

Connecticut Care Planning Council



December 2012 Newsletter

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Featured Board Member: **Henry C Weatherby**

CT Care Planning Council Advisory Board Members:



Weatherby & Associates, PC
Counselors at Law
Helping Families Preserve and Protect Assets and Values

[Henry C Weatherby](#)



[Henry C Weatherby Jr.](#)



[Brian Turly](#)

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[If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, Weatherby & Associates, PC can help.](#)

The [Connecticut Care Planning Council](#) (CTCPC) lists companies and individual providers on our website who help families deal with the crisis and burden of long term care.

One purpose of the CTCPC is to educate the public on the need for care planning *before* a crisis occurs. A second purpose is to provide, in one place, all of the available government and private services for eldercare.

Finally our ultimate mission is to



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Offers & Info:
[Veterans Aid & Attendance Benefits](#)

Contact Us:
34 Jerome Avenue,
Suite 310
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(860)769-6938

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offer a trusted listing service that the public will recognize and turn to for expert help in dealing with the challenges of long term care.

Call us at 860-769-6938

or click [here](#) to send an e-mail



Weatherby & Associates, PC
Counselors at Law
Helping Families Preserve and Protect Assets and Values

Invisible Heroes

They live in your city, perhaps on your street or even next door.

They serve with courage, perseverance, patience and love. Some give 24 hours a day, with days blending into weeks, months and years.

They are family caregivers; heroes quietly caring for loved ones at home.

There are over 66 million family caregivers in the United States, taking care of someone with Alzheimer's or dementia or who have physical disabilities. The overwhelming responsibility can be very difficult and emotionally wearing on the caregiver. Without some type of support the caregiver may end up with his or her own health failing. Stress, guilt, anger, depression and withdrawal from family

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Veterans 65 or older may qualify for a benefit of \$24,239/annually to pay for in-home help, assisted living, or nursing home care. Simply visit

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to find out more

I have a loved one with Alzheimer's, and I need caregiving help. How do I make sure my loved one is well taken care of, and that they don't lose their home or life savings? Discover the secrets at

www.ConnecticutMemoryLawyer.com

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and friends are some of the emotional feelings that leave these people feeling helpless. Many caregivers give up employment to attend to their loved ones' needs, causing financial stress as well.

National Family Caregivers Month was established in November to draw support for caregivers across the nation. In addition, November is [National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month](#). In the United States alone, there are nearly 15 million Alzheimer's and dementia caregivers.

Emphasis from support organizations is put on helping caregivers by educating them on resources available to them to help provide care to their loved ones and in the process take care of themselves. Government and private companies have added many programs that help caregivers. By providing education, services, health counseling and respite care for caregivers they are making available the helping hand that is very much needed.

The [Area on Aging Caregiver National Caregiver Support Program](#) extends throughout each state to provide local services.

"The National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP), established in 2000, provides grants to States and Territories, based on their share of the population aged 70 and over, to fund a range of supports that assist family and informal caregivers to care for their loved ones at home for as long as possible."

[Medicare](#)'s website offers education

and resources for caregivers offered through Medicare.

"Medicare toolkit offers informational resources that can be printed directly from this Web site and provided to caregivers. The resources are designed to help caregivers address challenging issues and work effectively with Medicare to ensure their family members and friends receive the best possible care."

Whether it is senior centers, local church groups or community groups that reach out with hands-on support; volunteers are found in every community. Private care providers can also help caregivers with the day-to-day responsibilities, enabling them to have time to spend on their own needs. There are large numbers of Home Care companies across the nation that provide medical and non-medical care as needed by the family caregiver.

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The Perfect Holiday Caregiver: It's All a State of Mind

The holidays are always a wonderful

time of year for family gatherings, reflection on what we have and the spirit of giving. The television is packed with specials showing relationships and families coming together for the holidays.

But the holidays can also be a time of stress and sadness for those who are caring for family members that are struggling with health problems, frailty, [dementia](#) and loss. Those who care for these individuals may feel overwhelmed, frustrated, depressed or resentful as they watch “perfect” families enjoying the holidays. There are many surveys and documents that show that [caregivers](#) are highly susceptible to these feelings. If you are a caregiver, there are measures you can take to avoid this.

