

The Caregiver's

Home Companion

"Helping Those Who Help Others"

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This Month Online

Visit our website, www.caregivershome.com, and join the caregiver-to-caregiver discussion on balancing career and caregiving. Click on the Community section, enter Forums and sign up to share your secrets or frustrations with other caregivers.

Caregiver Balancing Act

Juggling the Demands of Work and Caregiving

By Gwen Morrison

Most caregivers work full time and are juggling the ongoing demands of caring for an elderly parent, raising a family and managing their career.

You have a meeting at work and your mother has a doctor's appointment. Your boss is upset because you were late for work again while you waited for the day nurse to arrive to care for you parents. Your parents are in need of full-time care and you can't afford to lose your job. So, what do you do? The first thing you need to know is that you are not alone.

According to the National Family Caregivers Association (NFCA), more than 26 percent of the U.S. adult population has provided care for an elderly, disabled or chronically ill family member or friend during the past year. Based on the NFCA survey, that translates to more than 54 million people. Most of these adults work fulltime and are constantly juggling the ongoing demands of caring for an elderly parent, raising a family and managing their career.

"Balancing work and caregiving is one of the greatest challenges of mid-life," says Debbie Merrill, an Associate Professor of Sociology and Associate Dean of Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. "Adult children should seek assistance wherever possible."

Getting Help

The responsibilities of caring for an elderly parent and performing well at work can be overwhelming for adult children. The trick is in learning how to balance both effectively. In order to maintain a lifestyle that is as stress-free as possible, you will need help.

"Adult day healthcare is one of the primary resources that employed caregivers use to balance work and caregiving," says Merrill. "Finding work with flexible hours also makes it possible to care for an elderly parent."

Susan Newman, Ph.D., social psychologist and author of "Nobody's Baby Now: Reinventing Your Adult Relationship with Your Mother and Father" (Walker & Company, 2003), shares these tips with adult children who are trying to balance it all:

- Get as much outside help as possible so you can give full attention to your job.
- Enlist other family members to share the responsibilities, so you are not worried about your parent while at the office.
- On that score, people aren't mind readers – you have to ask. Be very specific in your requests; don't say I need help, rather say, "I need you at 4 p.m. on Friday for 'X' amount of time."
- Explain your predicament to your boss so if there's an emergency he will understand why you must leave.
- Have a backup plan in place at the office; i.e. someone ready to cover for you if necessary. This will reduce your stress immeasurably!
- Staying organized is helpful when you are trying to juggle career and parental care. Think, "I come first," some of the time. It's perfectly all right to take care of yourself.

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The Caregiver's Home Companion is produced by caregivers and professional healthcare workers. While this publication is not intended as a substitute for professionally administered medical advice, the practical suggestions, advice and tips made in this newsletter have been tested or reviewed by an individual or organization involved in caring for elderly loved ones. The Caregiver's Home Companion also strives to obtain the input of educators and researchers in all branches of medical and scientific research. We welcome your comments and suggestions at editor@caregivershome.com.

Avoiding Caregiver Burnout

Five Secrets to Managing Caregiver Stress

By Dr. Peter Andrew Sacco

Perhaps there is no greater stress than caring for a loved one. The amount of physical and emotional effort we put into caring for others can be very taxing. In fact, in many cases, the caregiver literally needs someone to care for them!

Stress comes in all shapes and sizes, and can affect you mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Enduring stress over a prolonged period of time will affect one's mentally. Simple mental tasks become more difficult to complete because your circuits become overridden with worries. It is not uncommon to begin forgetting the simplest tasks or get sidetracked and forget important appointments.

Being a caregiver to a loved one who is suffering from a slow and insidious illness can be very debilitating emotionally. Many caregivers develop feelings of helplessness, haplessness and hopelessness which start to facilitate the phenomenon of depression. It is not uncommon for caregivers to experience crying spells on a regular basis. Often times, caregivers will break down and become overwhelmed with feelings of sadness.

Caregiver Health

The physical stress one experiences as a caregiver can become so overwhelming, you can literally burn out. Often times, caregivers are so worried about their loved ones getting proper rest, eating and feeling comfortable that they neglect these tangibles in their own lives. In fact, many caregivers throughout the caregiving process develop their own stress-related physical ailments. Some require medication to correct their physical problems.

Finally, being a caregiver can also lead to experience what is called spiritual stress. When you have a loved one who is sick, you often believe in the power of prayer or God to make them better. When your loved one does not get better, or they deteriorate further, you begin to question your faith and belief system and start to doubt. Some become angry with God, their church, their minister or rabbi and literally get stressed out over their faith because it doesn't seem to be showing them the results they hoped for.

