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TOGETHER WE CARE

MAY NEWSLETTER

2023



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Farewell Reflections



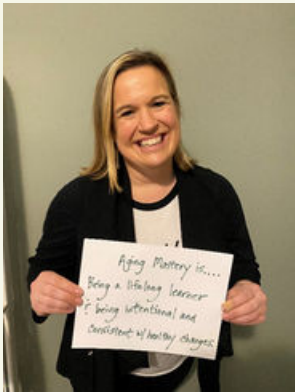
I have been fortunate to oversee the Older Adult Program with Tri-County Mental Health for the past 8 years. It has been such a rewarding blend of two things I am very passionate about--healthy aging and mental health support.

During my time with this program, Dianna Englander (NSC) and I formed "Together We Care" as an umbrella of support services for older adult caregivers. It has been such an inspiration to connect with so many of you in various ways. Each caregiving journey is unique, and no two days are the same. I have been touched by your willingness to learn and grow through every stage.

As I wrap up my time in this role, I am so very grateful for this time together with you. I hope the seeds of self-care that were planted together continue to flourish. The vision for this program continues as we transition to new staff. We are excited to discuss additional opportunities for education, support, and socialization. Please share any ideas that would be helpful to you as you navigate your caregiver role.

In closing, I would like to share a beautiful quote from Brene Brown: "Authenticity is a collection of choices that we have to make every day. It's about the choice to show up and be real. The choice to be honest. The choice to let our true selves be seen." Thank you for sharing with authenticity. It is brave, and yet often difficult, to be vulnerable with our thoughts and emotions. I have been honored to share such meaningful connections and wish you all the best!

Becky Franklin, LPC



**Remember Mom:
 Sunday, May 14**





Established in 1963, Older Americans Month (OAM) is celebrated every May. Led by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), OAM is a time for us to acknowledge the contributions and achievements of older Americans, highlight important trends, and strengthen our commitment to honoring our older citizens.

This year's theme, **Aging Unbound**, offers an opportunity to explore a wide range of aging experiences and to promote the importance of enjoying independence and fulfillment by paving our own paths as we age.

This May, join us as we recognize the 60th anniversary of OAM and challenge the narrative on aging. Here are some ways we can all participate in Aging Unbound:

Embrace the opportunity to change. Find a new passion, go on an adventure, and push boundaries by not letting age define your limits. Invite creativity and purpose into your life by trying new activities in your community to bring in more growth, joy, and energy.

Explore the rewards of growing older. With age comes knowledge, which provides insight and confidence to understand and experience the world more deeply. Continue to grow that knowledge through reading, listening, classes, and creative activities.

Stay engaged in your community. Everyone benefits when everyone is connected and involved. Stay active by volunteering, working, mentoring, participating in social clubs, and taking part in activities at your local senior center or elsewhere in the community.

Form relationships. As an essential ingredient of well-being, relationships can enhance your quality of life by introducing new ideas and unique perspectives. Invest time with people to discover deeper connections with family, friends, and community members.

Source: Administration for Community Living

For more information, visit <https://acl.gov/>



NEW CAREGIVER SERIES BEING OFFERED AT TRI-COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH!!

The Healthcare Home leadership team is excited to offer support and education on how to navigate various diagnoses in older adulthood.

This first series focuses on various dementia diagnoses. There will be quarterly classes offered. The next class will be Tuesday, June 20, at 10 AM at Tri-County Mental Health.

Each class will include:

- An overview of signs and symptoms at various stages of the diagnosis
- Care strategies to help meet practical needs
- Communication tools
- Self-care ideas for the caregiver specific to each stage
- Time for Q & A!

Monthly Caregiver Support Group "Together We Care"

This support group is held the first Thursday of each month in a hybrid format. In May you can either attend in-person at Woodneath Mid-Continent Public Library near Liberty or virtually by Zoom (call or email Charli at 816-452-4536 for the link at Charli@northlandsc.org).

Time: May 4 from 10 - 11:30 am .

When you arrive, meet in the coffee shop for a beverage of your choice (coffee, tea, bottled water)



Many caregivers experience depression. If you are experiencing symptoms, know that you aren't alone and that help is available. Depression is a serious condition, but one that is treatable.

Symptoms of depression

Caregiving is hard — and can lead to feelings of stress, guilt, anger, sadness, isolation — and depression. Depression affects different people in different ways and at different times. For example, someone may experience depression right after their family member has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Other caregivers may experience it as Alzheimer's progresses and the cognitive abilities of the person with Alzheimer's diminish.

