

CARE GIVING IS HARD WORK - PART I

By Donna Deos

If you are a care giver you know how true this statement is. If you aren't, please take a moment to think about the people you know who are care givers either as a profession or as a family member.

It doesn't matter if you are professionally paid for the job or if you are doing it out of the kindness of your heart – either way you are doing yeomen's work and I applaud you.

For those of you who are not familiar with what caregiving entails, let me give you some things to enlighten you. Care giving is when you are taking care of another person because they need help. Now, bear in mind, they may not want the help and they also may not recognize that they really do need the help. This is where it can get stressful and frustrating. They also may not realize that the things you are saying and doing are because you truly care and that you have their best interests at heart.

I'll give you an example from my own life to illustrate the point. My mother was a very strong and independent woman. She did everything. She cooked, she cleaned, she mowed the lawn and did the leaves. She also was a caregiver her whole life to a series of people and she also worked outside the home until 80 years old by her own choice. As she got older it got harder for her to do all of this. She kept trying to do it all, but she needed help. She didn't really want it because she didn't want to admit she was finding it harder to do it all. She didn't want to feel like she couldn't do something and she sure as shooting didn't want me telling her she couldn't or shouldn't do something.

She also had some medical setbacks along the way that truly forced the point of not being able to do things. This is very hard for anyone to handle, much less a strong independent person like her. This is where the family or just plain relationship dynamics come into play. We had some very hard times.

I was trying to protect her and help her and she was trying to hold onto her sense of who she was and control over her own life. It wasn't until I got so upset and frustrated that the real truth of the matter



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came out. I finally blurted out to her through a face full of tears that all I wanted was to keep her safe because I loved her and wanted her in my life as long as possible. I wanted to have nice times with her and not just using my vacation and paid time off to sit by her side in the hospital. I wanted us both to have quality of life for as long as we could. That's why I was saying and doing all of the things that I was.

That was when she realized that I wasn't trying to control her or take over her life, I just wanted her safe, happy and well cared for. That's all we want for our loved ones. From that moment on, she was able to understand I meant well and I was able to see she needed to remain in control of as much as possible for her well being too. We finally got each other and overcame the button pushing on both sides.

So, there's one example of how hard it can be to be a caregiver. I guess it's also an example of how hard it is to be a care receiver too! Please take the time to speak with each other. It is so important to communicate and explain how you both feel. It is very easy to get caught up in our own feelings and wants and not see how what we think of as the right thing negatively impacts the other person. We should also choose our words well. How we say things is so very important – especially if you want the other person to keep listening.

Let's continue this discussion next month as well. It is so important that the care giving discussion happens. Care giving is not likely to ever go away, so let's keep working on making it as good as possible.

All my best, Donna

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ZUMBA FITNESS

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BioBlitz

2021 NH BIOBLITZ!

During the month of September 2021, you are invited to help find and document species (plants, animals, insects, fungi) found on town-owned lands using the mobile app iNaturalist. This is a statewide event and you can participate on Bow's town-owned lands. You don't need to be an expert – iNaturalist can help you identify the species of plants, insects, fungi, and wildlife that you find. Learn more about the world around you and will help Bow learn more about its natural resources.

UNH Cooperative Extension, the sponsor of this event, is hosting two webinars in August for people interested in participating in the 2021 NH BioBlitz. Please visit the UNH website:

www.extension.unh.edu/events/explore-observe-nh-bioblitz-inaturalist-training
 for more information.

Participants are encouraged to sign up for an iNaturalist account at www.inaturalist.org and download the iNaturalist app to their phone prior to the information session. iNaturalist is free, fun to use, and can help you and your family learn more about nature.

If you are interested in participating or assisting in this effort in Bow, register for an information session and email the Conservation Commission at www.conservation@bownh.gov.