



Caregiver Support Line Telephone Education Groups

“Care for the Caregiver”

Typically, these calls occur on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m., the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m., and the 4th Wednesday of the month at 3 p.m. If you are interested in participating in a call, please contact your Caregiver Support Coordinators, Heather Moss-Baker, LCSW at 317-988-3488 or by e-mail: Heather.Moss-Baker@va.gov or Mary Burns-Verbarq, LCSW at 317-988-4891 or by e-mail: Mary.Burns-Verbarq@va.gov.

September 2016 - Dual Caregivers: Surviving and Conquering the Challenges

Caregiving for a loved one is challenging and many Caregivers find themselves balancing several caregiving roles. This group explores how becoming a Caregiver to a loved one may alter relationships and impacts the Caregiver’s ability to fulfill other roles and responsibilities. This group discusses some of the strategies and resources that Caregivers may use to help successfully juggle dual caregiving roles.

October 2016 - Tempering the Tyrant: Finding Anger’s Rightful Place

The ability to recognize and manage feelings of anger is important for all human beings. It’s especially important for Caregivers who struggle to balance caring for their own needs while also caring for another. Angry feelings, like any other feelings, arise as the direct result of one’s needs being met or not met, or when one’s safety or boundaries have been threatened. Recognizing anger as a simple, understandable human emotional response or warning sign is the first important step towards self-care. This group will help participants identify the signs of anger, how it may be expressed, and provide tools that will assist in communicating feelings in a manner that is constructive.

November 2016 - Finding Comfort in the Healing Gifts of the Season

During a time of year that can often be fraught with extra demands, expectations, and disappointments, this presentation explores the many simple and restorative activities that Caregivers may turn to for comfort, relief, rejuvenation, and a sense of connection. This group encourages all Caregivers to draw from the many cherished activities and healing practices of the season, with the hope of finding a renewed appreciation and joy in living.

December 2016 - Making My Goals Matter: Looking Forward to the Year Ahead



This group focuses on identifying why goals can be helpful, obstacles that may arise, and how to overcome these obstacles to achieve a desired outcome. Participants are coached to identify specific steps toward reaching the goal which take into account all the pressures and responsibilities of being a Caregiver. A visualization exercise is incorporated as a teaching tool to help Caregivers stay motivated towards reaching their goal.

January 2017 - Exploring Problem Solving Skills for Caregivers: How to Feel Better and Get Things Done

We all have different thought processes and styles of problem solving, some of which are effective and others that are not. This presentation will explore what works, what doesn't, and the skills needed to effectively resolve the problems that may be encountered. Five steps will be identified that will assist in approaching problems with less stress and more successful results.

February 2017 - Leaning into Love: Building Strong Relationship Bonds

With all the challenges love relationships face, particularly if caring for someone with medical and mental health concerns, one's own health challenges, time demands, financial and work stresses, caring for children, caring for a home, and trying to take care of oneself, how do Caregivers keep investing in his/her partner? This group helps participants identify the struggles of a loving relationship; the conflicts and burdens that are felt, and guides participants in exploring some practical tools that support maintaining a healthy loving partnership.

March 2017 - Negotiating the Emotional Milestones of Aging, Illness, and Caregiving

Caregiving has its own set of emotional consequences that are challenging and burdensome as well as enriching and positive. The statistics show that the bulk of caregiving rests with those at middle age and older. There are unique life stage milestones and emotional hurdles that one faces as they enter into the mid to late stages of life. This presentation will explore some of the emotional challenges of aging Caregivers as while navigating both the process of aging and the emotional demands and gifts of Caregiving.

April 2017 - Caregiver Self-Care: Embracing the Magic in the Moment



This presentation explores the topic of self-care. Why can self-care be so difficult? The meaning of self-care will be explored while focusing on how to engage in these activities in a way that feels less like another item on the to-do list, and more like an opportunity to provide healing from daily demands and stresses. This presentation aims at viewing self-care not as a thing to do rather, but rather as a way to enhance one's way of life.

May 2017 - Older Americans Month, Aging and Dementia Series- Understanding Long Term Care Options, Dementia Caregiving: Managing Difficult Behaviors, & Driving and Dementia

Older Americans Month, which dates back to 1963, encourages and supports Older Americans' efforts to take charge of their health. In keeping with this mission, three groups will be presented throughout the month whose topics tackle some of the most challenging aspects of aging. These individual groups each highlight specific concerns, and provide strategies and skills to successfully manage these challenges.

June 2017 - Choosing Your Words: Harnessing the Power of Communication

Caregivers challenged with the stresses and demands of the caregiving role find it essential to acquire the skills needed to advocate for themselves and their loved ones. This group will focus attention on expanding participant's awareness of what needs are, as well as providing some tools that support the communication of these needs directly. We will identify the critical communication skills that will empower Caregivers. This group will help Caregivers give voice to their needs and concerns, and the skills to advocate for oneself, and the loved one being cared for, with effective and clear communication.

July 2017 - Balance in the Eye of the Storm: Self Care When Caring For a Loved One with Mental Health Concerns

Caring for a loved one with mental health needs may present Caregivers with unique challenges. This presentation examines these challenges. Strategies are discussed to assist Caregivers in becoming more aware of personal reactions and tools are introduced to help Caregivers enhance their own well-being.

August 2017 - Setting Boundaries: Defining What's Best for You, the Caregiver

This presentation is focused on exploring the topic of boundaries and the importance of maintaining boundaries with the many demands on Caregivers. The concept of personal boundaries will be defined and how caring for others may contribute to



neglecting the physical and emotional boundaries that support Caregivers in caring for themselves. The problems that result when clear boundaries are not set will be identified, as well as the benefits that result when one clearly communicates feelings and needs to ensure others recognize and respect the boundaries that have been set.

September 2017 - Quiet on the Homefront: Restoring Connections at Home

Caregivers are often front and center when managing the competing needs and demands on the Homefront. Whether negotiating the care needs of a recently returning Veteran, caring for children, an ill Veteran parent, or an aging Veteran spouse, managing the multiple and often conflicting needs of oneself and loved ones can be difficult. The home can become a safe haven or hostile ground depending on the pressures and demands at home and the ability to negotiate and work together as competing needs arise. This presentation will explore some potential strategies for Caregivers to meet their own needs and bring some healing and connection back to the Homefront.