

Caregiver E-Visit

May 2018

Patience as a Healthy Virtue

Annette is a 70-year-old woman who is taking care of her 78-year-old husband, Mitchell. Mitchell has Alzheimer's disease. He has been misplacing things more and more. He's been forgetting appointments and has been short with his wife and more surly than usual.

When Annette tries to talk to him about these things, Mitchell denies that there is anything wrong, and has started getting mad at Annette for suggesting that there's something going on. Annette doesn't know what to do. She's so frustrated at Mitchell. Why can't he see that he's acting strangely, and try to change?

One day, she is working in the kitchen, and goes to throw out her scraps from preparing dinner. She notices a flash of color in the garbage can, and when she investigates, she finds that the checkbook is in the trash! Well, she didn't put it there... She finds Mitchell in the living room and asks why he threw the checkbook away. "I haven't touched the checkbook. I have no idea what you're talking about," Mitchell says. For Annette, this is the last straw. Her patience has run out. "It had to have been you! Don't touch important papers anymore! I'm so mad that you can't watch what you're doing!" She storms off to another part of the house. After a while, in a calmer

state, Annette is sorry that she blew up at her husband. She wonders how can she be more patient with him?

Patience. It is often the thing we lack and the thing we wish we had more of. We want to be patient,



but when we are sad, or frustrated with someone or something, or downright angry at the situation, we lash out. Being angry, sad, or frustrated is not something that we can – or necessarily should – stop feeling. Anger, and other emotions like it, are natural reactions to certain situations. Those emotions aren't good or bad, they just are. It's how we react to those emotions that can define the situation and make things better or worse. This is where patience comes in. It isn't easy, though. Being patient doesn't just happen. The phrase "practice patience" comes

Inside Story Headline



to mind, because it is a skill that we must practice and continue to develop over time. It is something that must be cultivated within ourselves. It is a

learning process. It means learning new ways to look, to listen, to slow down, and to breathe.

When something aggravating happens, using patience as a way to respond to that occurrence can take many different forms. It might be doing something right in that moment that can be calming, or it might be something that you do daily as a reminder to practice patience in other areas of your life.

Practicing patience in the moment might be as simple as making yourself pause and count to ten before you respond to what was said, or pausing to think of five things you are grateful for; or it might be using a breathing technique that only takes a minute. Breathing techniques and other relaxation methods, are something that can be used in the moment. It can also be practiced daily so that you train your brain to think of using them in that frustrated moment.

Practicing patience in an ongoing way might be doing some sort of exercise a few times a week, even if you're just taking a ten-minute

walk around the neighborhood, or making sure you have a little time each day to listen to music that calms you. When you do things for yourself this way, you are practicing self-care, and are working daily on calming yourself. These techniques can help you remember to calm yourself in those moments of stress.

There are other things a caregiver can do that don't even seem like a way to cultivate patience. You might utilize a respite program, so that your loved one is safe and you have time away to be in a calmer, less stressful space. You might learn more about your loved one's illness so that you can develop strategies to help you be more patient before a situation occurs, so that you are ready when it does. You might also talk to someone who understands what you are going through – a counselor, your pastor or other religious leader, or the folks at a caregiver support group. These are good, ongoing ways to encourage patience in other areas of your life.

Practicing patience has ongoing benefits in multiple areas of your life. Patience is good for your general state of mind, your overall health, and your caregiving situation. Exercise, for example, can help elevate your mood and helps you become physically healthier. It is also a way of practicing patience, routine, and determination, among other things.

Practicing patience takes time. It may never be something that we are able to master, because it is an ongoing life skill. But it is something that can have a tremendous positive effect in

For more information or if you wish to make comments on this E-Visit, contact Elizabeth Trudeau 262-833-8762



our lives.

Annette connects with her local Aging and Disability Resource Center. She is able to make an appointment to sit down with someone to talk about resources and other options for Mitchell, and she learns that she can speak to a Caregiver Support Specialist who can chat with her about

Mitchell's disease, and give her moral support and be available for one-on-one chats. She is looking forward to having someone to talk to about what she is going through. She knows they will have more ideas for her to cope with Mitchell's illness. She plans on asking specifically about ways to be more patient with her husband.

Caring—it's not the hard part of caregiving

A Community Dialogue on Supporting Family Caregivers.

Plan to attend:

Thursday May 31st

ADRC Auditorium
14200 Washington

Ave, Sturtevant

RSVP to
262-833-8777

9:30 to 11:00 am

**Focus on
Caregivers for
Seniors**

1:30—3:00 pm

**Focus on
Caregivers for
Adults and
Children with
disabilities**

Be heard and get your questions answered. Includes panel and resources information. See flyer on the

website:

www.adrc.racinecountyy.com



**Feel better.
Be in control.
Do the things
you want to do.**

Join Us
Fridays
June 8 - July 20
No class July 13

Time
1:00pm - 3:30pm

Place & address
Aging and Disability
Resource Center of
Racine County
14200 Washington
Avenue
Sturtevant, WI 53177

Class Fee \$10.00

**Put Life Back
in Your Life with
Living Well**

Are you 60 or above with an ongoing health condition?

You'll get the support you need, find practical ways to deal with pain and fatigue, discover better nutrition and exercise choices, understand new treatment choices, and learn better ways to talk with your doctor and family about your health.

If you have conditions such as diabetes, arthritis, high blood pressure, heart disease, chronic pain, or anxiety, the *Living Well* Workshop can help you take charge of your life.



"The workshops put me back in charge of my life, and I feel great. I only wish I had done this sooner."

To Register Call:
Elizabeth
262-833-8762

AGING AND
DISABILITY
RESOURCE CENTER
OF RACINE COUNTY

14200 Washington Ave
Sturtevant, WI 53177

Phone: 262-833-8777

Email: adrc@racinecounty.com

www.adrc.racinecounty.com

Support Groups for Family Caregivers

For caregivers who are over 60 or are caring for someone over 60 and caregivers (of any age) for people who have dementia. Contact: Marilyn Joyce, 833-8764, or marilyn.joyce@racinecounty.com

Sometimes we are able to make reminder calls to former attendees about an upcoming Support Group. However, this is not always possible. These groups nearly always happen at the scheduled time and place. If you haven't gotten a call, and you have doubts, please call 262-833-8764 or 262-833-8777. See you there!!

General Caregiver Groups

First Friday
12 Noon-1:00 pm

Caregiver Connection

Telephone Group
Call 833-8762 for call-in
Information

May 4 June 1 July 6

Second Saturday
10:30 am-12:00 Noon
Atonement Lutheran Church
2915 Wright Ave, Racine
May 12 June 9 July 14

Third Tuesday
1:30-3:00 pm
Yorkville United Methodist
Church
17645 Old Yorkville Rd
(Just off of Highway 20, 3 miles
West of I-94)
May 15 June 19 July 17

Third Wednesday
1:30-3:00 pm
Cross Lutheran Church
126 Chapel Ter, Burlington
May 16 June 20 July 18

Alzheimer's Association Support Groups:

*For families dealing with any
type of dementia*

First Thursday
10:30 am -12 Noon
Bethania Lutheran Church
4120 Wright Ave, Racine
(Park and enter in the back of the
building)
May 3 June 7 July 5

Second Thursday
6:00 – 7:30 PM
Bethania Lutheran Church
4120 Wright Ave, Racine
(Park and enter in the back of
building)
May 10 June 14 July 12

