



# APRIL/MAY NEWSLETTER 2015

**Carers' Society Otago  
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## ANNELOES' MUSINGS

In my web browsing I came across the following website: [www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org). One of the topics on that site is Family Caregiving. I have cut and pasted some of the article here and further on in the Newsletter and put in some additional information. Some of it may be old news to you but I thought it had some really good tips. Too good to miss for those of you who haven't got access to a computer.

### **Social & recreational needs of family caregivers**

- Stay social. Make it a priority to keep in touch with your friends and social circles. Nurture your close relationships. Don't let yourself become isolated.
- Do things you enjoy. Laughter and joy can help keep you going when you face trials, stress, and pain.
- Maintain balance in your life. Don't give up activities that are important to you, such as your work or your hobbies.
- Give yourself a break. Take regular breaks from caring. Find out about respite care and Carer Support. Try to give yourself an extended break at least once a week.
- Find a community. Join or reestablish your connection to a religious group, social club, or civic organization. Come to the Carers Meetings in your area. The broader your support network, the better.

### **Physical needs of family caregivers**

- Exercise regularly. Try to get in at least 30 minutes of exercise, three times per week. Exercise is one of the best ways to relieve stress and boost your energy. So get moving, even if you are tired.
- Eat right. Well-nourished bodies are better prepared to cope with stress and get through busy days. Keep your energy up and your mind clear by eating nutritious, healthy meals at regular times throughout the day.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs. It can be tempting to turn to substances for escape when life feels overwhelming, but they can easily compromise the quality of your caregiving. Instead, try dealing with problems head on and with a clear mind.
- Get enough sleep. Aim for an average of eight hours of solid uninterrupted sleep every night. Otherwise, your energy level, productivity, and ability to handle stress will suffer. There are good books out there that can give you tips about on how to achieve that. Carers' Society have some in their library as well.
- Keep up with your own health care. Go to the doctor and dentist on schedule, and keep up with your own prescriptions or medical therapy. As a carer, you need to stay as strong and healthy as possible.

Take care and look after yourselves!

# **CARERS' MEETINGS 2015**

## **SOUTH OTAGO CARERS' MEETINGS**

Meetings are **NOW** held on the **1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every ALTERNATE MONTH at 6:30 pm** in the Brian Dodds Room of Clutha Health First.

**5 MAY – Writing Workshop.** We will provide all the materials for your writing experience.

**7 JULY –** To be announced.

**3 NOVEMBER -** To be announced.

## **MILTON CARERS' GROUP**

You are cordially invited to join with the South Otago Carers' Group that meets as above. We will try to have one of our Milton afternoon teas and will let you know. Transport is available to Balclutha meetings. **Please contact Anneloes or Susan if you want a ride. (03) 471 6204.**

## **NORTH OTAGO CARERS' GROUP**

Meetings are held on the **2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month** in the Weston Community Church. The meeting dates are as follows:

**12 MAY – Writing Workshop.** We will provide all the materials for your writing experience.

**11 AUGUST -** To be announced.

**10 NOVEMBER -** To be announced.

## **CENTRAL OTAGO CARERS' GROUP**

Meetings are held at 2pm on the **1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month** in the Alexandra Community House. The meeting dates are as follows:

**2 APRIL – Writing workshop.** We will provide all the materials for your writing experience.

**3 SEPTEMBER –** To be announced.

**5 NOVEMBER -** To be announced.

## **DUNEDIN CARERS' MEETINGS**

Meetings are held on the **2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month** beginning with **MARCH** at 1:30 pm in the Alexander McMillan Room, Community House, 301 Moray Place.

**9 APRIL – Speaker: Judith Hyslop – Stroke Foundation.**

**14 MAY – Speaker: Dave Cox – Arthritis New Zealand.**

**11 JUNE -** To be announced.

**9 JULY -** To be announced.

**13 AUGUST – Annual General Meeting.**

**10 SEPTEMBER -** To be announced.

**8 OCTOBER -** To be announced.

**12 NOVEMBER -** To be announced.

## **DUNEDIN AND MOSGIEL WALKING GROUPS**

**In 2015** these two Walking Groups will be combined and have five walks in the year on the **4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month**. The walk usually starts with a coffee at 10am. Latecomers can get a coffee to go. All carers welcome. We would like to suggest that walkers meet informally in the intervening months when the group does not meet. Please check with the latest Newsletter for the meeting place.

The dates for the Walking Group are as follows:

**28 APRIL – We will meet at 10am in Vogel's Kitchen at 76 Vogel Street and have a look at all the street art in that precinct.**

**23 JUNE – Mount Cargill**

**25 AUGUST – Port Chalmers**

**27 OCTOBER - Aramoana**

## **YOUNG CARERS GROUP**

Meetings are held on the **3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month**.

