



# Beaver County Area Agency on Aging Cultivating Caregiver Wellness™

Hope Grows  
June, 2020

# Lisa Story Introductions



Lisa Story, founder and Executive Director of Hope Grows, a non-profit organization Cultivating Caregiver Wellness. A Licensed Professional Counselor and Certified Thanatologist, Lisa's professional experience in grief & bereavement and the connection to the natural world has led her to the path of the non-profit.

She holds Certificates in Addictions Counseling and Horticultural therapy. Lisa is an author, part-time faculty member of Robert Morris University in psychology, national and local speaker on the topic of caregiver respite, and a Jefferson award recipient.

Her ongoing project is creating a sustaining environment at the future location of the Iris Respite House. She believes that mindfulness, having a positive outlook, and connecting to nature is therapeutic.



# Who is Hope Grows?

**Hope Grows mission is to inspire hope through nature while empowering caregivers to seek wellness of mind, body and spirit.**

## **Our Core Beliefs**

- We believe that connecting to nature and the natural world is therapeutic.
- We believe in a positive, Mindful and holistic approach as a path to wellness.
- We believe that caregivers not only need a break, they deserve a break.

Our **Unique Approach** includes nature therapy, comprehensive services, innovative services and an overnight respite model.

## **Our Model of Support**

Hope Grows provides therapeutic respite, mental health counseling and education to family caregivers to improve the quality of life for both caregivers and care receivers. Focus on empowerment, self-awareness, and emotional connection for family/professional caregivers as well as the care receivers (during and after care)



# Hope Grows - the Results of our Work



## Caregivers experience

- increased awareness of need for self-care
- increased coping skills
- adopt and implement specific stress-reducing activities and techniques
- experience higher quality of life (both)

## **SERVING THE COMMUNITY 2019**

**Caregivers/Families – 418**

**Think Caregiver Program – 191**

**Counseling and Support - 670  
Hours**

**Therapeutic Respite - 654 Hours**

**Education/Training – 556 Hours of  
Education/Training Received and  
Given**

**Turkey Meals at Thanksgiving - 170**

**3,377 Hours Volunteer Service**

# Framing the challenge in the home



- Nationwide, family caregivers are providing \$470 billion of in-home care per year, which comes at a personal cost
  - *Additionally, caregivers are responsible for financial burden for care recipient preventative care that the insurance industry does not support*
- Chronic stress and illness arise because caregivers do not access respite services for self
  - *40-70% report clinical depression*
  - *63% have poorer eating habits and 58% indicate worse exercise habits than before caregiving responsibilities*
- Ignoring chronic stress and illness can result in caregiver death
  - *Elderly spousal caregivers (aged 66-96) in a caregiver role have a 63% higher mortality rate than non caregivers of the same age*
- Family caregiving has become an increasingly dominant form of care in the US, and will increase as people live longer

***Pennsylvania has 1.6 million unpaid family caregivers, which is 3.5% of the 43.5 million nationwide.***

# Grant Funded Projects/Research



In response to a national study on caregiving, caregivers identified program characteristics they believed to be the most beneficial/supportive

- Saved time
- Reduced caregiver stress
- Affordable
- Displayed appreciation
- Continuous contact, coaching, and encouragement are beneficial/supportive to caregivers.

From that, three different programs were developed

- Think Caregiver
- Caregiver Connect
- Caregiving Coaching Program

# Professional Window of Care

## **Two articles that were written by Hope Grows/Lisa Story Addressing workforce stress and burnout Professional Caregiver Stress is Infrequently Addressed**

- Professional caregivers struggle to find the balance between providing patients/clients with meaningful care and their own emotional self-protection.
- Mindfulness and Compassion-Based Interventions training is associated with an improvement in psychological well-being and a reduction of negative psychological symptoms and might be an appropriate intervention to protect professionals from suffering burnout and compassion fatigue.”
- The results of a survey of 174 professional caregivers left us at Hope Grows to speculate that there is a lack of psycho-education around the topic of professional caregiver health and wellness. This would explain why professional caregivers, in the study, rated their stress levels low, but their need for health management tools, high.

# Questions for Participants



How often do you stop to think about your overall health and well-being?

1. Not very often
2. Not often
3. Not sure
4. Often
5. Very often

# Questions for Participants



How would rate your level of stress when dealing with the family caregiver of your patients?

