



Home Sweet Home

Do your clients have aging loved ones whose homes may be turning into dangerous places to navigate? Are they facing the dreaded decision of what to do? Keep their elderly relatives at home in what may be an unsafe environment or move them to an assisted living facility? Does it seem as if there are no options?

Or, are your patients the very ones who need advice from you? There is one option many of us frequently overlook, say Dennis R. La Buda, M.A. and Vicki Schmall, Ph.D., authors of *Home Sweet Home? How to Help Older Adults Live Independently*. Often simple modifications and adjustments can be easily and cost-effectively made to an elderly person's home to "senior-proof" it, allowing them to continue to live their lives on their own terms without worry.

This book, published by AAL QualityLife Resources, lists and illustrates simple steps your readers can take to "senior-proof" their loved ones' homes. It identifies potential household dangers, tells what to buy in local hardware stores and gives examples of how to "senior proof" the typical home.

Home Sweet Home has been endorsed by many professionals in the field of geriatrics, by occupational and physical therapists and by its users. Although it does not have an academic tone, it is used as a textbook in college classrooms, as well.

The book can be purchased through the Caregivers' website—linking to AAL QualityLife Resources' Marketplace, Amazon.com, and barnesandnoble.com. If you wish to purchase in quantity or for a class, please call Leah Abrahams, AAL QualityLife Resources at 1-800-225-5225, ext. 4570 or write to leah_abrahams@aal.org

We've Made a Difference!

Isn't it wonderful to know that we've made a difference in the lives of caregivers who have participated in "Powerful Tools for Caregiving"? As we begin our 6th class of "Taking Care of You", I still continue to be amazed at the response of former participants.

After our first class, the participants chose to get together monthly for a luncheon at our local Holiday Inn (ironic, since the caregivers consider it a "Holiday" away from caregiving). We agreed to plan the luncheon and provide speakers chosen from topics of interest to the caregivers. Some of the topics included Spousal Impoverishment, Adaptive Equipment Installation, Microwave Cooking for Two, Prescription Discount Programs, Tool Boxes (How are we using our tools?), and Practice/Review of Communication Techniques-What's Worked for You? As subsequent classes were completed, we invited the caregivers to join the group. The response has been overwhelming.

New friendships were quickly formed and the caregivers tell us that they really look forward to the luncheon and the sharing of common problems. Some of the caregivers have formed support groups of their own as a result of the opportunity to "bond" with others who are experiencing the same situations. This monthly gathering has enabled the caregivers to continually share with others in similar situations. It seems to give them great satisfaction to know that though changes take place in their role as a caregiver (some have since lost their spouse or parent), they will always be a part of this special group and able to share their experiences with those who care.

The full impact of the meaning of these gatherings to those who participate was recently brought to my attention by a caregiver who (with tears in his eyes) said, "You are so important to me! I can't tell you how much this has changed my life. These people are such special friends. I can't wait to get there each month. Thank you for bringing me joy!" I was then the recipient of a huge hug that brought tears to MY eyes, and I knew that WE'VE (Powerful Tools for Caregiving) REALLY MADE A DIFFERENCE!

List of Training Classes

A **Train the Trainer Class** will be held July 22 through July 25, 2002 in Eau Claire, WI. The class will be held at Dove Healthcare Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and will be taught by Mary Brintnall-Peterson and Sheila Koca. Monday through Wednesday, class will be held from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. On Thursday, July 25, class will be held from 8:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. The class is sponsored by Wisconsin Alliance for Family Caregiving, Dove Healthcare Nursing and Rehabilitation and AgeAdvantage Area Agency on Aging.

To get more information or to register for the class, please contact:

Ginny Close
1227B Menomonie Street
Eau Claire, WI 54703
(715) 835-7050
(715) 835-0597 FAX
Virginia.Close@alz.org

Powerful Tools for Family Caregiving class will be held at St. William's Church, 1815 Ravine Street, Janesville, WI, beginning October 18, 2002. The class will meet for 6 sessions. For more information or to register for the class, please contact:

Julie Seeman
51 South Main Street
1900 Center Avenue
Janesville, WI 53545
(608) 758-8455
(608) 758-8472 FAX
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Pat Yourselves on the Back

The Wisconsin Alliance for Family Caregiving has trained over 50 individuals in over one-third of the counties in Wisconsin to teach the Powerful Tools for Caregiving Curriculum. The trained trainers have offered approximately 15 workshops that reached over 130 caregivers. Caregivers have rated the class as either very good or excellent. Caregivers report more confidence in their ability to deal with the increased care needs of the person they are caring for, their ability to do something to make themselves feel better when discouraged, and their ability to cope with the stress of caring for person they are helping. Some comments caregivers provided include:

"I have been moved to action by discussing care situation with other family members – I would have delayed had I not taken this course." Another shares, "This class completely changed my outlook and the way I do things caring for Mom."



New Logo and Updated Website

AARP has updated the look of the logo for the Wisconsin Alliance for Family Caregiving.

Along with this new logo, we have also updated the look of our website. Please note that all links are now controlled by buttons on the left side of the home page. We hope that you will find this update makes it easier to navigate around the website.