

Top traits of a successful caregiver

Caregivers are responsible for the care and well-being of others. Most people who go into this field are known for their sensitivity, their giving nature and their nurturing desire to help those in need.



Empathy

One of the best qualities a caregiver can have is a sense of empathy for those being cared for. Whether you're caring for a small child or helping an elderly person recover from surgery, a sense of personal understanding and connection is vital. Good caregivers understand their charges may feel vulnerable, scared, confused and uncomfortable, and being able to identify and allay these fears can create a sense of calm and trust for those being cared for.



Patience

People receiving care typically lack the ability to be fully independent and self-sufficient, which can lead to frustration and lashing out. You must be able to separate yourself from potential anger and resentment and not take the situation personally, all while still providing high-quality care services.



Realistic Outlook

People being cared for often take longer than usual to complete simple tasks or routines. Understanding the limitations of those you care for can help reduce tension in the environment. Good caregivers recognize capabilities and encourage self-sufficiency while still providing necessary levels of care and attention.



Strong Constitution

Caregivers often deal with bodily fluids, wound care, bathing and other personal hygiene routines of their charges. A good caregiver does not shy away from delicate situations and works to help those they care for retain a sense of dignity. A caregiver never chides or shames her charges for uncontrollable body functions, regardless of age or circumstance.



Soothing Nature

Good caregivers know how to calm and sooth their charges. People in care-giving situations must often be prompted to eat, drink and cooperate to some degree in their own care. Being a voice of encouragement is a good quality for a caregiver, as is the ability to calm and reassure those being cared for.



Reliability

Reliability is a vital trait in a caregiver. People receiving care come to rely on and depend upon their caregivers and often feel a sense of personal attachment. Caregivers must continually be on time, particularly if administering food or medical care is part of the position's responsibility.

(Source: <http://work.chron.com>)



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Caregivers CORNER

A quarterly newsletter for
MCFI Home Care caregivers
Summer 2014



SEDA: Helping Kids Succeed

Did you know that the School for Early Development & Achievement (SEDA) is now enrolling children in K4 to first grade?

Chartered through UWM, SEDA students not only learn about reading, math and science, but how to focus on tasks and control their emotions so they can succeed in school.

If your child is registered and enrolled by Sept. 19, 2014, you will receive a \$25 gift card.

- Employment of personal care aides is expected to increase by 48.8 percent by 2022, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. There should be more than 580,800 new positions by 2022.



SEDA's highly qualified teaching staff understands that each child has unique needs, and each child's education plan is built around those needs.

SEDA provides transportation to and from school, which is located inside the Milwaukee Center for Independence (MCFI), 2020 W. Wells St. Staff members at MCFI and students from local universities spend time with our students to enrich their education.

Our students enjoy two nutritious meals plus two snacks each day in a safe, nurturing environment.

If you would like to learn more about enrolling your child for the 2014-15 school year, please contact Principal Nicki Ciurro at 414-937-2059.

Summertime Tips For Caregivers

These summertime tips will help you keep your client with Alzheimer's safe:

- People with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias can be prone to dehydration so be sure to offer small glasses of water or a favorite beverage throughout the day.
- Limit exposure to the sun and excessive heat. Bring along sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat for outdoor activities.
- Consider picnics and outdoor gatherings as a fun time for all but be mindful of the need for your client to have a place to get away or nap during these events to avoid feeling overwhelmed by the noise or physical activity.

Make use of the coolness of the morning or evening to bring your client outdoors for fresh air and walks.

(Source: <http://ocadulldayservices.org>)



When a client has Alzheimer's

Caring for a person with Alzheimer's disease at home is a difficult task and can become overwhelming at times. Each day brings new challenges as the caregiver copes with changing levels of ability and new patterns of behavior.

Trying to communicate with a person with Alzheimer's disease can be a challenge. Both understanding and being understood may be difficult. The following tips, though, may make communicating easier:

- Choose simple words and short sentences and use a gentle, calm tone of voice.
- Avoid talking to the person with Alzheimer's like a baby or talking about the person as if he or she weren't there.
- Minimize distractions and noise—such as the television or radio—to help the person focus on what you are saying.
- Make eye contact and call the person by name, making sure you have his or her attention before speaking.
- Allow enough time for a response. Be careful not to interrupt.
- If the person is struggling to find a word or communicate a thought, gently try to provide the word he or she is looking for.
- Try to frame questions and instructions in a positive way.
- Be open to the person's concerns, even if he or she is hard to understand.

(Source: www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers)

Tips to make communicating with a client with Alzheimer's disease a little easier.

Are you at risk of Caregiver

BURNOUT

Caregiving can bring many positives into your life -- but it's also hard work, physically and emotionally. If you don't take enough self-care to replenish yourself, then caregiver stress, anxiety and depression can build.

And that puts you on the path for caregiver burnout, a syndrome of mental, emotional, and physical depletion.

What's your caregiver burnout index? Answer the following 12 questions and add up your score (A = 4 points, B = 3 points, C = 2 points, D = 1 point) to find out.

1. How often do you get a good night's sleep (seven or more hours)? a. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom/never
2. How often do you keep up with leisure activities that you enjoyed before caregiving? A. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom /never
3. How often do you feel irritable or lose your temper with others? a. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom /never
4. How often do you feel happy? a. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom /never
5. How often do you find it difficult to concentrate? a. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom / never
6. How often do you need a cigarette or more than two cups of coffee to make it through the day? a. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom /never

7. How often do you lack the energy to cook, clean, and take care of everyday basics? a. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom /never

8. How often do you feel hopeless about the future? a. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom /never

9. How often are you able to relax without the use of alcohol or prescription sedatives? a. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom /never

10. How often do you feel overwhelmed by all you have to do? a. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom /never

11. How often has someone criticized your caregiving or suggested you're burning out? a. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom /never

12. How often do you feel that someone is looking after or caring for you? a. Every day b. Often c. Sometimes d. Seldom /never

How did you score?

48-42: Keeping your cool (low burnout risk)

30-41: Feverish (elevated burnout risk)

18-29: Too hot to handle (high burnout risk)

12-17: Toast (already burned out)

A score of **17** or lower means you are already burned out.

(Source: www.caring.com)