Oh No You Didn’t: Family Caregiving Dynamics

Sandra Edmonds Crewe, Ph.D., MSW

- Howard University School of Social Work
- Dean and Professor of Social Work
- Director of Multidisciplinary Gerontology Center
- ...and caregiver

AGENDA

- Understand caregiving within context of family
- Identify factors that contribute to stress among family caregivers
- Engage in practices that promote win-win relationship among family members
Caregiving in the US

- One size does no fit all...
- Demographically diverse
- Shared yet different challenges
- Need Different Support Levels

Caregiving in the United States

According to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) (2008), “Family members, friends, and other unpaid caregivers provide the backbone for much of the care that is received by older adults in the U.S.” (p.241) NASW Standards
Caregiving in the Family- My Story

• The situation
• The choice
• The impact

Caregiving and Stress

• Caregiver stress is due to the emotional and physical strain of caregiving.
• Caregivers report much higher levels of stress than people who are not caregivers.

Family Dynamics

• Multiple decision-makers and personalities
• Economic and geographic disparities among siblings
• Different expectations complicated role reversals
• Ingrained ways of behaving,
• Old "baggage" and personal commitments
  • (AARP)
All grown up—well mostly

Sibling Dynamics

• Family roles when growing up are important
• Birth Order
• Not a model or experience working together
• Coming together during a major emotional crisis

The Bloodline....

• But it seems like that is where it stops...
How do I get past my anger?

• Yep ANOTHER day where I get to sit here and listen to my mother rock in her squeaky rocking chair all day while do nothing siblings get to go on with their merry care free lives. I KNOW I’ll never REALLY get over the resentment I have for certain siblings, but how do you get past the Anger??

Say What—Oh No You Didn’t?

• You don’t have time—and you think I do
• You are needed at your job—what about me
• You are better than I am at this caregiving—Really?
• I can’t take this stress—and you think I can
• I can give you money—that’s not enough
• You were always the favorite—I wonder why?

It’s a thin line between love and hate
Strategies

- Keep family members informed
- Listen and accept opinions
- Help really wanted and needed
- Ask for specific help
- Accept help

Forgiveness

- The Family Care Alliance
  - Try to forgive family members who continue to refuse to get involved in a loved one’s care. The only thing we have control over in a situation is our reaction. Attempt to work through your negative emotions to take care of yourself and move forward.

Strategies

- Family Meetings and Mediation
  - Set agenda
  - Focus on here and now
  - Share feelings not accusations
  - Listen and respect opinions of others
Families working together...

WIN-WIN For All!

Families in Sync

• Shared roles- acceptance of differences
• Strong Communication
• Good cop—bad cop
• Looking out for each other – especially primary care providers

The Law of Win-Win says, “Let’s not do it your way or my way, let’s do it the best way.” — Greg Anderson

A family doesn’t need to be perfect; it just needs to be united.
What is Win-Win?

- Win/Win is a frame of mind and heart that constantly seeks mutual benefit in all human interactions. Win/Win means that agreements or solutions are mutually beneficial, mutually satisfying.
- With a Win/Win solution, all parties feel good about the decision and feel committed to the action plan. Win/Win sees life as a cooperative, not a competitive arena.
- Stephen Covey says that there is one clear sign of win-win, and that’s winning by helping others.

Applying Win-Win to Caregiving

- A person... that approaches conflicts with a win-win attitude possesses three vital character traits:
  - Integrity: sticking with your true feelings, values, and commitments
  - Maturity: expressing your ideas and feelings with courage and consideration for the ideas and feelings of others
  - Abundance Mentality: believing there is plenty for everyone

Strategies

- Family Meetings and Mediation:
  - Set agenda
  - Focus on here and now
  - Share feelings not accusations
  - Listen and respect opinions of others
Caregiver Challenges with Win-Win

Destination Win-Win—How to Get There?

• “Forgiveness does not overlook the deed. It rises above it.”
  — Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela

• “Whenever you’re in conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude.”
  — William James

Destination Win-Win—How to Get There?

• Getting here isn’t as hard as you may imagine.
• Simple, everyday actions make small differences that in the long run, become habits that come naturally.
Self Care – Do you like you?

How you treat yourself is how you are inviting the world to treat you.

Self Care—Yes you have the time!

Self care is not self indulgence.
Self care is self respect.

Win-Win Affirmation

A POSITIVE mind finds a way it can be done; a NEGATIVE mind looks for all the ways it can’t be done.

Napoleon Hill www.napoleonhillassociates.com
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secwe@howard.edu