Signs and symptoms of depression include:

- Becoming easily agitated or frustrated
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Thoughts of death, dying or suicide
- Disturbed sleep
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities
- Difficulty thinking or concentrating
- Changes in appetite and weight
- Physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders and pain

Source: American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

See your doctor

If you are concerned that you might be depressed, see your doctor as soon as possible. Certain medications and some medical conditions can cause the same symptoms as depression. A doctor can rule out these possibilities by doing a medical exam and lab tests.

If depression is left untreated, it can lead to emotional and physical problems. It can also affect the quality of care you're able to provide the person with Alzheimer's or dementia.

Treatment

Depression can be effectively treated. And the earlier treatment begins, the earlier you'll feel better. Treatment commonly involves a combination of medication, therapy and support.

Medication

Feeling better takes time. If you are prescribed an antidepressant, talk with your doctor about how long it will take to feel the full benefit. In some cases, it may take six to eight weeks. Never stop taking an antidepressant without consulting your doctor first. Abruptly stopping antidepressants can cause unwanted side effects.

Counseling

Your doctor may refer you to a mental health professional, such as a counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist or social worker. Counseling can be very effective in the treatment of depression, and can help you deal with the problems you are facing. It's important to be comfortable with the professional you seek treatment with, so consider interviewing several to find a good fit. Your primary care physician, insurance provider or community mental health clinic may be able to provide referrals.

Coping

In addition to seeking help from a professional, you can take steps to help yourself.

- Let family and friends help you.

Take others up on offers to help and ask for help when you need it

- Seek out caregiver support.

Consider respite services, a local caregiver support group or our online community. Building a support network can keep you from feeling isolated.

- Try journaling.

Expressing your emotions (both negative and positive) in a journal may boost your mood.

- Learn ways to relax and manage stress.

Try meditation or yoga to help reduce caregiver stress.

- Take time for yourself.

Participate in activities that you enjoy.

Source:

<https://www.alz.org/helpsupport/caregiving/caregiver-health/caregiver-depression>



UPCOMING EVENTS:



SAVE THE DATES!!

- **Thurs, May 4, 10-11:30 AM--Together We Care-- Caregiver Support Group (hybrid format) Woodneath Library near Liberty**
- **Wed, May 17, 1:30 - 3 PM-- Caring Cafe -- "Celebrating Strengths in Older Adulthood" at Northland Shepherd's Center**
- **Wed., June 20, 10-11:30 AM--Caregiver Support Group--continued discussion on Dementia--Tri-County Mental Health Unity Room**

“Together We Care” ...

.....is a support program offered to older adult caregivers. This program was formed out of a joint effort of two local organizations: Northland Shepherd’s Center (NSC) & Tri-County Mental Health Services (TCMHS). Both recognize a need to support and encourage those that are in a caregiver role.

NSC has been helping adults 60 and older remain independent at home for 30 years. Of special interest to caregivers is BreakTime Club, where your loved ones can go to have fun while you get a break! Call 816-452-4536 for details about this and other services.

TCMHS provides comprehensive mental health services to individuals living within Clay, Platte, and Ray Counties. The Older Adult Program is one area of support that is offered through community presentations, support groups, and case management that is available either in an office setting or in-home. Call (816) 468-0400 x330 for additional information.

The **Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)** Caregiver Support Program (CSP) offers clinical services to caregivers of eligible and covered Veterans enrolled in the VA health care system. The program’s mission is to promote the health and well-being of family caregivers who care for our Nation’s Veterans, through education, resources, support, and services.
https://www.caregiver.va.gov/support/New_CSC_Page.asp

Matter of Balance Class

8 - week class helps participants gain confidence about managing and preventing falls.

Mondays, April 3 thru May 22, 1:00 - 3:00 pm at Parkville Living Center, 819 Main St. Free, registration required: 254-206-1737 or email Amy at avyogaandwellness@gmail.com.

Walk with Ease Class

· Walk with Ease - 6 week walking program that builds confidence, starts Monday, April 3 at Northland Career Center, 1801 Branch St, Platte City, 5:00 - 6:00 pm. Free! Enroll online: Northland Career Center.

Ageing Mastery Program (AMP) for Caregivers

Are you interested in learning practical strategies for aging well? Do you want to learn ways to balance care for yourself and your loved one? [We'd love to hear from you!](#) Each year, Together We Care offers the opportunity to attend AMP for Caregivers.

We are planning our class for this year and would appreciate your feedback on whether you are interested in attending and dates/times that would work well for you. **Please call or email Charli at (816) 452-4536 or Charli@northlandsc.org.**

We have the option of offering a 12-week class meeting for 2 hours weekly or a condensed 6-week class meeting for 3-hours weekly.

VOLUNTEER AS AN ADVOCATE FOR LONG TERM CARE RESIDENTS!



CALL (800) 309-3282

LTCOmbudsman@health.mo.gov