1. Not at all stressful
2. Somewhat stressful
3. Moderately stressful
4. Very stressful
5. Extremely stressful

# Caregiver Stress

SO... WHERE DO WE BEGIN TO CREATE A  
RECIPE FOR CULTIVATING WELLNESS?

# STRESS

## Acknowledging the Effects of Stress

- Need to be aware when we need a break, implement self-care, get support and help

## Ask yourself

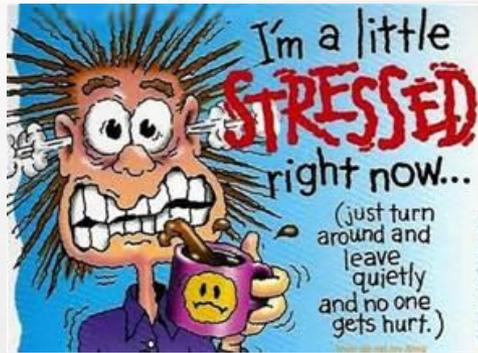
- Basics needs must be met
  - Food, water, sleep, breathing,
  - What do I need?

## Types of Self Care

- Physical, Emotional/Mental, Spiritual



# Do you know your STRESS?



- Do you know your warning signs?
- Do you know your sources of stress?
- Results of Neglecting Stress
  - Increased health problems
  - Disrupted relationships
  - Decreased quality of care
  - Compassion Fatigue
  - Burnout
  - Secondary Traumatic Stress



Compassion Fatigue  
Burnout  
Secondary Traumatic Stress

# Being Immersed in Suffering/Loss

“THE EXPECTATION THAT WE CAN BE IMMERSED IN SUFFERING AND LOSS DAILY AND NOT BE TOUCHED BY IT IS AS UNREALISTIC AS EXPECTING TO BE ABLE TO WALK THROUGH WATER WITHOUT GETTING WET.”

R.N. Remen



# COMPASSION FATIGUE vs BURNOUT

## Compassion Fatigue

- Refers to the physical, emotional, or spiritual exhaustion affecting a caregiver
- Interferes with individual's ability to feel joy or empathy
- One feels the pain of his/her client, and that affects day to day functioning.
- Sometimes called Secondary Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Different than burn-out