First; Remember, that you are not alone.

If you are new to caregiving or have been caring for someone for a very long time, remember that the perfect family on television is not reality for many Americans. You are not the only one with these challenges. A recent study by the National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP found that 44.4 million Americans age 18 or older are providing unpaid care to an adult. In fact according to the survey provided by the National Family Caregivers Association:

- The typical caregiver is a 46-year-old Baby Boomer woman with some college education who works and spends more than 20 hours per week caring for her mother who lives nearby.

- Female caregivers provide more hours of care and provide a higher level of care than male caregivers.
- Almost seven in ten (69%) caregivers say they help one person.
- The average length of caregiving is 4.3 years.
- Many caregivers fulfill multiple roles. Most caregivers are married or living with a partner (62%), and most have worked and managed caregiving responsibilities at the same time (74%).

Second; Find help.

There are many resources available to a caregiver. Some of these include family members, friends, a local religious group, [elder care agencies](#) and [homecare providers](#). The internet provides many great resources and help. The [National Care Planning Council](#) offers many articles, brochures and local referrals to help caregivers find the help that they need.

“When my husband’s stepfather was released from the hospital in December of 2009, he called us to give him a ride home. Once he was home, we quickly realized that he was not able to care for himself at all. He lived alone and we found ourselves driving back and forth three or four times a day to assist all of his needs. It was overwhelming and frightening to suddenly become a caregiver to a man we weren’t even that close to. With my husband working full time days, I became his primary

caregiver. I would pack up my two little girls every day to come with me to take him to the doctor, do his laundry and feed him his meals, do his grocery shopping and help him with his bills. I had no idea what his finances were like or how to pay his medical bills. He was too sick to care or even understand what I was saying to him. I quickly realized I was going to have to find help. First I called his children. They were sympathetic, but gave all kinds of excuses as to why they could not help. Next, I went to the internet. I went to the website for National Care Planning Council www.longtermcarelink.net and found and contacted a Care planner in my area. The Care Planner came to my stepfather's house and met with the two of us. They helped me get organized and set up time to meet with someone to explain his Medicare services and what my next steps would be. It was such a relief to have a plan and to know what to do." MH- Salt Lake City, Utah

Most family members are willing to help, but just don't know what to do. Many caregivers feel that they are the only one who can give the best care. It is important to communicate with other family members about what kind of help you need and let them know specifically what they can do.

A number of organizations and private companies will give you advice and guidance -- many for free. If your care recipient has a very low income, you might get free help from your local [Area Agency on Aging](#). A lot depends on available funds. Click here for a [nationwide list of agencies](#).

A good source for professional advice is

the rapidly growing business of [non-medical home care companies](#). Most will offer free consultations and will provide paid aides to help you with your loved-one with such things as bathing, dressing, shopping, household chores, transportation, companionship and much more. These people may also help you coordinate [adult day care](#) or other community services.

You may wish to pay for a formal assessment and care plan from a [professional geriatric care manager](#). Even though it may cost you a little money to hire a care manager, this could be the best money you will ever spend. Care managers are valuable in helping find supporting resources, providing respite, saving money from care providers, finding money to pay for care, making arrangements with family or government providers and providing advice on issues that you may be struggling with.

Lastly; it is important to take care of yourself first in order to give effective and loving care.

Stephen Covey tells a story in his book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* about a man who is sawing a tree. A woman approaches and asks the obviously exhausted man how long he has been sawing the tree. He tells her that he has been there for hours.

She says “Well, I see that your saw is dull, if you would just sharpen your saw you would be able to saw it much faster and with less effort.”

He replies, “I don’t have time to stop and sharpen my saw, I need to chop

this tree down now!”

It seems pretty silly that the man just doesn't stop for a few minutes to make the work easier. It is common for caregivers to do the same thing. They focus on caring for their loved one and run themselves down instead of stopping to “sharpen their saw”.

