

# CAREGIVER NEWS

Region IV Area Agency on Aging Caregiver Newsletter

April/May 2021

## Are you trying to fix it?

Ask yourself:  
Do I feel I  
need to fix

everything wrong in my loved one's life?

One of the most painful realizations for a caregiver is that there is no fixing what a loved one is going through. That in no way diminishes the care you provide, but it can be an upsetting truth to grapple with.

Take a step back and redefine your role. Your job is not to fix what's wrong. Your role is to advocate for your loved one, keep them safe and clean, and ensure they're well cared for. The fundamental challenges of caregiving are handling these tasks while preserving your loved one's dignity and being realistic about your own abilities and your limits.

*-information on this page and the back cover is excerpted from Aging-Care.com article "How a Fix-It Mentality Leads to Caregiver Burnout" by Cindy Laverty*

Environmentally  
conscious?

Prefer email?

Send us an email at

[info@AreaAgencyonAging.org](mailto:info@AreaAgencyonAging.org)

to be added to our

Caregiver News

email list



## My Life. My Choice.

We can help you know your options and get the support you need to live as independently as possible in the setting of your choice

Call (800) 654-2810  
[AreaAgencyonAging.org](http://AreaAgencyonAging.org)

Serving Berrien, Cass and  
Van Buren Counties



## In This Issue

- Caregiver Realism
- Free Zoom Classes
- Parkinson's Program
- Dementia Wandering Information and Tips

... and more!

## Free Zoom Classes

Area Agency on  
Aging's Campus for  
Creative Aging

classes are online, live! And we're ready to enjoy some time with you. If you need instructions on how to use Zoom, we can help!

**Cancer PATH**, April 12, 1:00-3:30 p.m.

**Healthcare Planning with Bronson**, April 14, 10:00-11:00 a.m.

**Diabetes PATH**, April 14, 1:30-4:00 p.m.

**Brunch for Winners**, April 14, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

**Fresh Connections for a Healthier Life**, April 15, 22, 29 and May 6, 10:00-11:00 a.m.

**New to Medicare**, April 15, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

**Caregiver Support Group hosted in conjunction with Caring Circle**, April 20 and May 18, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

**Zoom 101**, April 21, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

**Jazzing up Veggies**, April 28, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

**The Power of Podcasts**, April 29, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

**Chronic Pain PATH**, May 4, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

**There Really IS an App for That**, May 4, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

**Pizza Party**, May 12, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

**Sandwich Soiree**, May 26, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

All classes are interactive Zoom sessions. Register online at: [CampusForCreativeAging.org/classes](https://CampusForCreativeAging.org/classes) or call Amy Nichols at (269) 982-7748. More classes are added regularly!

## Education Project for Parkinson's Caregivers

Do you know someone caring for a person with Parkinson's Disease?

Parkinson's is a complicated disease that can present a changing variety of symptoms. Caregiving can be challenging. Please pass along this opportunity to them:

Michigan Parkinson Foundation (MPF) is launching a new Caregiver Education Project as a resource to family caregivers, or other individuals who may seek assistance on caring for someone with Parkinson's.

The free training program will provide critical care information for direct care workers, home health aides, family caregivers and others who assist individuals with Parkinson's to ensure better quality care.

Link to training- <https://michiganparkinsonfoundation.academy.reliaslearning.com/>

# Minimizing Agitation and Restlessness

Here are some great tips from other caregivers:

- Keeping my mom well fed and active all day with no naps. I also make sure Mom's daycare keeps her awake and hydrated. It works well, and I can tell when they don't follow through.
- I suggested we take Mom off ALL sugar (in her tea, biscuits, cakes, desserts, etc.). Since we have done this, she has been sleeping right through until five or six in the morning.
- I found that my mother felt better 'doing' something when she was her most restless. Fold laundry, sort coins, clip magazine pictures, play cards.
- Pray or sing songs together.
- Ask the doctor or pharmacist to check medication side effects, or to change the times



What causes wandering in dementia patients?

## Wandering

Wandering is a phase of deterioration. How long this restless phase will last varies from person to person, but it will not last forever.

People with dementia walk, seemingly aimlessly, for a variety of reasons, such as boredom, medication side effects or to look for something or someone. They also may be trying to fulfill a physical need - thirst, hunger, a need to use the toilet or exercise.

Discovering the triggers for wandering is not always easy, but they can provide insights to dealing with the behavior.

You are not alone in this situation. Discuss your concerns with your loved one's physicians and other experts. Don't hesitate to call us for further ideas and information. Check out the Caregivers Support Group listed on page 2.

*- excerpted from AgingCare.com article "What Causes Seniors with Dementia to Wander?" by Ashley Huntsberry-Lett.*

**Region IV Area Agency on Aging**  
2900 Lakeview Avenue  
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PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

When we begin this journey, it all seems altruistic and loving.

## Thank You for Caregiving

We feel needed, wanted and valued, but, in time, a sort of mutual dissatisfaction can take root with both caregivers and care recipients.

Eventually, “thank you” is no longer part of the dialogue. Your loved one may have gotten used to you handling everything for them, or they may harbor some resentment over their sudden loss of independence. Some seniors even lash out and become cantankerous because they feel a complete lack of control over their lives.

Just let go. Stop striving for perfection. Resolve to be your best. Know that the assistance you provide is appreciated even if the person you are caring for never says thank you.

Contact us at:

## Info- Line

for Aging and Disability

**(800) 654-2810**

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2900 Lakeview Ave.  
St. Joseph, MI  
49085

Region IV Area Agency on Aging supports your caregiving and aging needs