YOU ARE NOT ALONE

The Alzheimer’s Association knows that during this unprecedented time, no one should face Alzheimer’s or other dementia alone. We are here for all who are navigating the process whether you are the individual living with a diagnosis or supporting someone who has received a diagnosis. Today, I wanted to spend time focusing on caregivers. Currently, there are 16 million Americans providing care in some capacity and they vary in many ways, however there are some similarities. Over half of primary caregivers take care of parents, one quarter is sandwich generation caregivers taking care of both an aging parent and children and two thirds are women. Finally, about one in three is age 65+ but many are younger including millennials and children who are providing support. These caregivers often report high levels of emotional and physical stress. The Alzheimer’s Association has identified ten signs of stress including denial, anger, social withdrawal, anxiety, depression, exhaustion, sleeplessness, irritability, lack of concentration and health problems. These may be intensified due to the pandemic.

If a caregiver is identifying with these signs, there is help available. We encourage caregivers to know resources, get needed support and to use relaxation techniques. While using relaxation as a self-care tool may seem overwhelming there is research supporting the use. Some methods are mediation, breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation and visualization (link to follow). Additional suggestions are to get moving with physical exercise, find time for yourself, consider taking advantage of respite care, educate yourself, visit your doctor regularly and make and put into place legal and financial plans. Remember practicing self-care is not selfish! Give yourself a few minutes and try visualization with me. Watch this video HERE and relax for a few minutes.

Visit the Caregiver Center at www.alz.org or call 1.800.272.3900

We are still here for you!
Annette Clark