If you don't manage your stress, no one will manage it for you. Caregivers often will report

feelings of fatigue, frustration and burnout. Being a caregiver is an unselfish and overwhelming sacrifice of one's self. Moreover, it is most times a thankless job with few tangible rewards. Nurses and healthcare aides are trained to deal with others and taught to be objective. When you are caring for a loved one, it is hard to remain objective and disallow feelings from getting in the way. Professionals can walk away from their job and enjoy their personal lives. When you care for a loved one, your personal world literally becomes recreated by the health status of your loved one.

A Doctor's Recommendation for Overcoming Helplessness, Haplessness & Hopelessness

Balancing Life

There are no clear-cut, great strategies for being the perfect caregiver. However, to be an effective caregiver, you need to keep your life in balance. You need to learn to keep things in perspective and keep stress in check before it overwhelms you. Here are five strategies you might try to manage stress:

1. Take a physical break from the caregiver situation. Being a caregiver will keep you glued to one's bedside, chair or room. You need to totally dissociate yourself from your loved one for a period of time each day. Most will feel guilty about not being around their loved one all hours of the day. You shouldn't feel guilty. Don't feel like you're abandoning them. Perceive this as time to recharge your batteries. Caregiving is a physically draining job and you need to constantly be refreshing yourself. Just going for a walk is a great tonic. Any sort of exercise is encouraged. You need a fresh supply of oxygen to your brain as well as keep your heart and blood flow healthy. In fact, a 20 minute walk will make you more refreshed and alert.

2. Take mental and emotional breaks from your loved one. Do something for yourself which you enjoy doing. Give yourself at least one hour every day to treat yourself to "life." Just because a loved one is ill doesn't mean you have to stop living. Go to a movie. Read a book. Visit with friends. Go bowling, watch TV or go shopping. Live your life. When caregivers become overwhelmed with stress, some begin to dread seeing their loved one because they perceive them as a burden. It is not uncommon for some caregivers to actually start resenting or becoming bitter toward their loved one. A caregiver who was normally mild-mannered may begin to start cursing their loved one every time they call for help as they begin to feel trapped. Feelings

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High Fiber Diets Are Important In Keeping Your Loved Ones Healthy

By Sharon Palmer, RD

Caregiving often boils down to providing some of the simplest yet most important functions of everyday life. Somewhere on the top of every caregiver's list of routine priorities is written in bold letters "adequate nutrition and elimination."

One of the many side effects of aging is the gradual decline in intestinal tract motility, which causes the food mass passing through the gut to slow down. The end result is the dreaded "c" word that both caregiver and victim fend off like a demon: constipation. This debilitating condition that causes cramping, bloating, discomfort and poor appetite can divert an astonishing amount of energy for its treatment from the caregiver.

But constipation may pose even more threatening side effects than discomfort and added stress. According to Howard Loomis Jr., D.C.

in *The ICA Review*, the longer food remains in contact with the intestinal wall, the greater the possibility of adverse effects from toxicants or carcinogens, and infections.

We all know without reading the latest New England Journal of Medicine that constipation is a very bad thing, and we vow to do everything in our power to stop it from rearing its ugly head. But how? The answer lies in fiber, affectionately coined "the broom of the colon." Not only is fiber a super hero in the war against constipation, the American Dietetic Association points out research that indicates a high fiber diet may reduce the risk of diverticulitis, reduce the risk of certain types of cancer, help control the level of blood sugar in diabetics, and may help lower the level of total blood cholesterol.

A recent study of 3,588 elderly people enrolled in the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute Cardiovascular Health Study noted that eating more cereal fiber was found to be associated with a lower risk of heart disease. Those who ate the most cereal fiber had a lower risk of developing the disease than those who ate the least cereal fiber.

The American Dietetic Association recommends a consumption of 20–35 grams of fiber per day. This goal may be easier said than done, given the fact that due to poor appetite and poor dentition, the elderly pop-

ulation has a notoriously low fiber intake.

Think about what menu creates jubilation in those you care for. If your thoughts zoom in on meatloaf and mashed potatoes with vanilla pudding for dessert, then you're probably not alone. When one's appetite is poor, smooth foods slide down the throat easier. Unfortunately, these comfort foods are

noticeably low in fiber.

