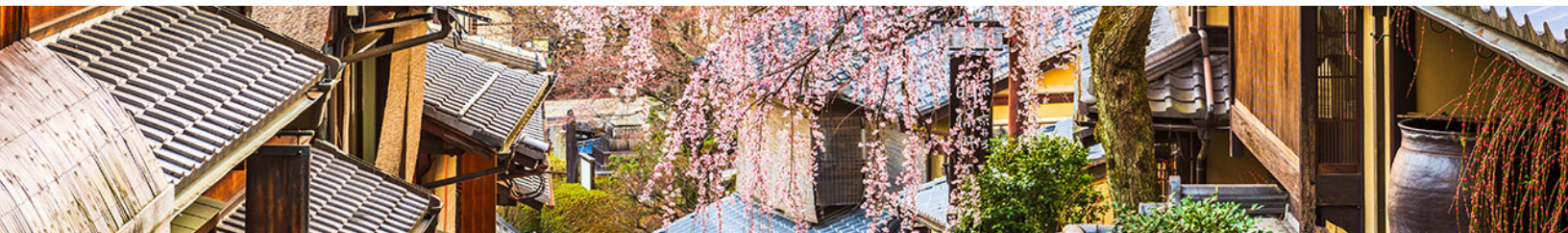


February 2024

The Empowered Care Partner



Together With You on Your Ceresti-Care Partner Journey



FEATURED ARTICLE

Heartfelt Caring: Embracing American Heart Month with Love and Wellness

Every February, we find ourselves dedicated to matters of the heart. February is not just about Valentine's Day; it is also American Heart Month—a time to celebrate your own heart and the hearts of those you care for with love, empathy, and a commitment to wellness.

Caring for others is a noble and heartfelt duty, but it can often lead to neglecting your own well-being. This month, as you provide compassionate care to your loved one, remember to care for yourself as well.

As a Ceresti family care partner, you may encounter the impact of challenges to heart health more than most. Heart disease, strokes, and other cardiovascular conditions affect millions of lives each year. During this *American Heart Month*, let's join together in raising awareness and encouraging lifestyle changes that promote heart health. By adopting a proactive and positive attitude, you can make a difference in your own life and the lives of those you care for.

Nurture the Heart: Caring for Yourself

To be an effective care partner, you must first care for yourself. Nurture your heart by setting aside time for self-care. Whether it's a quiet moment with a cup of coffee or tea, a walk in nature, or indulging in a hobby

you love, these small acts of self-compassion can have a profound impact on your well-being. Remember, it's okay to ask for help when needed, and never hesitate to seek support from friends, family, or support groups.

Spread Love and Awareness

Embrace the spirit of Valentine's Day by spreading love not only to your loved one but also to others. Share what you know about risk factors and prevention with others, and encourage friends and family to stay current with regular check-ups for heart health. Remember, sometimes a simple conversation can save lives.

Healthy Habits for a Healthy Heart

Small changes in daily routines can lead to significant improvements in heart health. Encourage your loved one to engage in physical activities that they enjoy, and take part with them! A walk in the park, dancing to a song you both love or gentle yoga sessions can elevate moods and strengthen hearts. Also, pay attention to what you eat; a heart-healthy diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins can be a perfect choice for everyone.

FEATURED ARTICLE

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Monitoring and Medications

As a Ceresti family care partner, you have a crucial role in supporting your loved one with their medical needs. Remind them to take prescribed medications regularly, attend medical appointments, and follow recommended treatment plans. Your care and attention to detail can make a significant difference in their heart health journey.

Finding Joy in Everyday Moments

While being a family care partner can be demanding, it can also provide beautiful and meaningful moments. Embrace the joy in everyday acts of care, and let those moments be a source of inspiration. Celebrate the small victories and cherish the smiles you bring to the face of your loved one. Your love and dedication make a profound impact.

This *American Heart Month*, we, at Ceresti strive to help you bring love, compassion, and wellness into your caregiving journey. As a Ceresti family care partner, you are an unsung hero, with a heart that beats with love, empathy, and hope.

Thank you for all that you do, and may this month be a reminder of the love and care you bring to everything you do every day.

By Marilyn Abrahamson - Brain-Health Education Specialist at Ceresti Health.

BITE-SIZED TIPS FOR A BETTER BRAIN

EAT A HANDFUL OF WALNUTS

Walnuts are not only delicious and nutritious, they're great for your brain - and if that's not enough - **they literally look like a brain!**

Walnuts offer a healthy dose of the fiber, fats, vitamins, and minerals that your body and brain need to function properly every day. Let's get more specific:

- Walnuts are rich in antioxidants and Vitamin E that help to reduce bad cholesterol.
- They are a higher source of Omega 3 fatty acids than any other nut. Omega 3 fatty acids are essential for heart and brain health and are a nutrient you can only get from food.
- They can reduce inflammation, which can cause many diseases, including Alzheimer's disease and some kinds of cancers.
- They promote gut health. The gut-brain connection is important because an unhealthy gut can contribute to inflammation and disease. Eating a healthy handful of walnuts each day may be one way to support your gut health.

