



Journaling Helps Caregivers Remember the Joy

Caregiving is a journey of twists and turns, good days and bad. There are days in which the smile and thank you we received from our loved one is over shadowed by the stress of cleaning up an accident or going to the doctor.

As a result those moments of joy are quickly pushed off or forgotten and replaced by distressing moments, which can quickly add up. Thereby increasing our feelings of stress and adding to the possibility of burnout. If caregivers can find a way to remember those joyful moments, recalling them when stress is at its highest it will be a benefit not only to themselves, but to those who receiving the care.

One way to capture those happy times and also process those distressing moments is by writing about them. A recent study by the University of Iowa indicates that caregivers who added 20 minutes of journaling just three times per week significantly reduced the level of cortisol a stress hormone found in the human body.

Journaling has also been found as a therapeutic approach to heal relationships, build self confidence, gain personal knowledge, increase ability to problem solve, enhance creativity, release emotions and improve cognition. In addition, by journaling about your caregiving journey you will be forever capturing this segment of your loved one's lives and your interactions with them.

There are many approaches to journaling some write about it online or use a tape recorder to speak about their experience, while others dictate their notes on a calendar. However, by far the most common form of journaling is to put pen to paper.

However, your journal is up to you, but the reality of caregiving is that at some point the journey will end. When this happens this journal will serve as a connection to your loved one. It will bring back memories of the care you provided and the love you shared.

Therefore, you may find that you want to keep two journals. A "Stress" journal for when you just need to get the words out and if pages get ripped out in frustration it will not matter. The other journal or "Joy" journal is where you write about the hugs you receive, the precious times that you never want to forget and the moments that make you smile.

When your caregiving journey is over the "Stress" journal can be disposed of, but your "Joy" journal will serve as a reminder of your loved one and how truly joyful your journey was together.

Azura Memory Care offers a unique model of memory care services and programs for those suffering from dementia and Alzheimer's. The company believes in the importance of transforming the culture of care through transformational programming and educational outreach. Azura Memory Care offers 13 locations in Wisconsin including Beloit, Clinton, Eau Claire, Green Bay, Janesville, Kenosha North,

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