Fiber is essentially the structure in plants that give them their shape and rigidity. Picture a celery stalk. Fiber is what gives celery its texture, crispness, and structure. This same structure in the celery is what bulks up the contents of the intestinal tract. Fibers hold on to water, makes the stool softer, and

pushes it through the colon without being digested itself, thus decreasing transit time.

Here are some easy, helpful hints to promote a high fiber diet.

Check with a physician before starting a high fiber program. If surgery has been performed on the stomach, intestines, colon, or rectum, a high fiber diet should be approved by the physician prior to commencing it.

Increase fiber in the diet slowly to prevent digestive problems. Sudden increases in fiber intake may result in gas or bloating.

Drink plenty of fluids. Try to drink 8 cups of water or other fluids each day while on a high fiber diet. Fiber acts like a sponge, holding on to water to keep waste moving along. Remove the water from the equation and you've got something akin to cement.

Choose high fiber foods at each meal. While grocery shopping, check the food labels for higher fiber food sources. (See *Ferretting Facts from Fiber* on page 4) Start planning high fiber foods sources at each meal and snack.

Load up on fruits and vegetables. "Five a day" of fruits and vegetables is a good rule



Timely Tip:
A portable baby monitor can be a sanity saver for caregivers who need to keep a close watch on their bedridden elderly. In the same way parents can watch over a small child, the popular electronic listening device frees the caregiver to go about many normal duties in the house while still giving care.

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High Fiber Diets Continued from Page 3

Fiber Fabulous Recipes:

Visit our website, www.caregivershome.com, and find excellent fiber recipes for you and your loved ones under the News & Info section.

Timely Tip:

Compile a list of family and healthcare phone numbers to be distributed to neighbors. It can help in an emergency.

of thumb for the elderly. Look for fruits and vegetables with little preparation and paring. Case in point: A whole apple with the skin has 3 grams of fiber. A whole apple without the skin has 2.4 grams of fiber. Applesauce has 1.8 g. of fiber. And finally, apple juice has .2 grams of fiber. Fruits and vegetables with their skins in place and edible seeds are some of the highest sources of fiber. Think baked potato, pears, nectarines, strawberries, and plums.

Make every breakfast a high fiber feast.

Get a good source of fiber each morning by choosing cereal with 5 or more grams of fiber per serving, sprinkling bran flakes over hot cereal, or choosing whole grain waffles, toast, or muffins.

Discover legumes. Try legumes (dried

peas and beans) a few times per week for good fiber sources. Put chili, refried beans, split pea soup, garbanzo bean salad, or lentils on the menu.

Fiber-up your favorite recipes. Try substituting half of the white flour for whole wheat flour; add raisins, nuts, grated carrots, diced apples, or sprinkle in wheat germ and bran flakes into casseroles, cereals, breads, salads, and dessert recipes.

Sharon Palmer is a registered dietitian and freelance writer with a 16-year career in managing health care food and nutrition departments. She lives in Southern California with her husband and two sons. She can be reached at spalmer952@earthlink.net.

Ferretting Facts from Fiber

Deciphering the Fiber Food Labels:

High Fiber Sources: 5 grams or more per serving

Good Fiber Sources: 2.5 – 4.9 grams per serving

More or Added Fiber: At least 2.5 grams more per serving*

*As compared with a standard serving size of the traditional food.

Fiber Rich Food Sources:

Food	Amount	Fiber (grams per serving)	Food	Amount	Fiber (grams per serving)
Apple (w/skin)	1 med.	3	Peanuts	1/4 cup	3
Applesauce	1/2 cup	2	Pear (w/skin)	1 med.	4
Baked Beans	1/2 cup	3	Peas	1/2 cup	2
Banana	1 med.	2	Pinto Beans	1/2 cup	6
Blueberries	1/2 cup	2	Potato (w/skin)	1 med.	4
Bran Flakes	3/4 cup	5	Prunes, dried	3	2
Broccoli	1/2 cup	2	Pumpernickel Bread	1 slice	3
Brown Rice	1/2 cup	2	Raisins	1/4 cup	2
Brussel Sprouts	1/2 cup	3	Sunflower Seeds	1/4 cup	2
Carrots	1 med.	2	Spinach	1/2 cup	2
Figs, dried	2	4	Strawberries	1 cup	4
Granola w/ raisins	1/4 cup	2	Tomato	1 med.	2
Lentils	1/2 cup	4	Wheat Bran	1 Tablespoon	2
Oatmeal, cooked	3/4 cup	3	Wheat Germ	1 Tablespoon	1
Orange	1 med.	3	Whole Wheat Bread	1 slice	2
Raisin Bran	3/4 cup	5	100% Bran Cereal	1/3 cup	8

Source: Bowes and Church's *Food Values of Portions Commonly Used*, 16th Edition, Plant Fiber in Foods, 2nd Edition, and manufacturer data.