So, take a brain-health minute and enjoy some walnuts!

To learn more about your amazing brain and how to nourish it properly with brain health foods, visit **Ceresti's Brain Health Education Portal**. Go to brainhealth.ceresti.com. If this is your first time visiting the portal, use the invitation code **GIVECARE** when you register.

SELF-CARE FOR THE CARE PARTNER

MINDSET: CHANGING YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Life can feel like a glass half-empty.

This is a sentiment that every human being will encounter at one time or another. It's only natural to have challenging days when your focus shifts away from your blessings and *toward what seems to be lacking in your lives.*

Acknowledging these feelings without judgment can grant you the resilience you'll need to choose your thoughts more carefully moving forward.

To cultivate a more positive mindset, it's important to train your mind to embrace the positive aspects of your life. Engaging in activities that prompt you to seek out more positive thoughts can make a significant difference.

One highly effective method is by keeping a gratitude journal.

Your gratitude journal doesn't have to be fancy. A simple notebook or writing pad will suffice. In your journal, jot down anything positive that comes to mind. Take your time so you can dig deep into your mind. Then, close your eyes and focus on what you've written, and you'll soon feel a sense of calm and happiness. Moreover, you can revisit your journal entries whenever you need a lift, reminding yourself of the blessings in your life.

Creating a habit of adding an entry to your gratitude journal each day can be transformative.

Although some days may be more challenging than others, even the small things count. A warm, beautiful day or a joke that makes you laugh can act as little sparks of joy, and acknowledging these moments as small gifts can be immensely beneficial. When you write them in your journal, you'll create a treasure trove of positive experiences to revisit whenever you wish.

Over time, this practice can lead to a profound positive shift in your perspective, transforming your daily experiences from negative to overwhelmingly positive. Embracing this approach, you'll find yourself better equipped to face life's challenges with a newfound sense of optimism, gratitude, and happiness.



Cultivating Patience and Resilience: Weathering the Storms as a Family Care Partner

Being a Ceresti family care partner is a journey like no other, filled with moments of joy, compassion, and deep connections. But it also comes with its fair share of challenges that can sometimes appear like sudden storms. When this happens, one thing stands out like a beacon – *the need for unwavering patience and resilience.*

You may often find yourself on an emotional rollercoaster every day, navigating the twists and turns life can throw your way at a moment's notice. It's essential to recognize that the highs and lows are all part of the journey, and every bump in the road is an opportunity for growth. *Patience* is the anchor that keeps us steady amidst the chaos, allowing us to be present for our loved ones and ourselves.

Patience: Embracing the Emotional Rollercoaster

In moments of frustration or exhaustion, it's easy to let impatience take over. But patience can empower you to *respond* rather than react. When you cultivate patience, you create a safe and compassionate space for your loved one, providing them with the support they need, while maintaining your own emotional well-being.

One effective strategy to nurture patience is mindfulness. Taking a deep breath and grounding yourself in the present moment can work wonders in reducing stress and anxiety. In the hustle-bustle of being a care partner, it's easy to get lost in worries about the future or regrets from the past. Mindfulness can bring you back to the *now*, where you can find the strength to face any challenge.

Resilience: Navigating the Storms

Resilience is the lifeboat that helps you weather the storms that come your way. It's not about avoiding rough waters but about developing the capacity to bounce back stronger. As a family care partner, you may encounter obstacles that test your limits, but resilience can remind you that you are capable of navigating through these difficulties with grace and determination.

One way to foster resilience is through *the power of gratitude*. Finding moments of gratitude, no matter how small, can shift your perspective from focusing on what's lacking to cherishing what you have. Gratitude can open your eyes to the beauty of the journey and help you embrace its imperfections.

Coping Strategies for Turbulent Times

When the storms of being a family care partner seem overwhelming, having a toolkit of coping strategies can be a lifesaver. Here are some practical ways to stay afloat:

Reach out for support: Being a family care partner should not be a solitary journey. Connect with support groups or friends who understand the challenges you face. Sharing experiences can provide valuable insights and emotional relief.

Self-Compassion: Be gentle with yourself and acknowledge that caregiving can be emotionally taxing. Practice self-compassion by treating yourself with the kindness and understanding you would offer a dear friend.

Create Moments of Joy: Amidst the chaos, seek out moments of joy and laughter. Engage in activities that bring you happiness and uplift your spirits.

Establish Boundaries: Setting boundaries is crucial in maintaining your well-being. Know your limits and communicate them clearly to others.

Celebrate Small Victories: Celebrate even the smallest wins. Each step forward is an achievement worth acknowledging.

Staying Positive in the Face of Adversity

Maintaining a positive outlook doesn't mean ignoring challenges; it means facing them with a hopeful heart. In times of difficulty, positive affirmations can be a source of strength. Remind yourself of your resilience, compassion, and dedication as a family care partner. Focus on the moments of connection and the positive impact you make in the lives of your loved ones.