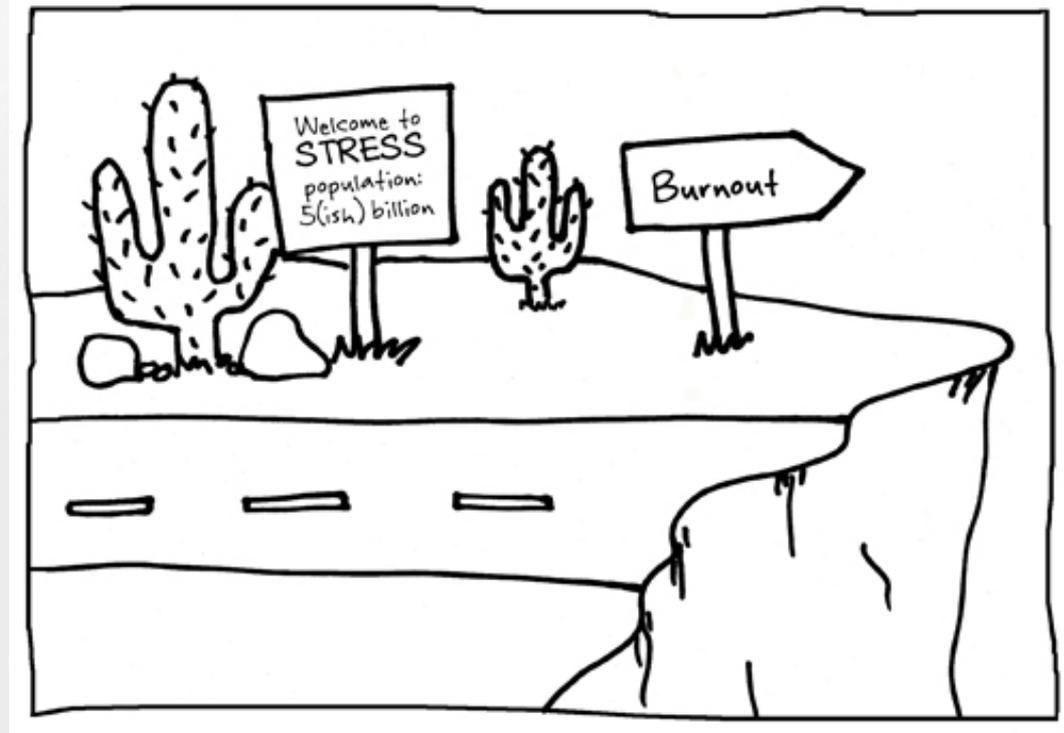
## Burnout

- Burdensome agency policies
- Documentation demands
- More work than time to do it
- High expectations by management
- External locus of control
- Tight deadlines
- Unrealistic vision of what can be done
- Little autonomy and independence

It is possible to have both burnout and caregiver stress (compassion fatigue) at the same time, which is a challenging combination.

The “helping” professions tend to have the highest rate of job burnout.

The tools for fixing them is the same.



# Questions for Participants



How often do you find yourself attending to the emotional and mental needs of the family caregiver?

1. Not very often
2. No often
3. Not sure
4. Often
5. Very often

# Questions for Participants



How helpful would it be to have another person to help decrease non-care related interactions with the family caregiver?

1. Not very helpful
2. No helpful
3. Not sure
4. Helpful
5. Very helpful



# Detecting & Prevention Compassion Fatigue

# ProQOL

- Most widely used evidence-based assessment of Compassion Fatigue, compassion satisfaction, and burnout
- Well validated and available for free
- Can be administered online or on paper, with groups or individuals
- Can be tailored to meet the needs of any group or professional
- The website has an exhaustive bibliography
- Online comprehensive manual
- <https://www.proqol.org/>



# Strategies

- Compassion satisfaction
- Building resilience
- Vicarious resilience
- Creating a self-care plan
- Leaving work at the office
- Stress and self-care
- Self-Care Brainstorming
- Pro-QOL Helper Card
- Eating Well



# Questions for Participants



If offered training, which of these would be of interest to you? (check all that apply)

1. Stress management/reduction
2. Assessment of emotional/behavioral needs of family caregiver
3. Relaxation techniques
4. Other

# Hope Grows Contact Information

Hope Grows

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[www.hopegrows.net](http://www.hopegrows.net)

412-369-4673

Mission: To inspire hope through nature while empowering caregivers to seek wellness of mind, body, & spirit.

## Caregiver Q&A

### What is Hope Grows?

Hope Grows is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that helps caregivers' alleviate stress and direct some of their focus on self-care. We offer counseling and support, therapeutic respite activities, and education and training. Most of our services are free.

### How Do I Know I'm a Caregiver?

Hope Grows defines the caregiver as anyone providing unpaid care to dependent children, spouses, parents, siblings, relatives, friends, or neighbors.

Caregiving can include personal care, physical help, emotional or social support, behavior support, assistance with activities of daily living, assistance accessing services, and financial help.

### How Do I Know If I'm Stressed?

**Physical Strain** - Lack of sleep or excessive sleep; back or stomach pain; headaches; use or increased use of stimulants or depressants (*caffeine, nicotine, alcohol or sedatives*).

**Emotional Distress** - anger, irritability, sorrow, or defensiveness; trouble remembering and concentrating; making poor decisions.

**Spiritual Challenges** - Feeling lonely; withdrawing from activities, hobbies, or faith/religion; saying "I can't do anything right"; feeling unhappy and removed from the world around us.

**Social Withdrawal** - Engaging less with friends or family.

*We're here for you!*

HopeGrows.net | 412.369.4673



### OUR MISSION:

To inspire hope through nature while empowering caregivers to seek wellness of mind, body, and spirit.



## We help caregivers plant seeds of hope

- 🌱 Weekly Caregiver Tips
- 🌱 Monthly Check-In Calls
- 🌱 Day of Rest & Relaxation
- 🌱 Short Breaks
- 🌱 Free Turkey Meals at Thanksgiving
- 🌱 Emotional & Mental Health Support
- 🌱 Caregiver Overnight Break Away
- 🌱 Healing & Restorative Gardens
- 🌱 The Iris Movement

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