Covey states that “sharpening the saw” is to take care of yourself by keeping your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual self balanced. There is joy and respite in balancing all of these areas in our life. This is what makes us efficient and happy. Here are some ways for you as a caregiver to sharpen your own saw:

- Maintain a positive attitude. Take time to be grateful for everything that is good in your life. There is always something. Adjust your expectations for the holiday season. If you aren't expecting that perfect holiday family picture, then you won't be angry and frustrated that it isn't something you have right now. It is always possible to change your attitude and perceptions, but it is not always possible to change your circumstances.
- Eat healthy food and be sure to get some exercise. Do this in small increments if it is too overwhelming to plan menus. Drink more water, cut down on sugary snacks, pick up some vegetables and fruit to grab. Walk or do marching in place.

Run or walk up and down stairs if that is all the time you have right now.

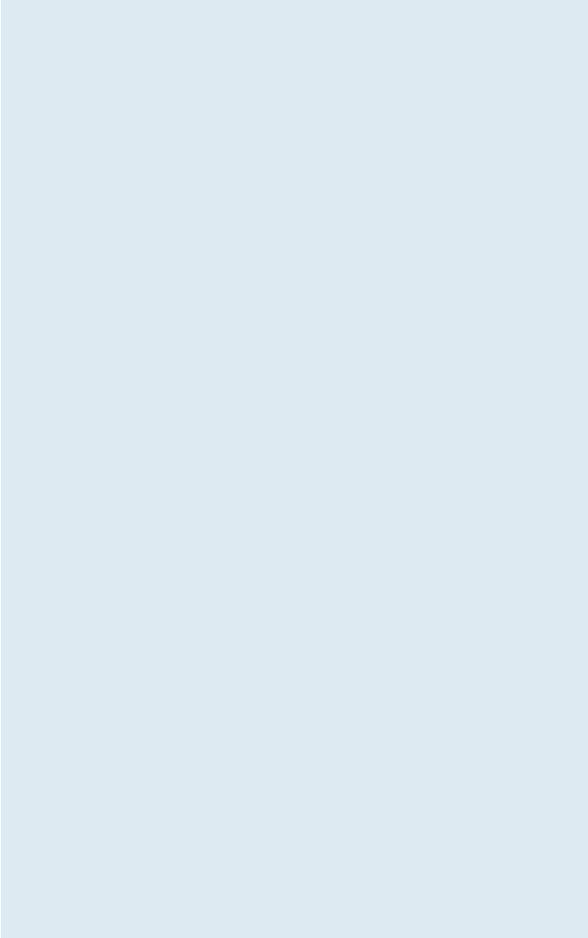
- Forgive and let go of frustrations, anger, resentment and guilt. These are common feelings for caregivers. The best thing a caregiver can do for their own emotional health is to clear out these negative thoughts and feelings. Get counseling, talk to a friend or family member or simply write down the negative feelings to get them out of your system. Never take your anger and frustrations out on those you care for.
- Take time to do something you enjoy and give yourself a little bit of rejuvenation everyday. Laughter is a great stress reliever. Find something funny to read or get on the internet and find a funny video to watch.
- During the holidays, be easy on yourself. If you enjoy holiday activities, then get out there and do them. Ask someone to help with your caregiving duties even if it is just for an hour or two to shop or to see a concert or movie. There are day care facilities or home care services available for short term care. See www.longtermcarelink.net for a service in your area.

Being a “perfect” caregiver during the holidays does not have to look like the perfect on-screen holiday family. How you handle your circumstance will be the key to creating your own peace,

happiness and cheer during the holiday season. The holidays can be a time of reflection on good things. Your attitude and a little care for yourself can make a big difference in the care that you give in the coming year.

If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, Weatherby & Associates, PC can help

- Has the elder been diagnosed with a mentally or physically debilitating disorder such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, ALS, stroke or a decline in functional capacity?
- Is the elder isolated due to the recent death of a spouse, or have family that either lives too far away or is too busy to provide adequate care?
- Is the elder to be discharged into a care facility or currently receiving in-home care?
- Does the elder have a variety of healthcare providers and need coordination and advocacy for quality care?

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- Does the elder have a variety of healthcare providers and need coordination and advocacy for quality care?
 - Does the elder have a spouse whose financial needs must be considered in light of the elder's medical condition?

Wisdom from the Web

**"You are as young as your faith,
as old as your doubt; as young
as your self-confidence, as old
as your fear; as young as your
hope, as old as your despair."
~Douglas MacArthur**