



Keys to Health and Well-Being for the Family Caregiver

CAREGIVING TO SOMEONE WITH A **CHRONIC ILLNESS** REQUIRES A DIFFERENT MINDSET THAN CARING FOR SOMEONE WITH AN **ACUTE ILLNESS**.

With an **acute illness**—such as the flu, pneumonia, or appendicitis— *we often set aside our own lives until the illness passes.*

This approach is *not effective* when our family member has a **chronic illness**, such as a stroke, Alzheimer's disease, or Parkinson's disease.

(Legacy Caregiver Services) Learn about: [Powerful Tools for Caregivers](#) class.

Did you know?...

- ◆ In 2012, 15.4 million family and friends provided over 17 billion hours of unpaid care to those with Alzheimer's and other dementias – care valued at more than \$216 billion. (2014 Appropriations Fact Sheet—Alzheimer's Association)
- ◆ Caregivers are present in one of every five households. (National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP) 83% are unpaid family caregivers. (Family Caregiver Alliance 2005)
- ◆ It is estimated that the number of family caregivers will increase by 85% from 2000 to 2050 (Department of Health and Human Services and Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 2003)
- ◆ In Oregon, in 2011, the health care costs for family caregivers exceeded the health care costs of non-caregiving peers by \$91 million. In 2012, the difference was \$96 million. (Oregon Alzheimer's Statistics 2013)

What is respite care?

When caring for someone with a chronic illness, if the caregiver sets his/her own life aside until the illness passes, the caregiver will get sick and even predecease the loved one they are caring for.

Respite care offers the caregiver a reviving, refreshing break, while their loved one has an opportunity to socialize with peers in a fun, supported, stimulating environment.

Keys to Self-Care:

- ⇒ Increase your awareness of stress-producing situations in your life. Can you remove any of these situations, remove yourself from them, or adjust or re-action?
- ⇒ Analyze your self-talk. Is it accurate? Could shifting your focus or reframing the situation reduce your stress?
- ⇒ Communicate your needs, preferences and strengths to others. Don't assume anyone can read your mind.
- ⇒ Consider joining a support group as a part of your self-care strategy.
- ⇒ Explore avenues of stress-release. What are your soothers? What relaxes you? Honor yourself by including these as priorities in your life.
- ⇒ Laugh! Breathe!

Power of the Heart: Dementia Education and Behavior Coaching
Core Curriculum class 4

(sweet day respite logo and name)