

# Adult Day Self-Care Newsletter

March 2023

## The Challenges of Providing Elder Care Services

Healthcare workers in general experience high levels of work stress and burnout—a situation that worsened during the pandemic. For workers in elder care services, especially providers supporting people with memory loss, there are added challenges. Memory loss often includes communications difficulties, changes in mood and behavior, and progressive loss of function, making the work emotionally difficult as well as physically demanding. These factors explain burnout, affecting 25-75% of workers in geriatric settings<sup>1</sup> and high turnover rates. While we don't have data on turnover among Adult Day Center staff, estimates for related services are very high, such as home care<sup>2</sup> (65%), assisted living<sup>3</sup> (68%), and nursing homes<sup>4</sup> (45%). The US Surgeon General has identified [health worker burnout](#) and [workplace well-being](#) as top priorities. No matter what our roles are, there is something we can do. The most basic is to learn to recognize the signs of distress and burnout in yourself and others: emotional exhaustion, a low sense of accomplishment at work, and “depersonalization” (losing sight of others as unique individuals worthy of respect). Keep reading for tools and tips that can help.

## Resources for Work Stress and Burnout

Our colleagues at the Rutgers University Center of Alcohol and Substance Use Studies provide links to resources for addressing stress and burnout among healthcare workers. The *Wellness Training and Learning Collaborative* provides information on three categories of resources:

- **Individual** approaches are used by each worker independently to manage stress and build resilience. Examples include yoga, movement, and improving work-life balance.
- **Organizational** approaches address workplace culture and gather input from workers.
- **Peer support** approaches help link co-workers, encourage mutual support on the job, and build skills that can help staff look after one another.

### References

- <sup>1</sup> Potard & Landais (2021). The use of cluster analysis to identify different burnout profiles among nurses and care assistants for older adults. *Geriatric Nursing*, 42(5), 1135-1142.
- <sup>2</sup> Home Care Association of America (2021).
- <sup>3</sup> McKnight Senior Living (2022).
- <sup>4</sup> Zheng et al. (2022). Association between staff turnover and nursing home quality.... *J American Geriatrics Society*, 70(9), 2508-2516.



## Staff Turnover = Training Needs

At COPSA, we are aware of the high rate of staff turnover in NJ-based Adult Day Centers over the past few years. We recognize that new staff need training to effectively care for people with memory loss. In April, we will offer two **free** webinars on the basics of aging and understanding dementia for professional care providers that will be perfect for new Adult Day staff. Links to register for each webinar are on page 2.

## Building Personal Resilience

Resilience means bouncing back from a difficult experience. We can't always prevent stressors, but we can do things to strengthen ourselves so that we can handle stress and recover well. Regular self-care helps build resilience.

**Be kind to yourself:** [Tone down](#) the self-criticism! We all do it, but we can counter our negative talk with self-praise for a more balanced and healthy perspective. Take a short [self-compassion break](#).

**Breathe:** The very best stress buster is a few deep breaths. Practice taking one slow deep breath through your nose, breathing into your belly with relaxed shoulders. Then let it out slowly through your mouth. Try some different [breathing exercises](#) to see what works for you.

**Treat your body well:** Stay hydrated, eat fruits and vegetables, and move often. A stretch break can do wonders for you by reducing tension.

**Sleep:** Getting a good night's sleep is critical for long-term health and well-being, but also might [improve](#) compassion and kindness! Keep this in mind this month when the clocks "spring ahead" and you lose an hour!

## Tools You Can Use

Download our [handout](#) on *Healing Compassion Fatigue and Burnout through Self-Care*.

Create a [Personal Protection Plan](#) to boost your job satisfaction and avoid burnout at work.

You can find the [Adult Day Resources pages](#) on our website through the drop-down menu in the Professional Resources section.

As always, you can access the Self-Care resources on our website for free.

<https://care2caregivers.com/professional-resources/self-care/>



visit our website [www.care2caregivers.com](http://www.care2caregivers.com) for information on caregiver support groups

## Save these dates: Staff Training Webinars

### Aging 101

April 18, 2023 | 10:30-12:00

Click [HERE](#) to register

This webinar provides an overview of the positive aspects of aging as well as common challenges, and how we can maintain and enhance our well-being as we age. Tips will be provided to help professionals supporting older adults in achieving quality of life in line with their wishes.

### Understanding Dementia

April 25, 2023 | 10:30-12:00

Click [HERE](#) to register

Dementia is an umbrella term for conditions that affect cognitive functioning and behaviors. Understanding the many types of dementia can help professional caregivers provide support and improve quality of life.

*After you register, you will receive information on how to join the Zoom session, using your phone or computer.*

## Upcoming Caregiver Education 2023

### Managing Challenging Behaviors

March 15, 2023 | 1:00pm

Click [HERE](#) to register

### Dealing with Challenging Emotions

April 19, 2023 | 1:00pm

Click [HERE](#) to register

### End of Life Conversations

May 11, 2023 | 1:00pm

Click [HERE](#) to register

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