



Helping caregivers through their journey one step at a time.

I'm Fine, Thanks by Pat D'Andria

That is the life of a caregiver. You are always fine because the focus is always on the person that you care for. You are “just fine” because if you think of allowing yourself to be anything other than fine, your legs will come out from under you. You just keep moving along, all the while knowing that the person that you are trying to convince that you are “just fine” is you. It would have to be you; everyone else in creation can see the dark circles under your eyes and recognize the tension buzzing through your system like an overdose of caffeine.

Let's assume that it has been a while since someone in your life has had a diagnosis or an accident that leaves you in charge of everything. Not just them and their care, but everything from cooking and cleaning to paying the bills and getting the vehicles maintained. It might be accurate to say that you had a few minutes to adjust to the whole idea before you had to start making some pretty big decisions and it probably has not stopped since then.

It is a sure bet that the personalities involved get all the more interesting to boot. Not necessarily those directly involved, but all the folks that sort of buzz around just wanting to cause more drama; as if there is not enough already. Oddly enough, the drama that used to be so upsetting in life can become so tiny in the scheme of things when real life rears its head.

It's right about now that you get cocky. You think to yourself, “Stress? Ha! I laugh at stress. I have everything under control.” You have it all figured out, you are working, you have aides coming in and taking care of your loved one, you shop, you cook, you can find things—life is just fine. Out of the blue, you find yourself in the shower shaking and crying and you don't even know why. Ahhh. I guess I am not so fine after all.

This is where you realize that you really do come into the picture after all. You have to fit yourself in or you won't be o.k. If you have a counselor, you go. If you don't have a counselor, you find one. You start to learn that you are still present and need to be cared for also. The only one to care for you is you.

There is a lot of talk about finding balance in your life. When you are a caregiver, balance seems to be the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. It seems that you need to tie together different skills in the hopes that in unison they will deflect some of the stress in your life.

Remember that life was hard to deal with before you were a caregiver. Not that much has really changed; there is just a whole lot more of it and it feels so huge.



Attempt to find balance anyway. Understand that you need to accept help from others with grace and they need to help, it makes them feel good. If all you do is give, you will come to resent it and get cranky. You need to make sure that you also receive from others; whether this is in the form of massage, a pedicure, manicure, getting your haircut—all of those hands-on things that make you feel more connected. In an ideal world it would be nice to have your give/receive ratio be equal, but as a caregiver you will not get close to that. Shoot for what feels right for you.

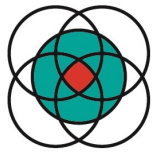
Active relaxation is so helpful—meditation, self-guided relaxation, yoga, Tai Chi or any form of exercise that works the knots out. Do something that helps you develop an ability to let stress slide off of your body.

It is o.k. to think about you. Most of the time your focus is on the person that you care for. When you do start to think about your own needs, it feels uncomfortable, like new shoes. Get over it. It is so easy to lose yourself in all of the “stuff”. Re-create a life for yourself, this is the perfect time to take a breath and think about what you really want for you.

Take a break from drama. The inconsequential “who said what about who” stuff that people love to lay at your feet. Just let it pass on by and pay no attention to it.

Swear off guilt forever. I could go on and on about this one. Just suffice it to say: Stop with the guilt already. Feeling it, giving it or getting it.

Live in the moment and kick back and relax when you can. Not many people understand what an honor it is to be someone's caregiver. Give yourself a good healthy pat on the back, but hurry it up; you have places to go and things to do.



September 2022

Cucumber Salad

This cucumber salad is the perfect refreshing side dish for a summer meal.

Prep 15 min	Cook	Total Time 15 min
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Servings: 2

Nutrition Information

Serving Size 1 cup

Nutrients	Amount
Total Calories	90
Protein	2g
Carbohydrates	4g
Dietary Fiber	1g
Total Fat	7g
Saturated Fat	1g
Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	15mg



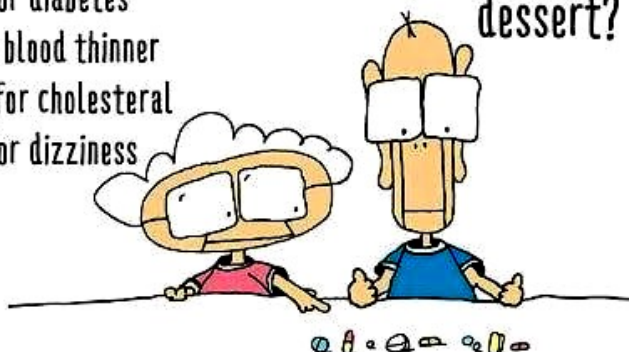
Ingredients

- 1 large cucumber (peeled and sliced thin)
- 2 tablespoons lowfat yogurt
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 teaspoon dill weed (optional)
- 1 dash pepper (optional)

Directions

- Peel and cut cucumber into thin slices.
- Place all other ingredients in a mixing bowl and whisk thoroughly to combine.
- Add cucumber slices and toss until all slices are coated.
- Chill until serving.

That pill is for your heart
that one is for your eyes
that one is for blood pressure
That's for diabetes
that's a blood thinner
That is for cholesterol
That's for dizziness



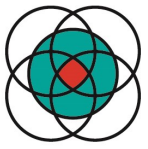
What's for
dessert?

UNDER CARDIAC ARREST

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Do you have an email address? Want to receive your newsletters electronically? Please submit your email address to me for future correspondence! You can email me at jferril@thrive-alliance.org. Caregivers of Older Adults support groups are currently held the third Thursday of each month at 2:30 p.m. via Zoom. You can also join the first Thursday of every month at 3:30 p.m. via Zoom or live at the Decatur County Hospital. Relative Caregivers support groups are currently being held the second Tuesday of every month at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom. **All support groups are R.S.V.P.**

We also have a Thrive Alliance Caregiver Resources Facebook group. Email me if you would like to be a part of the group.



Wildlife Wordsearch!

M J R T J P I S G Z L Y Y E S G C
I E C F I I A R M F T T V C R O W
H F L Y P G Z W V B A H V H A J B
D I R F E E C O F G H F O X A A I
U C S I P O L R L D S A L Y C J R
X N P R I N T M F S D E Z V I F D
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B J E A A D D U R K H I O V T K X
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M O T H B Z Q K Z R P G F M E Y Y

snake

bee

spider

crow

badger

birds

worm

butterfly

squirrel

spitbug

ant

fly

hedgehog

moth

pigeon

fox