

A Day In The Life of A Caregiver

By Maggie Roach-Ganaway

Janet lets the phone go to voice message as she is trying to get breakfast on the table for her husband after a busy morning of getting him up and ready for the day. Today is appointment day, so it started earlier than normal. Her husband's dementia is progressing; the medication he was prescribed doesn't seem to be working for him and in fact it is causing side effects that she is concerned about. After the appointment, she will need to stop by the bank to deal with an issue that came up and duck into the grocery store to pick up a few things.

This is just one day in the life of a caregiver and, although every caregiving journey is different, quite similar emotions and challenges come into most of their everyday lives.

A caregiver lives each day wondering what will lie ahead and just trying to get through another day without a catastrophe that may turn their life upside down. For the most part, each day becomes like the last and things gradually seem to become routine and normal.

What most caregivers don't understand is that this sense that things are normal is often a coping mechanism. Underneath, they are seeking their old life back, before they became a caregiver. Most caregivers will not admit this out loud for fear that other people will think ill of them or will think they may be resentful of the situation. But, what caregivers need to realize, is that others feels the same way as well, and that it is normal to feel this way.

Along with making sure personal care, meal prep, house-keeping, errands, appointments, and financial matters

are all taken care of, some caregivers also have to take over the things that their loved one usually took care of. This can be an added strain on the relationship and can lead to those feelings of resentment.

How people handle these feelings is a totally personal thing. But there may be some things they can try to help make it a better place for them.

Taking time for yourself and doing something that gives you joy and pleasure can take your mind off of the every-day "tasks" that have to be done.

Joining a group whether it is a support group or a line dancing group will give you a chance to talk with other people and break up the monotony of everyday life.

Writing down your feelings in a journal may help you get some feelings out that you may not be able to tell anyone else and this can act as a release for some people.

Getting organized and writing things down, will help with things that pop up at the last minute and make them easier to deal with.

Planning ahead for things that will need to be dealt with in the future, may ease your mind about what the future may hold.

These things shouldn't feel like just another chore that has to be completed. They are meant to act as a distraction and an enjoyable interlude in the everyday routine that has become your life. Make everyday a time to cherish instead of dwelling on the negative things that you have no control over.



Wishing you a peaceful and
joyous holiday season.
All the best for a
wonderful 2020.