Tips for Overnight Caregivers

By Ursula Furi-Perry



Taking care of another person during the night is not an easy mission. Overnight caregivers perform numerous tasks, including supervision, night-time feedings, administering medicine, and generally assisting elderly loved ones with any other concerns.

Overnight caregivers are often presented with a variety of challenges. Patients may feel more drowsy or disoriented, posing greater safety risks. In addition, sleep deprivation may impair the caregiver's own judgment and problem-solving skills. "The toughest battle is trying to get some sleep," says Argie Elorde, a professional caregiver at Medina Home Care in Palm Springs, California. And sleep is extremely important — not only for the caregiver who may have to continue his or her job in the morning, but also for the loved one who needs his or her rest.

While taking care of an elderly parent or other loved one overnight is a tough job, it can be virtually stress-free and much more rewarding with the help of a few techniques.

Be sure both caregiver and patient are comfortable. Experiment with sleeping arrangements until you find the perfect fit. For some caregivers, sleeping in the patient's bedroom is inevitable, while others may feel more comfortable staying in separate rooms. Also take care to adjust internal temperatures as necessary for comfort. Keep the noise level to a minimum, although it may be a good idea to talk to disoriented patients — they may be able to better recognize their surroundings at the sound of a familiar voice.

It's imperative to stock up on supplies that will help make your night easier. These supplies include flashlights, pillows and bedpans, as necessary. Have everything handy in a secure location. Consider installing a

couple of night lights in the room. "Not only will you be able to see better, but the patient likely won't become disoriented upon awakening," Elorde advises. If you decide not to share a room with the loved one, consider purchasing a baby monitor for added security. Finally, make sure all necessary medicines are easy to find and administer, yet out of the reach of possibly groggy patients.

Be prepared for emergencies. Have a cordless phone handy at all times and secure the loved one's surroundings. "We've had patients with dementia try to leave the house in the middle of the night," recounts Elorde, "it can be scary at times." Try to eliminate obstacles that could cause nighttime injuries, such as slippery floors, lack of side rails on beds, and furniture the patient could bump into.

Be sure to take time out for you, the caregiver, as well. This is especially important if you can't manage to nap during the day. Watch yourself for signs of exhaustion and over-exertion, such as headaches, extreme fatigue, trouble concentrating, and drowsiness. For the safety of both patient and caregiver, be sure to take a night off as needed, provided adequate replacement support can be found. It is essential that overnight caregivers be in the best possible physical and mental shape.

Most importantly, be prepared to become a jack-of-all-trades. "Overnight stays are quite adventurous," Elorde says. "You'll always find something new to learn."

Ursula Furi-Perry is a freelance writer based in Woburn, Massachusetts. She can be reached at perry11@rcn.com.

Timely Tip:

Make family visits more enjoyable for your parent and ease the load on yourself by suggesting that your older children separately visit their grandparent each week. This reduces the visitation load on you while giving the children one-on-one grandparent time. For your parent, it spreads several visits during the week instead of one larger family visit.

Managing Caregiver Stress Continued from Page 2

Timely Tip:
Reduce the stress of taking over your parent's finances by automating as many bill payments as possible. For some of us, it is enough to keep up with our own bill payments, without having to remember when to pay Mom's bills. Check with utilities, insurance, mortgage companies and taxing agencies to set up automatic payment drafts as soon as possible.

of being "trapped" lead to frustration and anxiety. Interestingly, you started out with the best intentions to help you loved one, and now you find yourself resenting them.

3. Always try to maintain an open network of support systems. Friends and family are very important during times of stress. Whenever family and friends offer to help out, jump at the opportunity. Some caregivers become so enamored and fixated with curing and caring for their loved one that they lose track of the boundaries that separate them. In fact, some actually develop a "martyr" complex where they sacrifice their very existence for their loved one. They believe they should be the only ones offering care and they don't want to "burden" others. Caregiving can create egoistic attitudes in the caregiver whereby they view their way as the only way. Moreover, they may deter those who want to help. Whatever help you can get, accept it. You may be in this situation for the long haul so keep yourself fresh.

