



CareDimensions

HOSPICE | PALLIATIVE CARE | SUPPORT SERVICES

Formerly Hospice of the North Shore & Greater Boston

Volume 1 | Issue 2

Living with
Advanced Illness

Community Education Newsletter

888-283-1722

Coping During the Holidays when Your Loved One is Seriously Ill

Holidays are meant to be a celebratory time that creates lasting memories. Many people enjoy spending time with family and friends honoring their many traditions. However, if you are caring for a loved one who is seriously ill, it can be challenging to balance caregiving responsibilities while preparing for the upcoming holidays. You may feel overwhelmed, but with support, you and your family can still enjoy meaningful and joyful experiences during this holiday season. Here are a few suggestions on how to minimize your stress and enhance the quality of time you spend with family and friends:



- **Balance your time with others with some time alone.** Both are important. Solitude can provide you with time and space to think about how well you are doing. Focus on all the good things you are doing today for your loved one rather than dwelling on when he or she may not be there to share time with you.
- **Don't abandon healthy habits.** Make sure to eat regular meals, try to get quality sleep and exercise. Do whatever you can. Physical activity is a good way to release the tension that builds around this time of year.
- **Have some fun.** Don't isolate yourself, keep in contact with friends. Arrange for someone to stay with your loved one while you see a movie or go to lunch.
- **Keep your schedule simple.** Commit only to events you feel are important and say no to the rest. Give yourself permission to do only what you can reasonably manage.
- **Make new traditions.** Have a potluck dinner, order the meals from a restaurant, stay at home instead of traveling.
- **Be kind to yourself.** Recognize that you are doing your best.
- **Talk about how you feel.** Share your thoughts and feelings with someone you trust.

Try to remember that you cannot change the current situation, but you can change the way you approach the holiday season. Enjoy the special moments. A lot of love and laughter can be shared together this year. Focus on the here and now for all its simple pleasures and beauty.

You are not alone. Care Dimensions understands that the emotional side of advanced illness is often more devastating than the disease itself. Support for family and caregivers is a hallmark of our comprehensive services, which address complex medical issues as well as emotional, spiritual and family concerns.

If you would like more information on how Care Dimensions can help you and your family, give us a call at **888-283-1722** or e-mail us at info@CareDimensions.org.

We Honor Veterans

Care Dimensions is a proud member of the We Honor Veterans program, a national campaign conducted by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization in collaboration with the Department of Veterans Affairs. This program promotes quality care for veterans and increases their access to hospice and palliative care.



WE HONOR VETERANS

We are the first non-profit hospice in Massachusetts to achieve the highest Level IV partnership. We believe our Veterans Program is our way of giving back to those who have given so much to our country.

We treat veterans with honor and dignity, providing expert medical care and comprehensive support for the veteran and his/her family during a life-limiting illness.

Highlights of the program include:

- Individualized care plan for pain and symptom relief that addresses medical and psychological issues common in veterans
- Hospice care provided by a team of physicians, nurses, hospice aides, social workers, chaplains and volunteers
- 24-hour support system
- Medications, supplies and equipment
- Assistance in identifying and securing military benefits, pensions and community resources
- Veteran-to-veteran volunteer program
- Formal recognition and appreciation for military service
- Assistance with military funeral and memorial planning
- Grief support for the veteran's family

To learn more about our Veterans Program or to become a Veteran-to-Veteran volunteer, please call **888-283-1722**.

Care Dimensions, one of the nation's first hospice programs and the region's largest, provides services in more than 90 communities in Eastern Massachusetts. As a non-profit, community-based leader in advanced illness care, our services include: hospice, palliative care, specialized care programs, Kaplan Family Hospice House, grief support, education and training.

Main: 888-283-1722
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