

Caregivers Resolve To Build Resiliency

Most of us shrink from the idea of making New Years resolutions because it usually involves putting extra pressure on ourselves to try to do what we already know is hard for us. The focus is often on depriving ourselves of foods we enjoy or giving up money or time we need.



Decide instead to recognize that as a family caregiver you need to nourish and nurture yourself to stay in good emotional and physical health. You also need to build your *resiliency* to be able to meet the many often unexpected challenges and demands of caregiving.

Caregivers often feel that they constantly juggling too many demands. This frequently leads to poor nutrition, lack of rest, proper exercise, and time for fun and social outlets. There is often a sense of anxiety that we can't handle everything and a fear of "what's coming next?" If you are feeling life has gotten out of control, then it is time to **build your caregiver resiliency**.

Let's look first at the **components of caregiver resiliency**.

- Self-Care
- Self-value
- Develop optimism
- Value continuous learning
- Develop Flexibility
- Friendship and love relationships
- Build a Caregiving team

Let's take a closer look at some of the critical aspects of developing resiliency.

Take Care of You First

- When it comes to the basics you must get

adequate sleep, exercise and nutrition. Prioritize these needs to avoid burn-out and/or falling ill yourself.

Self-value and Care

- Time to breathe and create an inner calmness
- Writing down your thoughts and feeling often bring clarity
- Foot and temple massage is easy to learn and a great stress buster. Find yourself a massage buddy or if they are able your care partner.

Develop Optimism

- Yes, you can learn optimism. It doesn't mean being in denial or avoiding the painful, but is being able to nurture hopefulness.
- Laugh even when you don't feel like it. Go to Laughterforhealth.com to find out how to do it and see how good it is for you.



Develop Flexibility

You have heard the clichés:

- "Roll with punches" and "Pick your battles"
- This is especially true when dealing with illness; we need to bend in the storms, so we don't break.

Nurturing Fun and Friendships

- Be with people who are fun and make you feel good about yourself.
- Keep or develop those friends that you can have a heart to heart with. Be silly and have fun with your care partners.

You already may have learned how to be resilient from your parents or through life's experiences. However, many of us have not. In our upcoming **Building Caregiver Resiliency** workshop, you can take a resiliency test to learn ways in which you are and are not resilient and learn how to incorporate those skills and attitudes that would be helpful to you. This free two- hour workshop will be given in January and March, 2009. Please call **Leslie Ahern at 617-477-6676** for dates, questions and to pre-register.

Caregivers: Voice your Needs

AgeWell West Roxbury is conducting an Assessment of Need to determine what elderly West Roxbury residents want in order to stay in their homes as long as possible.



A critical component of helping seniors with this goal is the caregiving they receive from loving family members. Thus, the voice of caregivers is needed to determine what they need to be able to serve their loved one, well maintaining a healthy balance in their own lives.

We are asking caregivers to take part in a focus group at the **end of January**. If you would like to express your concerns and assist with this very important assessment, please call **Cathy Slade, AgeWell Coordinator at 617-477-4616**.



The Caregiver Alliance of Suffolk County has a website which is waiting to keep you informed on all caregiver related information, support groups and activities. Visit

www.caregiveralliance.org or www.ethocare.org you can call **Jasjot Kaur at 617-277-7416** for locations and languages of support group

Caregiving on Community TV

Age Wise Boston: Bridging Generations

The BNN Live cable show is on every second Tuesday of the month at 2:30 PM.



Taking Care

Family Care Advisor, **Leslie Ahern** and her husband **Paul Antokolsky** who is an elder care specialist and SHINE counselor host their one-hour

show **“Taking Care” Live every Wednesday at 6:00 PM** on Comcast channel 9 and RCN channel 15. The program is then repeated on Friday at 10:30 AM and Sunday at noon



For more information, please contact:
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 617-477-6676

www.ethocare.org
www.caregiveralliance.org

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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

This free monthly group will meet on **Monday, January 5, 2009** at the Boston Center in West Roxbury. Call the Family Care Advisor, **Leslie Ahern at 617-477-6676** to pre-register. The group provides support and education about dementia and the Alzheimer’s disease process.



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”.* © **Group Meets Every First Monday of the Month**

LGBT* Caregiver Support Group

Monday, January 5, 2009 from 6:00 -7:30 PM at the Ethos’ office in Jamaica Plain
 Contact: **Joanne Peskowitz (617) 271-4182**
 *Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender

“Taking Care of Me” Support Group

The group will meet **Monday, January 26, 2009** at 6:00-7:30 PM at the Boston Center in West Roxbury. It is accessible to MBTA and there is free parking. Refreshments are provided. Contact: **Leslie Ahern at 617-477-6676**. **Due to MLK holiday this month we will meet the fourth Monday of the Month.**