4. Get plenty of rest. If you don't get rest or sleep, you are going to become so run down you will not be of optimal use to your loved one. It is noble to try and be superman or superwoman, but your body will eventually tire and weaken and you will be of little use to your loved one. It is best to regroup and take care of your physical body and mind so you can provide the best possible support. Your loved one has enough to worry about with their own ailments without having to

worry about you! Also, avoid taking any kind of sleeping pills or sedatives to help you rest or get caught up on sleep you have missed. The last thing you need is to develop a dependency on pharmaceutical drugs.

5. Finally, apply the Serenity Prayer to your caregiving ritual and life. Remember the following statement: "Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference." Whether you are a "believer" or not, this is a profound caregiving tool. If you pray, perhaps you will be shown the answer to what you are seeking. If you are not a believer, then perhaps introspecting within yourself will show you the answers for how to cope better with your situation. And the key word in the "prayer" is change. The only thing you can change is yourself and how you choose to handle the caregiving situation.

Try applying these five strategies to your life. See if they make a difference in optimizing your caregiving abilities. No one said providing care to a loved one would be easy, but you only offer what you have. If you remain cool, strong and as distressed as possible, you will be able to handle caregiving more readily.

*Dr. Peter Andrew Sacco is a psychology professor, author and lecturer living in Niagara Falls, Canada. Sacco is the author of *Fear Factors* and *Women Want What They Can't Have*. He appears regularly on TV and radio and has written nearly 300 magazine and journal articles.*

Fight vs. Flight – Caregiver's Dilemma

Walter Cannon, the noted American physiologist, is famous for coining the phrase "fight or flight response." Cannon used it to describe what happens to individuals who experience a very stressful situation. Most individuals opt for the easy way out which is the flight response, where you run away from your problems. On the other hand, many will go with the first option and stand up to their problems and try to resolve them.

There is a situation however which can debilitate a lot of people. This occurs when individuals fall in between the fight or flight response. They literally get caught between the two polarities and do not know what to do. Figuratively speaking, it is like being a deer and wandering onto a highway and getting caught in the headlights of an oncoming vehicle.

Many caregivers get caught in state of catatonia while caring for their loved one. They become frozen in their actions, thoughts, feelings and assistance. They feel

like their hands are bound and this exerts a tremendous amount of stress on them as they feel totally helpless.

They chose to "fight" and help their loved one, but the outcome didn't go as they planned. They may have chosen the "flight," but something has brought them back to their loved one's bedside and they now feel caught in the middle. The "fighters" were willing to endure the battle with their loved one, even wanted to re-retreat at times, but now feel caught in the stressful "stuck" state. And the "fighters" tried to run away but tried to help out only to now feel "trapped".

However you want to look at it, this is stress. In fact, this is what professionals would label DISTRESS! Distress is negative stress as a result of some trauma or negative life change and it is very destructive. It must be avoided in caregiving for your sake and the sake of your loved one.

— Dr. Peter Andrew Sacco

Juggling the Demands of Work and Caregiving Continued from Page 1

- Recognize that you need a break. You can't be all things to all people, even your parent. You'll be a better worker and a better caregiver if you get away for periods of time without either responsibility. Even if it's only for an hour or two to exercise or go out to dinner or a movie with your partner or a friend.

June Ninneman heads up business development for SeniorBridge Family's newest office in Chicago and has dealt with caregiving issues from a professional viewpoint and as an adult child providing care for her elderly parents. When she became a caregiver for her parents, she found it difficult to see things objectively.

"As someone who directs others in how to find resources for their aging parent, it was difficult for me to make the transition from professional to caregiver," says Ninneman. "I was caring for both of my parents, and am currently helping my mother who has been seriously ill for the past six months."

When she started caring for her mother, she could use weekends and evenings to set up appointments and help out where needed. As the months went on, her mother's health deteriorated and now she is finding herself in more of a hands-on role of providing care. "I am fortunate in that I have two brothers and one sister, and they are great about sharing the responsibilities," she says. "It's important to communicate to others what you can and cannot do. Recently, I had trouble when I had to transfer my mother from the car to the wheelchair. I had to tell my brother that I couldn't do it anymore – it was just too difficult, physically. I would be of no use to her if I was laid up."

With two teen-aged daughters at home, Ninneman says there are some days she isn't sure how she will balance it all. "My husband is the sole caregiver for his 87-year-old mother and I want to support him, too."

Ninneman has been able to balance work and caregiving successfully in part because she works for a company that is very supportive of the demands of caring for an aging parent. "I have the flexibility that some people might not have," she says. "I am able to take time off, shift priorities and work from home if I need to. If you have to be 'on duty' it can be difficult."

