

FRIENDS CLUB NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2018

Celebrating more than 28 years of serving the Alzheimer's community!

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An Excerpt from “The 36-Hour Day”

by Peter. V. Rabins, M.D., MPH

Caring for Yourself

The sick person's well-being depends directly on your well-being. It is essential that you find ways to care for yourself so that you will not exhaust your own emotion and physical resources.

When you care for a person who has a dementing illness, you may feel sad, discouraged, frustrated or trapped. You may be tired or overburdened. While there are many reasons for feeling fatigued, the most common is not getting enough rest. You may put aside your own needs for rest, time with friends, and time alone in order to care for the sick person. If you have multiple responsibilities—family, job, children—your own needs have probably been greatly shortchanged.

Even if you are not caring for a person full time, you may have little time for yourself. You may be going to the nursing home after work several days a week or spending the weekends providing care so the full-time caregiver can get some rest. Whatever your direct care responsibilities are, you might feel anxious, saddened, and frustrated. Getting help with these emotions can benefit both you and the ill person.

Try to find ways to deal with annoying behaviors that irritate, provoke, or simply exasperate you. Changing the person's behavior might help considerably, but it is often not possible to eliminate the frustrating behaviors and they may continue to get on your nerves. To continue to cope, you will need to get enough rest and try to spend some time away from the ill person.

Behavior problems are often caused by the brain damage: when this is the case, neither you nor the confused person can prevent these problems, but you may be able to lessen their frequency. In addition, your mood can affect the ill person's behavior. If you are rushed, tense, or irritable, the ill person may sense your feelings. This, in turn, can make him become more anxious or more irritable, move more slowly, or begin an annoying behavior. When you are rested and feel better, the ill person may manage better and feel better too.

It is not unusual for family members to feel alone in their struggle with a chronic illness. Friends drift away and one doesn't know about other people with similar problems. It may seem impossible to get out of the house, and life narrows down to a tight circle of lonely misery. Feelings of sadness and grief seem more painful when you also feel alone with your problem.

For these reasons, you need to take care of yourself. You should get enough rest, have time away from the sick person, and spend time with friends—people you can enjoy, share your problems with and laugh with.

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You may find you need additional help in coping with your feelings of discouragement or sorting out disagreements in the family. A common error is feeling that it is a sign of failure to ask for help. I believe the opposite is true; not asking for help when you need it is detrimental to the ill person and to you and your family.

Joining with other families to exchange concerns, to make new friends, and to advocate for better resources for people with dementing illnesses can benefit not only you and the person you are caring for but also others in a similar situation.

~DEMENTIA TOOLBOX~

If you're a caregiver of someone with dementia, you know there are no simple answers or catch-all solutions for easing day-to-day responsibilities. That's why when Friends Club learns of a tool that might be helpful, we are committed to spreading the word.

There is a website we just learned about called **Lotsa Helping Hands**. This website, which you can find at www.lotsahelpinghands.com, is free and helps coordinate family members and friends willing to help with various tasks. Caregivers set up a members-only online community and then post jobs others can sign up to do. The service emails helpers when there is a new task listed.

www.lotsahelpinghands.com



Lotsa Helping Hands
CREATE COMMUNITY

Thank you to Giant
Food for donating
lunch to Friends Club
in April and May!



Helpful Websites

Georgetown Memory Disorders Program
Information on local treatment and study participation

<https://memory.georgetown.edu>

Alzheimer's Disease Cooperative Study
Information on treatment research and development

www.acds.org

Alzheimer's Therapeutic Research Institute
Information on treatment research and development

<https://keck.usc.edu/atri/>

Database of clinical trials:

www.clinicaltrials.gov

Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral Center (ADEAR)

www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers

U.S. Government Alzheimer's Site:

www.alzheimers.gov

FOLLOW FRIENDS CLUB
ON FACEBOOK!

@FriendsClubBethesda



MOMENTS OF JOY



In recent weeks, members of Friends Club have enjoyed singing performances by the Bradley Hills Presbyterian Nursery School Children, a lot of piano music from Bob L., sharing "Transportation Day" with the school children, puzzle races, and BJ the dog's annual obedience demonstration (on his birthday!)

SPECIAL NOTICES

UPCOMING CLUB CLOSURES

Wednesday, July 4
Independence Day

Monday, Aug. 27-- Friday Aug. 30
Closure for Vacation Bible School at BHPC

CELL PHONE REMINDER

Please remind your loved one to turn their cell phones off or to silent mode before they come to Friends Club. It is extremely disruptive to have cell phones ringing while we are doing our programming, and it is difficult to re-establish everyone's attention after an interruption.

THANK YOU!

BIRTHDAYS

JUNE

Milton T. 9

JULY

Art L. 6
GayLynn M. 29

AUGUST

Bernie A. 1
Tillman N. 4
Bif W. 5
Andrew L. 10
Kanesa T. 23
Mark R. 29

Happy Birthday



Upcoming Friends Club Support Group Meetings

All meetings are held from 9:30 – 11 a.m. in the church library

June

Monday, June 4
Wednesday, June 20

July

Monday, July 2
Wednesday, July 18

August

Monday, August 6 – NO MEETING
Wednesday, August 15

NEW TRANSPORTATION OPTION

As the abilities of our members change over time, it can be difficult for them to manage calling a cab, an Uber or a Lyft on their own. Some of our families have tried Go Go Grandparent with great success. The rides can be organized by a third party, which can relieve a lot of confusion and stress on all involved. A smartphone is not needed to use the service. Call 855-464-6872 or visit www.gogograndparent.com.

