

Wellness

New caregiving strategies for a new year

At CaringKind, we like to say, "If you've seen one case of Alzheimer's, you've seen one case of Alzheimer's." But we also know that caregivers share some universal experiences along their Alzheimer's journey. With a new year on the horizon, it's important to remember common caregiver pitfalls and consider new approaches to those problems.

PITFALL: Your mom has, once again, accused you of hiding the remote control. You insist you haven't, and go back and forth until she's worked up and you're exhausted.

NEW APPROACH: Instead of arguing with her, tell her you're sorry and must have hidden it without realizing, and move on. The issue is a small one. By keeping the peace, you'll keep the arguing and stress levels to a minimum.

PITFALL: You've been fighting a cold for a week. You think about making a doctor's appointment, but figure it's not worth the stress of finding someone to watch your dad. Your cold turns into pneumonia and you're unable to care for him for weeks. Now you need to hire someone to stay with him while you recuperate, which is very costly.

NEW APPROACH: Take care of that cold right away. Ask a relative or friend to sit with your dad while you go to the doctor. It's even worth it



Care Chronicle
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to pay a fee for a professional to care for him for a few hours. You'll get the care you need to stay healthy.

PITFALL: You have several items that need repairs around the house. Your husband, who has dementia, was a "Mr. Fix-It," but can no longer tend to these problems like he used to. You hire a handy man to do the work and your husband becomes hurt and angry.

NEW APPROACH: Try to anticipate these feelings and understand that he may feel his responsibilities are slowly narrowing. You may want to tell him that, since he has so much experience with these repairs, he should supervise the project, greeting the handy man and explaining what needs to be done. This will allow him to retain some of the control and his pride. You may also want to give the handy man a heads up so he is aware of the situation.

PITFALL: You have enrolled your wife in CaringKind's MedicAlert NYC Wanderer's Safety Program because lately she's been going



With a new year on the horizon, consider some common caregiver pitfalls that may have led to hurt feelings on either side, and consider new approaches to those problems so past arguments don't follow you into 2019.

out for walks and getting lost. You feel a sense of relief, which is short-lived because she absolutely refuses to wear the identification bracelet. She says it makes her feel old and helpless. She doesn't wear the bracelet and you continue to worry about her safety.

NEW APPROACH: Have your grandson give the bracelet to your wife as a gift. Chances are, she will be so touched by the child's thought-

fulness, she'll agree to wear it. And, instead of the jewelry making her feel old, she may even brag to her friends about how caring her grandson is.

Remember that the dementia experts at CaringKind can help you find an out-of-the-box solution to any problem. Call us 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at (646) 744-2900. We are here for you.

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