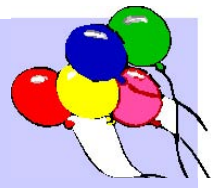


NURTURER, NURTURE THYSELF!



This program is aimed at the Caregiver, both private and among the professional health care community.

Nowhere is it more apparent that self-nurturing is critical than it is among caregivers. Burnout is all too frequent, because so often the care giver is spending so much time and energy on the person who is ill that he or she “forgets” to take care of their own needs.

But as Ina’s own therapist pointed out to her when she heard about her own brother’s cancer metastasizing, “You must take care of yourself. If you don’t, how can you take care of your brother?”

Among health care professionals, the situation is tough no matter how detached and professional, and highly skilled one is. As one nurse put it, “Imagine how you feel dealing with fourteen patients on a cancer ward, and then how you feel as you lose ten of them?” These caregivers are dealing with life and death issues, plus the burden of easing patients’ and families’ worries. All too often, the professional care giver, like close family and friends of ill patients, finds him- or herself feeling anxious and pressured, or a victim of compassion fatigue.

So, this Un-Workshop has been designed to give both private and professional caregivers support. Plus an armload of practical ideas for “remembering,” and giving themselves permission to take time to give themselves the care and nurturing they need.

One set of tools centers on the appropriateness of laughter to the care giver. While we realize this may sound frivolous, we have found it is anything but. As Abraham Lincoln said after telling a joke to his shocked Cabinet during the Civil War, “Gentlemen, if I did not laugh I should surely die, and you need this medicine as much as I do.”

And as a nurse attending an Un-Workshop put it, “Lightening up on ourselves is a great idea. I think every professional care-giver should attend, maybe regularly. It’s a great stress reliever, and in our work we face a lot of stress every day.”