



June, 2017



### **Find Time in Your Calendar for You!**

Caregivers' calendars tend to be filled with appointments, meetings, and other household/work related activities. We also tend to add loved one's social and recreational activities to our calendars as we remain focused on keeping them active and engaged.

Meanwhile, caregivers can go for multiple weeks without participating in a preferred activity themselves. No wonder it's so difficult and sometimes depressing when starting a new week.

Even when caregivers do manage to schedule and participate in an activity of choice for themselves they can often be filled with guilt. I can remember a number of times during my caregiving journey with my parents when I felt guilty during times I spent out of the house for leisure, learning, or recreation. When I felt guilty or thought about what was happening with my parents at home, I did not live in the moment and missed out on fully enjoying some activities.

Over time, I learned (through work with my own life coach) that taking time for myself was not selfish so there was no need to feel guilty. In fact, by fully participating in at least one enjoyable activity each week I refueled my caregiving energy and provided even better and more balanced support throughout the rest of the week. It is vital to always have things to look forward to in your calendar--this will help you stay more positive even when you face great challenges.

**Practice Tip:** Schedule one fun or preferred activity in your calendar to be completed within the next week. This does not need to be a major activity - it could be something as simple as spending time alone reading in a park, walking on a nearby beach or pond, going to a movie, etc. This will give you something to look forward to. When you participate in your activity, be fully present and enjoy it to the fullest. After you return from your activity, your loved one will benefit as you have much more positive energy for your caregiving support activities.

If you can, it would be nice to plan for and schedule at least one major activity during the summer travel season. Book a weekend or week away. If you do not want to leave your loved one or have concern with financial resources, just take a few day trips to refresh yourself.

Source: A. Michael Bloom



### **Hugs Are Healthy**

Do you love hugs? Hugs are good for your health and for the health of the person you're hugging. That's because when you hug, your brain releases oxytocin, which promotes feelings of trust and bonding. Oxytocin also influences mood and behavior.

Research shows hugs reduce stress and anxiety. Hugs lower blood pressure, and they also can reduce depression. Research also links hugs to bolstering your immune system and building up your pain tolerance.

Researchers are quick to point out, however, that the positive effects of hugs happen only if you're hugging people you trust and love. Hugging people you're not close to or hugging people you don't even know can raise anxiety and stress levels.

Source: U.S. News and World Report



### **Certain Pills and Pillows Don't Mix**

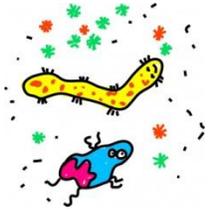
If you have trouble sleeping at night, the cause may be an external factor, such as your mattress, the room temperature (too hot), or a pet sleeping in your bed. The possible cause, however, is internal; namely, a pain pill that you swallowed before bedtime.

Certain over-the-counter pain medications contain caffeine because it helps the body absorb the pain-relieving ingredients. Unfortunately, caffeine can also raise your blood pressure and increase the amount of adrenaline in your body, causing your heart to race. Caffeine can also increase the release of stomach acid, leading to an upset stomach. All these factors can keep you up at night, preventing you from getting a good night's sleep.

One tablet of Excedrin Extra Strength medication contains 65 mg of caffeine. That's more than you'd find in a 12-ounce can of Mountain Dew (54 mg) or Diet Coke (47 mg). Other over-the-counter pain medications containing caffeine include Anacin and Midol Complete.

If you have to take a pain reliever before bedtime, caffeine-free versions include Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, and Aleve.

Source: Prevention.com



### Did You Know . . .

Three areas in your home where germs and bacteria thrive are the bathroom faucet handles (more so than the toilet handle), the water holder of your coffee maker, and the dog bowl. Be sure to clean and disinfect these areas several times each week.

Source: WebMD.com



### Rhubarb Dream Bars

*This is a new recipe that I just made and oh, it is so good! You can cut into squares as for brownies or larger squares for dessert dishes. Yummy! But it should be with the ingredients that are in it. But I rationalize the carbs in that rhubarb is short-lived in my garden and one or two desserts like this during the year is OK. You don't have to eat the whole pan in one sitting. Right? Enjoy!*

Crust: Combine 2 cups flour and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup powdered sugar. Cut in 1 cup butter. Press into bottom of 11x15 or 9x13 pan. Bake 350 for 15 mins. or until lightly browned.

While baking, prepare the filling: Blend until smooth 4 eggs, 2 cups sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup flour  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt. Fold in 4 cups diced rhubarb. Spread over the hot crust; Bake 40-45 min till filling is lightly browned. Cool; cut into squares.



### **Meditation**

*Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. – Romans 12:13*

Hospitality: the act, practice, or quality of being hospitable, friendly.

I can see a relationship between hospitality and caregiving. Our loved one enjoys our being hospitable and releasing happy vibes. A smile on one's face is balm to another's spirit. A smile indicates all is right with the world. Even just walking around their room with a smile on your face while putting away clothes or dusting the furniture gives a lift to their spirit.

Hospitality that comes directly from the heart is much more than simply a social nicety or a flair for relationship building. It is evidence that the Holy Spirit is at work, cleansing away the selfishness and sinfulness that lurks in the corners of our hearts. Sometimes these sins escape our notice, and so we ask our Lord to continue His "housekeeping" chores in our souls, not only forgiving us, but also cleansing us "from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Thank you, Lord, for the smiles in my life. Help me give happy, friendly vibes to those around me without a hint of hesitation. Be with us as we continue to move forward through these challenging situations. In Jesus name, Amen.



Our grandson is graduating from high school in North Carolina, and then the family is taking a vacation to Sunset Beach, NC. We are really looking forward to it. Pray for good health and safe travel.

