamentals of regular exercise, diet and adequate sleep.

A true powerhouse of wellbeing is movement. Discovering the ways that moving our bodies makes us feel not only good but alive can help bolster our positive mental attitude and provides resilience against stress and the buildup of stress hormones in the body, such as cortisol. Keeping our bodies in motion is crucial to longevity, and within the marathon of caregiving we need all the staying power we can muster. While regular exercise routines might not be practical with your hands full as a primary caregiver, there are methods to incorporate focused, intentional movements to your daily tasks and chores. One example of a way to keep the blood flowing is to just stand up. According to this article from Mayo Clinic, sitting down all day, every day, poses mortality risks akin to smoking cigarettes, hence the modern adage that sitting is the new smoking. In this regard we can literally take a stand for ourselves and our foundational wellbeing. Simply choosing to stand over sitting throughout the day can significantly increase our daily physicality while requiring little to no extra time demands. Think of other ways you can incorporate movements you enjoy into your daily tasks. Another adage that pertains here might be '...use it, or lose it.'

A more horizontal pillar of a well-balanced self-care approach is providing yourself with enough sleep. Sleep is when our bodies recover and perform the maintenance required to once again go through the battles of our daily responsibilities. Without proper sleep we not only feel less energetic and sluggish, our measurable functional capabilities diminish dramatically. This article from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute highlights the myriad of ways sleep is pivotal to wellbeing. Aside from the obvious benefits of feeling rested, getting enough sleep is necessary for many of our bodies regulatory patterns. Without enough sleep our immune system

June
21
28
St George Support
Group
Metcalf Mortuary
1pm

About Memory Matters Utah

Our mission is to reduce isolation and improve wellness for individuals with dementia and their caregivers through support, activities, education, and consultations. People are our passion and we are dedicated to aiding all those affected by dementia in any way we can!

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weakens and our bodies build-up detrimental metabolites, setting ourselves up for illness and disease. Our mental processes and cognitive functioning also requires the sorting and management that only occurs when we sleep sufficiently; without this mental house-keeping our ability to be our best self when rising to the care needs of a loved one is thwarted before we begin. Not getting enough sleep is like pulling the rug out from under your feet before you're even standing on it.

While the demands of being a primary caregiver for the ones we love is a reality with seemingly few options for self-care, there is help available if we can choose to see that it is not really a choice at all. If we neglect our own selves in the stead of others we are potentially undermining our goals as caregivers; and possibly setting ourselves up for our own set of debilitating problems, essentially turning what was a precarious house of cards into a raging structure fire. By bringing awareness and attention to our struggles as care providers, and by choosing to honor ourselves as we honor our loved ones, we can make small daily choices that lead us to be the best version we can be for those loved ones, and to include ourselves in that group.

Free Weekly Support Groups.

Zoom every Monday from at 1:00 contact Janet at janet.labrum.mmu@gmail.com for an invitation.

Every Wednesday at 1:00 at Metcalf Mortuary at 288 West Saint George Blvd
Second Tuesday of each month at the New Harmony library.

Thrift store coming soon look for more information to come!

Contact

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