



CAREGIVER CONNECTIONS

Resources for Elders, Family and Professional Caregivers

SPONSORED BY ETHOS AND THE CAREGIVER ALLIANCE OF SUFFOLK COUNTY

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Caregivers Resolve to Care For Themselves

Here are some recommendations for the New Year.

Learn to take **one hour out of each day** just for yourself to read, enjoy a hot bath, walk, journal your thoughts or call a buddy. Then attend at least **one caregiver support group each month** to realize that you are not alone and that you can give and receive support from others.

Set a goal to have **someone fill in as caregiver for you at least once a month for a whole day**. Then you go do whatever to recharge your battery.

Give your own health more of a priority in partnership with your doctor. Eat a balanced diet and **exercise at least 20 minutes three times a week** even if all you can do is walk around the house, up and down the stairs, or exercise from a chair. **Seek out one new resource** to support your caregiver role such as chore services, housekeeping, adult day health, or home care programs.

Create a **“Buddy System” stress relief plan**. Get yourself some buddies - like a **laughter buddy** who always helps you regain perspective and finds the humor in situations. You also will need someone with whom you feel comfortable crying and don't forget your **“I am angry as hell and I am not going to take it any more” buddy** who lets you vent your frustrations. You may find most of these attributes in one person but try to include at least two or three people in your “Buddy” support system.

Reach out to your family and friends to help with your loved one so that the care giving demands can be lifted and shared. One way you can do this is to **keep a list of needs handy** so that when help is offered you can be ready with a request.

Please don't let this become another list of overwhelming demands. **Take it a day at a time, and line up those buddies early on to have their help**. Caregivers and seniors will probably find a lot of support in the educational classes that are described as follows.

My Life, My Health

This class will help you manage your chronic disease (or that of a loved one) and take control of your life. Topics include healthy eating, exercising, effective communication, and relaxation techniques.



Classes are 6 weeks.

No cost but you must pre-register.

Classes are starting:

- **Thursday Jan. 13, 2011 from 1-3:30 p.m.**
Woodbourne Apartments, 6 South Bourne Rd. Jamaica Plain
- **RSVP to Jessie Brown at 617-522-3633**
- **Friday Jan. 14, 2011 from 2-4 p.m.**
Harvard Vanguard, 291 Independence Drive, West Roxbury.
- **RSVP to Esther Jackson at 617-477-6694**

A Caring Class

Feeling stretched caring for a loved one? When you take care of yourself everyone benefits. Join the upcoming **Powerful Tools for Caregivers** class sponsored by AgeWell West Roxbury that is designed to provide you, the family caregiver, with the skills you need to take care of yourself. You will learn:



- **How to Reduce Stress**
- **Improve Self Confidence**
- **Balance Your Life**
- **Better Communicate Your Feelings**
- **Increase Your Ability to Make Tough Decisions**
- **Locate Helpful Resources**

Classes start Wednesday February 2, 2011 and run from 6-7:30 p.m. The class is for 6 weeks. It will be held at Faulkner Hospital (Social Work



Conference Room), 1153 Centre Street, Jamaica Plain. **No**

charge but Pre-Registration is required. Call 617-477-6694. Refreshments will be served.

Preventing Falls This Winter



Avoiding winter falls is all about **traction, balance, and attention**. For better **traction**, wear footwear that has non-smooth

soles made of rubber or neoprene; avoid plastic or leather soles. Walking on ice is safest with cleats or ice-traction slip-ons that fit over regular shoes and boots. Use your arms for **balance**, and bend your back to lower your center of gravity. Take small steps, shuffle your feet, and walk flat-footed on icy surfaces. If you must carry something, divide the load equally between both hands. Be **attentive** and watch the ground directly ahead of you for trouble spots. **If you do start to fall**, try to tuck your body as much into a ball as possible to minimize the chance of injuries. Try to make contact with your hip, then thigh, and then your shoulder. Do not try to break your fall with your hand. With **patience and preparation**, we can all work toward a fall-free winter. You can contact Matter of Balance at:

www.Mainehealth.org/pfha or call toll free at 1-866-609-5183.

Thanks to certified Matter of Balance Leader, Paul Antokolsky for above write-up about fall prevention. If you are interested in information about local classes you can reach him at 857-919-9154.

Caregiving on Community TV

“Agewise” Programming on caregiver issues at 2:30 PM on BNNTV every second Tuesday.

“Taking Care”

(www.takingcare.tv)

airs live every **Wednesday at 6:00 PM** on **Comcast channel 9** and **RCN channel 15**. The



program is repeated on Friday at 10:00 AM and Sunday at noon. You can also watch this show on your computer by going to www.bnntv.org and watch Channel 9 at the show times mentioned.

Caregiver Support Groups

Join other caregivers for refreshments and discussion in a caring, relaxed, and confidential setting on a monthly basis. Everyone is welcome and **there is no charge**. We ask that you pre-register first.

“Smoother Sailing” Alzheimer Education Group (First Monday of the Month)

This free monthly group will meet on **Monday, January 3, 2011 and February 7, 2011** at **Spaulding Nursing & Therapy Center** at 1245 Centre St. in West Roxbury at **6-7:30 PM**. (Formerly the Boston Center) Call **Leslie Ahern at 617-477-6676** to pre-register.



We will learn behavioral techniques called Habilitation therapy. We will problem solve how to manage challenges like bathing, eating, toileting and anxiety. Our goal is to make “smoother sailing” of your every day care. We also will look at therapeutic activities to brighten everyone’s day. **“While we can not stop the stormy winds of dementia diseases, we can learn together how to better adjust our sails”.** ©

LGBT Caregiver Support Group

This group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals usually meets the first Monday but please contact Joanne Peskowitz at **(617) 271-4182** for exact dates.

“Taking Care of Me” Support Group 6 PM

The group will meet the fourth (due to holiday) Monday in **January 24, 2011** and third Monday on **February 21, 2011** at Spaulding Nursing & Therapy Center at 1245 Centre St. in West Roxbury. (Formerly the Boston Center). It is accessible by MBTA and there is free parking. Contact: **Leslie Ahern at 617-477-6676**.



Please note all services are provided free and no income verification is required. For more information or to receive this newsletter monthly, please contact: **Leslie Ahern** Family Care Advisor 617-477-6676 LAhern@ethocare.org
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