

Caregiver Training Class – call 707-542-0282 to sign up (every 2nd Friday of each month)

January

Video: ***Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter***—This film is an Oscar-nominated documentary of one woman’s experience caring for her mother with Alzheimer’s disease. She chronicles her struggles and challenges and shares how she learned to adapt, cope, and cultivate connection with her mother as the disease process progressed.

Discussion: Living with ambiguous loss and anticipatory grief, adjusting to new ways of interacting with a cognitively-impaired loved one, setting realistic expectations, the importance of self-care to manage stress and remain flexible

February

Videos: ***Louie, Louie: A Portrait in Parkinson’s, Early Onset Memory Loss: Conversations with Letty Tennis, and Living After Stroke: Conversations With Couples***—These films explore the experiences of families living with the after effects of different types of dementing illnesses and discuss issues that are common across diagnoses as well as disease-specific challenges.

Discussion: Understanding how challenges may manifest differently depending on a person’s diagnosis, identifying family caregiving challenges that transcend diagnoses

March

Videos: ***Communicating With Moderately and Severely Confused Older Adults***—These video clips demonstrate specific communication strategies and techniques that allow for connection with a cognitively-impaired person, regardless of the content of the conversation.

Discussion: Adjusting the way we approach communication in the context of a dementia diagnosis, why logic and reasoning won’t work, how to get “a foot in the door”

April

Video: ***Managing and Understanding Behavior Problems in Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders*** —These video clips introduce coping strategies for accommodating challenging dementia-related behaviors, including The ABC approach. This approach identifies where caregivers have control and where they do not and can help frustrated caregivers gain a sense of empowerment.

Discussion: Shifting the goal from stopping challenging behaviors from starting to accommodating them, viewing all behavior as an attempt to fill an unmet need, becoming a “detective” to identify needs that difficult behaviors may be seeking to fill, noticing environmental triggers to behavior, practicing the ABC approach to managing difficult behaviors

May

Video: ***Bathing Without a Battle and Mouth Care without a battle***—These films demonstrates helpful strategies for minimizing fear and resistance to help with areas of personal care, including bathing and mouth care.

Discussion: Understanding the root -causes of resistant behaviors, anticipating, and minimizing predictable triggers for fear and resistance, setting realistic expectations for both the care receiver and the caregiver

June

Videos: ***He's Doing This to Spite Me: Emotional Conflicts in Dementia Care and At the Breaking Point: Emotions and Ethics in Family Caregiving***—These videos teach caregivers to understand and decipher behavioral cues, and body language in people with dementia and to use those cues to help interpret challenging behaviors. They offer validation for frustrations and grief, along with practical coping strategies.

Discussion: Interpreting non-verbal signals, keeping behavior in the context of emotional need, learning to let go of the idea that difficult behaviors are done on purpose, developing adaptive coping

July

Video: ***Prescription for Caregivers: Take Care of Yourself***—This film discusses the common issues of guilt, resentment, overwhelm, and obstacles to self-care that challenge many caregivers. It is filmed in front of a live audience of family caregivers who contribute from their experiences. The value of self-care is stressed.

Discussion: Setting realistic expectations for the caregiver and the care-receiver, increasing emotional reserves through practical self care, brainstorming realistic ways to prioritize self care

August

Video: ***A Thousand Tomorrows: Intimacy, Sexuality, and Alzheimer's and Sexuality, Intimacy, and Dementia in the Residential Care Setting***—These films follow people dealing with the issue of changes in intimacy as dementia causes changes in roles. These changes are often left unaddressed by professionals, family, and friends. Couples discuss from their experiences, how they learned to adapt, both in the home and in residential care settings

Discussion: Grief and loss, learning to redefine intimacy when sexual attraction and desire is diminished due to the caregiver's blurred roles and the care-receiver's ever-increasing dependency for care, normalizing human sexuality across the life spectrum

September

Video: ***More than Words: A New Culture of Care and Communication With Persons Who Are Living With Dementia and Other Age-Related Conditions***—This video shows practical ways of identifying the underlying need behind a patient's challenging behavior and shows the process of evaluating adaptive approaches to help meet those needs. This film follows actual dementia patients and care in a residential facilities and offers strategies that can be used anywhere including in the home.

Discussion: Setting realistic expectations with regard to behavior management, focus on behavior accommodation versus behavior modification identifying environmental triggers and learning where caregivers do and do not have control

October

Video: ***The Alzheimer's Project: Grandpa, Do You Know Who I Am?*** — Five children--ages 6-15--talk about coping with grandparents who are suffering from Alzheimer's disease in this documentary. Maria Shriver provides commentary and delivers valuable lessons for the kids.

Discussion: Helping children understand and cope with memory, personality, and behavioral changes in their loved ones, including how we can model, validate, and encourage children to develop adaptive coping

November

Video: ***Is It the Right Time? The Nursing Home Decision***— This video deals with the tough decision of nursing home placement, and how one family struggled with that decision.

Discussion: Exploring placement options, including accessing supportive resources to find appropriate Residential Care, indicators that residential care may be necessary, and how to approach a move

December

Video: ***My Father's House: A Journey of Love and Memory and Quiet Triumphs***—These films focus on the caregiving journey—following a daughter's experiencing of caring for her father through the final stage of dementia, including his death. They explore some of the good that can come out of caregiving. Caregivers discuss their experiences of gratitude and growth in the midst of the stressors of long-term caregiving.

Discussion: Identifying areas of meaning in caregiving, adapting to "both/and" thinking with regard to challenges and fulfillment