|  | **~ November 2016 ~** |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
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| 13 **National Caregiver Day** | 14 Drop In Monday10-3Please bring a lunch.No Transportation Provided | 15 Decision Making11-2Please bring a lunch | 16 Language and Communication Skills11-2Please bring a lunch | 17 No BISG meeting**BISG Pirate Voyage****6pm show** | 18  | 19  |
| 20  | 21 Drop In Monday10-3Please bring a lunch.No Transportation Provided | 22 Lunch at El Patio Mexican Restaurant11-2 **$$** | 23 Craft Day11-2Please bring a lunch | Image result for thanksgiving clip art24 **Agency Closed** | 25 **Agency Closed** | Image result for fall tree clip art26  |
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**Caregiving for a loved one can be stressful and negative emotions are normal.**

**Here are a few ways to help cope with them.**

**Caregiver Emotion**: Guilt

**Causes:** Guilt stems from doing or saying what you believe is the wrong thing, not doing what you perceive to be enough, or otherwise not behaving in the "right" way. A few examples: I must avoid putting Mom in a nursing home. I ought to visit every day. I shouldn't lose my temper with someone who has a brain injury.

**Risks:** Caregiver guilt is an especially corrosive emotion because you're beating yourself up over faults that are imagined, unavoidable -- or simply human. That's counterproductive at a time when you need to be your own best advocate.

**What you can do:** Lower your standards from ideal to real. Recognize that guilt is virtually unavoidable. Because your intentions are good but your time, resources, and skills are limited, you're going to feel guilty sometimes -- so try to get comfortable with that gap between perfection and reality instead of beating yourself up over it.

**Caregiver Emotion:** Resentment

**Causes:** Caregivers often feel put-upon and upset because of imagined slights by others, including siblings and adult children who don't do enough to help. Caregiver resentment is especially felt toward the person being cared for, when the caregiver's life feels hijacked by responsibility and out of his or her own control.

**Risks:** Without enough support, feelings of being ignored, abandoned, or criticized can fester into anger and depression.

**What you can do:** Simply confiding in someone you trust can bring some release. Try venting to a journal or anonymous blog. Know that resentment is a very natural and common response to long-term caregiving, especially if your work life, marriage, health, or outside activities are compromised as a result. Know, too, that you can feel this complicated emotion yet still be a good person and a good caregiver.

**Caregiver Emotion:** Anger

**Causes:** We get mad for reasons both direct (a balky loved one, an unfair criticism, one too many mishaps in a day) and indirect (lack of sleep, frustration over lack of control, pent-up disappointment).

**Risks:** Anger that builds up unexpressed can lead to depression or anxiety, while anger that explodes outward can jeopardize relationships and even harm others

**What you can do:** Rather than trying to avoid anger, learn to express it in healthy ways. Simple deep-breathing exercises can channel mounting anger into a calmer state. Ask yourself if there's a constructive solution to situations that make you angry: Is a compromise possible? Would being more assertive (which is different from anger) help you feel a sense of control?

**Caregiver Emotion:** Defensiveness

**Causes:** If you're feeling stressed, insecure, or unsure, hearing comments or criticisms by others, or reading information that's contrary to your views, can inspire a knee-jerk response of self-protection: "I'm right; that's wrong!"

**Risks:** You risk losing out on real help. You may be so close to the situation that you can't see the forest for the trees, for example; a social worker or friend may have a perspective that points to what really might be a better way.

**What you can do**: Try not to take everything you hear personally. Instead of immediately getting cross or discarding others' input, vow to pause long enough to consider it. Remember the big picture. Is there merit in a new idea, or not? What you're hearing as a criticism of you might be a well-intentioned attempt to help your loved one.

**Caregiver Emotion:** Worry

**Causes:** Good intentions, love, and wanting the best for your loved ones are the sources of worry.

**Risks:** Being concerned is harmless. Over worry and obsessing, however, can disrupt sleep, cause headaches and stomach aches, and lead to mindless eating or undereating.

**What you can do:** Flip negative thoughts to their productive side: How can you help? Who can you call? Are there possible solutions? And don't be shy about seeking out a trained counselor to help you express and redirect obsessive ruminations more constructively.