Resource Spotlight

USC Leonard Davis
Family Caregiver Support Center

Many families enter the world of caregiving in unexpected ways. It often begins with a phone call: "Something's happened; Mom/Dad/Auntie/Uncle/Sister/Brother/etc. is not doing well." Following this revelation, family members often have unrealistic expectations of what will happen. One of the biggest misconceptions when families begin their caregiving journey is that everyone in the family is able to (or wants to) help with the caregiving responsibilities. People build an idealistic scenario in their minds where everyone pitches in equally and works together to care for their loved one. There is a lot of talk about who "should" do what. Ultimately, having unrealistic expectations about different family members' roles can take a toll on relationships and turn things sour.

Families each have their own unique type of dynamics and history. One of the biggest pitfalls we can make as caregivers is to assume that everyone else in the family is going to overlook past family history to cheerfully take up caregiving duties. It simply does not happen that way. Families have had years upon years to build their dynamics: perhaps a child is estranged, siblings do not get

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- Sept 3rd, 6:00-7:30 PM: Rancho Palos Verdes Support Group
  Location: Mary & Joseph Retreat Center
  5300 Crest Rd., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

- Sept 4th & 18th, 1:00-2:30 PM: Pasadena Support Group
  Location: Pasadena Senior Center
  85 E. Holly St., Pasadena, CA 91103

- Sept 5th, 1:00-2:30 PM: Santa Fe Springs Support Group **(Presented in Spanish)**
  Location: Gus Velasco Neighborhood Center
  9255 S. Pioneer Blvd., Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

- Sept 10th & 24th, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM: First AME Church Support Group (*PEER-LED*)
  Location: First AME Church: Allen House
  2249 South Harvard, Los Angeles, CA 90018

- Sept 11th, 10:00-11:30 AM: Rosemead Support Group
  Location: California Mission Inn (Massie Hall)
  8417 Mission Dr., Rosemead, CA 91770

- Sept 11th & 25th, 12:00-2:00 PM: USC Support Group
  Location: LACRC@USC - Davis School of Gerontology

- Sept 12th, 4:30-6:00 PM: Claremont Support Group
  Location: Claremont Manor Care Center (OT Room)
  621 W. Bonita Ave., Claremont, CA 91711

- Sept 12th, 6:00-7:30 PM: SPANISH Telephone Support Group
  Please register by calling toll-free (855) 872-6060.

- Sept 13th, 9:00 AM-1:00 PM: "Family Caregiving: What You Need to Know" **(Presented solely in Mandarin Chinese)**
  Location: Arcadia Community Center
  365 Campus Dr., Arcadia, CA 91007
  REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. Please call Mei-Chi Kuo (213-821-6920) to register.

- Sept 18th, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM: Downey Support Group
  Location: Remita Health
  12620 Erickson Ave., Downey, CA 90242

- Sept 18th, 1:30-3:00 PM: Azusa Support Group
  Location: Silverado Sierra Vista Memory Care Community
  125 Sierra Madre Ave., Azusa, CA 91702

- Sept 19th, 9:00-11:00 AM: "C.A.L.M. About: What is Dementia?" (Baldwin Park)
  Location: Kaiser Permanente Medical Center
  1011 Baldwin Park Blvd., Baldwin Park, CA 91706
  Basement Conference Rooms

- Sept 19th & 26th, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM: "Stress, Resilience & Positivity" (Cerritos) (Weeks 1 & 2)
  Location: Cerritos Senior Center
  12340 South St., Cerritos, CA 90703
  REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. Please call Yvonne Kuo (213-821-6919) or Jenny Peterson (213-821-6908) to register.

- Sept 19th, 1:30-2:30 PM: "C.A.L.M. About: What is Dementia?" (Arcadia)
  Location: Arcadia Community Center
  365 Campus Dr., Arcadia, CA 91007

- Sept 25th, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM: Pico Rivera Support Group
  Location: Pico Rivera Senior Center
  9200 Mines Ave., Pico Rivera, CA 90660

- Sept 26th, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM: Caregivers' Circle
  Location: Potrero Heights Community & Senior Center
  8051 Arroyo Dr., Montebello, CA 90640

- Sept 26th, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM: Long Beach Support Group
  Location: Grace First Presbyterian Church (Fireside Room)
  3955 Studebaker Road, Long Beach, CA 90808

- Sept 26th, 6:00-7:30 PM: Lake View Terrace Support Group (*PEER-LED*)
  Location: Lake View Terrace Library
  12002 Osborne St., Lake View Terrace, CA 91342

- Sept 26th, 6:30-8:00 PM: Telephone Support Group
  Please register by calling toll-free (855) 872-6060.

along, a spouse is unhappy, a parent is cold and distant, etc. These dynamics did not develop overnight, but rather, have been years in the making. When we become caregivers, it is unrealistic to expect these relationships to change suddenly. It is important to accept that we need to work with what we have rather than unsuccessfully trying to reach an impossible ideal that "should" be.
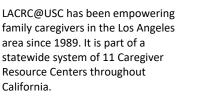
A family meeting can help those families who need to get a handle on how to deal with caregiving. However, you must keep in mind that not everyone in the family feels the same way. Some may be more willing to help than others. Some may be more hands-on, while others prefer to contribute support financially. We need to keep in mind that everyone has his/her own strengths and weaknesses. We need to work toward using each person's strengths to provide good care rather than trying to force people into duties they feel uncomfortable doing.

Many families often focus on dividing caregiving "equally," which causes resentment in everyone involved. Remember, caregiving is not about equality in tasks; it is all about using each family member to their full potential to provide good care to your loved one. A family meeting can open the lines of communication about what people will or will not do, how they feel they can contribute best, or how involved they want to be. If you need help arranging a family meeting, speak to your Family Care Navigator to see how they can assist and guide you.