

Caregiver Connection

Called to
CARE

A program of Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center

A publication that connects caregivers with resources, support and each other

January/February 2017

Caregiver Cafés

Drop in to chat with fellow caregivers, meet health care providers and learn about community resources.

Jan. 19 & Feb. 16, from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

The Soul Center at Beth El Congregation
8101 Park Heights Ave., Pikesville, MD 21208

Jan. 20 & Feb. 17, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Enoch Pratt Free Library
3601 Eastern Ave., Baltimore, MD 21224

Jan. 25 & Feb. 22, from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
5th floor waiting room

Info.: 410-550-1660 (no registration is required)

Lunch & Learn

“Considerations When Making Decisions About Assisted Living for Your Loved One”

Learn about assisted living options, the decision-making barriers faced by caregivers and strategies for making timely decisions. Lunch is provided.

January 12

12 to 2 p.m.

Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
Knott Conference Center

Register: 410-550-8018

Community Event

Stress Management

Learn how to manage your stress in the new year.

January 24

12:45 to 1:45 p.m.

Essex Senior Center
600 Dorsey Avenue, Essex, MD

Info./Register: 410-887-0267

Recap: 5th Annual William S. Perper Symposium

On November 2, 2016 more than 200 family caregivers, health professionals, faith leaders and community members gathered for the 5th Annual William S. Perper Symposium. This year's theme, “Faith in Action: Caregiving in the Community,” celebrated the power of family caregiving and helped participants understand the role of spirituality in caring for loved ones.



During the morning session, clergy leaders spoke about their sacred scriptures and faith traditions. Speakers were **Rabbi Dana Saroken**, Beth-El Congregation; **Bishop Denis Madden**, Archdiocese of Baltimore; **Rev. Donte Hickman**,

Sr., Southern Baptist Church; **Imam Hassan A. Amin**, Muslim Social Services Agency; **Rev. Paula Teague**, Department of Spiritual Care and Chaplaincy, Johns Hopkins Health System; and **Rev. Gregory Johnson**, Senior Advisor for Family Caregiving, Emblem Health.

In addition to learning about faith and caregiving, conference participants obtained the latest information about caregiving programs and health-related services from 25 government, community, social service and health care agencies. These partners work in collaboration with Called to Care to provide family caregivers with the resources they need to take care of themselves and their loved ones.

Overall, the symposium received rave reviews. In an evaluation, one attendee commented, “Excellent presentations. Extraordinary speakers. A wealth of information. Very well-organized. This event was truly faith in action.”

Another said, “The symposium is nothing short of eye opening. The basics of loving each other, caregiving and helping the needy are what life is about.”

The Voice of the Caregiver: Andraya Dolbee

I am 55 and one of nine caregivers for my 86-year-old mother, who has dementia, mobility issues and mood problems associated with what we call “end-stage alcoholism.” As part of her “caregiver village,” I am the co-owner of her bank account so I can monitor her spending, pay her bills and reimburse a sibling if they incur any expenses. One of my sisters handles her insurance, while one of my brothers takes her out to breakfast and for haircuts.

The most difficult thing for me is the slipperiness of this slope that we are on. Initially, we had to deal with a fall that broke mom’s shoulder, which uncovered other health problems—dementia and alcoholism. Once we found an assisted living facility for her, my siblings and I were able to breathe easier for the first time in two years. Mom is more social, is eating better and is healthier than if she were living at home by herself. However, she doesn’t understand the staff as well as she once did and is starting to develop minor health issues that may require around-the-clock care.

As a caregiver, I try to remember what my older sisters told me when I had my first baby: “Of course, you’re going to be swept up into every moment of the baby’s care, but just because the baby is having a bad day doesn’t mean that you have to have a bad day.” I have to remind myself that just because mom is confused, paranoid or angry when I talk to her, it doesn’t mean that we are right back in crisis mode or that I need to say exactly the right thing to make her feel better. I’ve learned that I can only be a sympathetic ear.

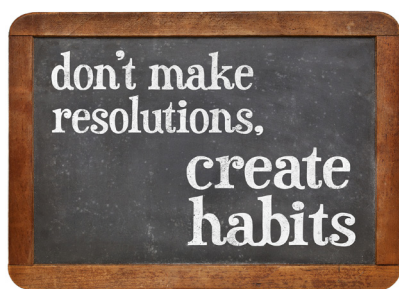
My experience as a caregiver has made me realize that self-care is important. I’ve tried acupuncture and meditation, and have become committed to daily exercise. I want to keep making better decisions with my time, nutrition and finances.

My advice for other caregivers is to ask for help. Find a way to share the burden, even if it means you are purchasing care through Care.com. Stay focused as you shift from providing care to making decisions about care.



Caregiving Tips for the Best New Year

Every January, one in three Americans resolves to better themselves in some way. This year, make a promise to care for yourself while also caring for a loved one.



Give yourself a health and wellness gift. Make it a point to get that overdue medical checkup or book yourself a much deserved massage. Set aside a nap time or get out for a daily walk.

Ask for help and be open to accepting it. Too often we have a “go it alone policy” and believe that we must take care of everything ourselves—you don’t. Ask friends or family members for help.

Schedule family conferences. Understanding roles and responsibilities is extremely important to keep a healthy family dynamic. Ongoing family conferences will help maintain necessary boundaries so that no one feels out of control or inadequate.

Source: www.joanlunden.com/category/3-caregiving/item/18-caregiving-tips-for-the-best-new-year

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