

Who Takes Care of the Caregiver?

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CANCER SURVIVOR DAY

Presenter Bio

Wright Doss, MSW, LCSW-C, LICSW, LCSW

- Wright is a clinical social worker who has worked with adults and youth with a broad range of behavioral health needs, including persons and their families impacted by Cancer
- He has taught undergraduate and graduate Social Work at the National Catholic School of Social Service
- Wright earned his master's degree in Social Work from the National Catholic School of Social Service in 2001

What we will talk about today...

Who are the caregivers

Caregiver challenges

Promoting self-care

Who are the caregivers?



Who are the caregivers?



Working mom
caring for her mom?



Husband caring for
his wife?



Helping out a
neighbor?



Retired wife caring
for her husband?

Caregivers come in many forms but they all have one thing in common...they make time in their lives to provide social, financial, emotional, and physical support to someone who needs their help

Who are the caregivers?

Some stats...



60% are female



85% care for a relative



48% provide care at home



24% provide care for ≥ 5 years



Nearly 20% care for more than one person

About 43.5 million adults in the United States provided unpaid care to adult or child in the last 12 months and these numbers will rise!

The challenge of being a caregiver



The challenge of being a caregiver

Too often the life of a caregiver feels like this...



**Tasks associated
with being a
caregiver**

**Everything else in
life (other needs
and commitments)**

The challenge of being a caregiver

Caregiver Fatigue / Burnout

“Caregiver burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion that may be accompanied by a change in attitude -- from positive and caring to negative and unconcerned. Burnout can occur when caregivers don't get the help they need, or if they try to do more than they are able -- either physically or financially. Many caregivers also feel guilty if they spend time on themselves rather than on their ill or elderly loved ones. Caregivers who are "burned out" may experience fatigue, stress, anxiety, and depression.”

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/caregiving-recognizing-burnout>

The challenge of being a caregiver

Physical Toll

Caregivers experience:

- Chronic conditions (heart attack/heart disease, cancer, diabetes and arthritis) at nearly **twice** the rate as non-caregivers
- Increased rate of physical ailments (acid reflux, headaches and pain/aching)
- Diminished immune response, which can lead to frequent infection and increased risk of cancers
- Higher rates of alcohol and substance abuse compared with non-caregivers
- **1/3** of caregivers continue to provide intense care to others while suffering from poor health themselves



The challenge of being a caregiver

Emotional Toll

Caregivers experience:

- a feeling of being alone with a huge responsibility
- worry or doubt about the quality of care you're providing
- guilt that you aren't doing enough
- resentment toward the person you care for
- anger at the lack of time you have for yourself and your family
- frustration that this isn't what you had planned for yourself at this time in your life
- fear about how much longer you can keep up this kind of care
- confusion about where to turn for help
- a sense of loss because the person you care for has changed so much
- stress over money

Promoting self-care



Promoting self-care

Where to start

Stress impacts us...

- Physically
- Socially
- Spiritually
- Emotionally

Therefore

Solutions should target...

- Our Physical Well-Being
- Our Social Lives
- Our Spiritual Lives
- Our Emotional Well-Being

Promoting self-care

Where to start



You can't add more hours to the day, so you need to make self-care a priority and plan ahead for it

Promoting self-care

Where to start



Commit to yourself



**Set specific time
aside each day**



**Make sure you have
back-up help**



Set goals for yourself



Don't give up

Promoting self-care

Physical Well-Being

Exercise

- 30 min on 3-5 days / week is ideal
- But even 10 minutes a day, 3 days / week helps
- No pressure... really



Eating Healthy

- Balance of protein and plant based food
- Minimal sugar, caffeine and alcohol
- Portion control



* Exercise produces biochemical reactions that mimic the effect of anti-depressants

*The foods we eat affect our immune system and our mood

Promoting self-care

Social life

Friends and Family

- Quality time (not quantity)
- Accept help from others
- Celebrate! (even when you don't feel like it)



Hobbies

- These are important, don't let these go!
- Own these and make them a priority
- They are a positive distraction



Promoting self-care

Spiritual life

Spirituality and Faith-based Activities

- Multiple studies have shown protects against depression
- Fosters hope and optimism
- Provides social support and helps avoid isolation



Promoting self-care

Emotional Well-Being

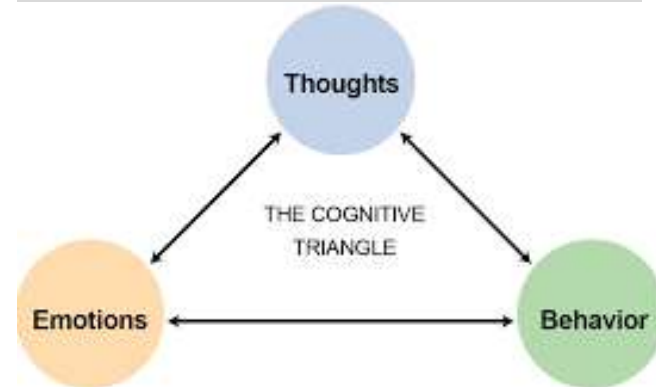
Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

- Uses self-awareness of our bodies and breathing
- May include meditation
- Manages the biology of stress and anxiety



Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

- Helps us to feel more effective and less stressed by focusing on changing how we think about ourselves and others



Promoting self-care

Emotional well-being

Make sure to avoid...



Unnecessary Conflict



Toxic People

Resources

- Kaiser Permanente
 - Behavioral Health Appointments: 1-800-777-7904
 - Wellness Coaching: Whether you're trying to be more active, achieve a healthy weight, quit tobacco, manage stress, or eat healthier foods, a Wellness Coach can help. Call 1-866-862-4295.
 - KP.org: KP.ORG>Health & Wellness>Live Healthy
- The American Cancer Society
 - <https://www.cancer.org/treatment/caregivers.html>
- The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
 - http://namimd.org/family_friend_support
- National Alliance for Caregiving
 - <http://www.caregiving.org/>
- The Feeling Good Handbook by David Burns

Your Feedback is Important to Us

Please take a moment to fill out the short and anonymous evaluation of this session before you go!



Thank You!!!