Those individuals who work full time and care for an elderly family member need to be able to delegate certain responsibilities in order to maintain a healthy balance. It can

be very easy for caregivers to "burn out" if they try doing too much.

"Where possible, caregivers should delegate or hire out for less personal tasks, like house cleaning and grocery shopping," says Ninneman. "There's such an emotional component for the parent and often they want you to spend your time with them, not cleaning their house."

Ninneman says the key to balancing it all is to get good professional advice up front. "Before you make major decisions — like placing your parent in a nursing home — have an individualized assessment done. There's rarely one single answer for each family."

By getting the advice of an eldercare professional, you as the caregiver can plan for things like doctor's appointments, personal care and other responsibilities that your parent might need now, and in future months.

Says Ninneman: "SeniorBridge provides comprehensive eldercare, direct in-home care and also provides an ongoing monitoring to ensure that the person being cared for is getting the right care at the right time, depending on the state of their health." There are other national companies in the home-care field, including Comfort Keepers and Home Instead.

This care can take a lot of the burden off the caregiver. Caregiving is defined broadly, and by enlisting the help of a professional, the family caregiver is able to assess where they can provide care and what duties need to be delegated elsewhere.

Just the Facts:

The U.S. Census Bureau has projected that the over-65 population in the United States will double in the next 50 years. Other important facts about our aging population:

- There are more than 33 million Americans age 65 and older and over four million Americans over 85.
- People 85 and older – the oldest of the old — are the fastest-growing segment of U.S. population.
- One in every four American households cares for an elderly relative or friend.
- About one-fifth of those people who provide care for the elderly leave their jobs at least temporarily because of those responsibilities, according to a 1997 report by the AARP.
- By 2007, the total number of employed caregivers in the United States is expected to increase to between 11 and 15.6 million

Timely Tip:
Ordering your loved one's medications online can be more efficient as well as less expensive. Many online services will send you, the caregiver, a reminder when it is time to reorder. These services are easy to join and easy to leave if you no longer need the service.

Juggling the Demands of Work and Caregiving Continued from Page 7

working Americans – roughly one in every 10 employed workers, according to the National Alliance for Caregiving.

- Already 20% of employed caregivers say they have had to pull back to part-time and 16% say they left the workforce altogether.
- Of those still working, 68% say caregiving is hurting their job performance.
- American business loses \$11.4 billion

annually due to lost time by working caregivers, while each caregiver is estimated to lose more than \$659,000 in wages and benefits over their lifetime due to caregiving absences.

Gwen Morrison is a Lawrenceville, Georgia-based freelance writer whose articles have been highlighted previously in The Caregiver's Home Companion. She can be reached at gwenm4@gwenmorrison.com.

Juggling the Demands of Work and Caregiving Resources:

For further information on this topic, check out the "Resources" tab on our website, www.caregivershome.com, along with these other resources:

- **Eldercare Locator Service:** To find an area agency on aging, call toll free 800-677-1116.
- **SeniorBridge Family:** Assists older adults at home, whether home is a facility, an apartment, or the house they've lived in for twenty years. Offers assistance on how to best manage the long-term needs of both aging parents and their families. Phone toll free 866-506-1212 or visit www.floridaelderwatch.com.

Other SeniorBridge-like resources:

- **Comfort Keepers,** phone 937-264-1933 or visit www.comfortkeepers.com.
- **Home Instead,** phone 402-498-4466 or visit www.homeinstead.com.
- **Administration On Aging (AOA):** Web site designed to provide a comprehensive overview of a wide variety of topics, programs and services related to aging. Phone 202-619-0724 or visit www.aoa.gov/eldfam/eldfam.asp
- **National Association of Professional Geriatric Managers:** Non-profit, professional organization of practitioners whose goal is the advancement of dignified care for the elderly and their families. Phone 520-881-8008 or visit www.caremanager.org.

Timely Tip: Maneuvering a loved one with limited mobility in and out of the car can be a difficult task, especially on fabric seats which create "drag." Try placing a plastic bag on the seat, have your loved one sit down on it with their feet outside the car, and swivel them more easily into place sitting forward.

The Caregiver's Home Companion

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Upcoming in October

- When home care isn't enough – weighing options when your loved one is on the decline.
- How to develop a workable plan for transitioning to an assisted living facility.
- Caregiver depression: how to recognize it and how to deal with it.
- How to safely dispose of your loved one's outdated medications.