### **PLEASE NOTE**

**The Young Carers Group will start in MARCH 2015 and the session will be one half hour shorter.**

**WE WILL NOW MEET MONTHLY STARTING IN MARCH FROM 5:30 – 7pm.**

Contact Susan or Anneleoes for more information 471 6204.

Young Carers will be sent a monthly Newsletter as usual advising of the dates and activities.

## **NEWS FROM THE JENNIE CLEGG LIBRARY**

Our Library now has 290 books, videos, DVDs, CDs and Tapes. It is a self service Library located in the Carers' Lounge, Community House, 301 Moray Pl, Dunedin. The Carers' Lounge is open whenever the building is open so please feel free to drop in, browse, and take out a book. We will call you when you have had the book out for three months.

**If you want a copy of our complete library list please call us on 03 471 6204.**

**MAILING SERVICE:** If you have chosen the book you want from our list we can mail it to you and enclose a return mail bag. We know it is often difficult for you to get books out or return them, even in Dunedin. Please take advantage of this service.

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**The Otematata Cottage is now closed for the winter for carers' bookings.**

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## **WHEELCHAIRS**

We often have wheelchairs available for long or short term loan. These are lightweight and fold up to fit in the boot of a car. They are ideal for carers and are not the self propelling kind. If you need one, book a time to come in and pick one up. All you need is a \$30 deposit and the time to have a brief lesson on how to use the wheelchair safely.

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## **HOW TO GET SOME HELP FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

Even if you are the primary family carer, you can't do everything on your own, especially if you are caregiving from a distance (more than an hour's drive from your family member). You'll need help from friends, siblings, and other family members, as well as health professionals. If you don't get the support you need, you'll quickly burn out—which will compromise your ability to provide care.

But before you can ask for help, you need to have a clear understanding of your caree's needs. Take some time to list all the caregiving tasks required, being as specific as possible. Then determine which activities you are able to meet (be realistic about your capabilities and time). The remaining tasks on the list are ones you'll need to ask others to help you with.

### **Asking family and friends for help**

It's not always easy to ask for help, even when you desperately need it. Perhaps you are afraid to impose on others or worried that your request will be resented or rejected. But if you simply make your needs known, you may be pleasantly surprised by the willingness of others to pitch in. Many times, friends and family members want to help, but don't know how. Make it easier for them:

- Set aside one-on-one time to talk to the person.
- Go over the list of caregiving needs you previously drew up.
- Point out areas in which they might be of service (maybe your brother is good at Internet research, or your friend is a financial whiz).
- Ask the person if they'd like to help, and if so, in what way.
- Make sure the person understands what would be most helpful to both you and the caree.

Pablo Casals, the world-renowned cellist, said, "The capacity to care is the thing that gives life its deepest significance and meaning." It is essential that you receive the support you need, so you don't lose that capacity. While you are caring for your loved one, don't forget about your own needs. Caregivers need care, too.

Take time to relax daily and learn how to alleviate stress when you start to feel overwhelmed.

- Keep a journal. Write down your thoughts and feelings. This will give you perspective and serve as a way to release strong feelings. We will do some writing work shops in our Carers Meetings over the coming months.
- Talk with someone to make sense of your situation and your feelings. This can be a friend, social worker , GP or one of our Carers' Society Otago's Community Workers.

# JOKES

**A depressed frog visits a fortune teller. The fortune teller closes her eyes, makes some strange sounds, and finally says, "You will meet a beautiful young girl that will want to know everything about you"**

**The frog gets excited and says, "Wow! When will I meet her? At a party?"**

**"No," replied the fortune teller, "in her biology class."**

A married couple in their early 60's was celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in a quiet, romantic little restaurant.

Suddenly, a tiny yet beautiful fairy appeared on their table.

She said, "For being such an exemplary married couple and for being loving to each other for all this time, I will grant you each a wish."

The wife answered, "Oh, I want to travel around the world with my darling husband."

The fairy waved her magic wand and - POOF! - two tickets for the Queen Mary II appeared in her hands.

The husband thought for a moment: "Well, this is all very romantic, but an opportunity like this will never come again.

I'm sorry my love, but my wish is to have a wife 30 years younger than me."

The wife and the fairy were deeply disappointed, but a wish is a wish.

So the fairy waved her magic wand and - POOF! - the husband became 92 years old.

The moral of this story: Men should remember fairies are female.

**Give a thought to the poor Canadians who are just coming thorough a winter of incredible snow**



# RECIPES

## Super Quick Tomato Soup

Serves 4

### Ingredients:

2 cans pureed tomatoes  
1 sm pottle of pizza sauce  
1 onion  
Herbs from the garden  
1 Tbsp oil

### Method:

1. Fry chopped onion in oil
2. Add any herbs or chives you have growing in the garden
3. Add two tins pureed tomatoes
4. Add pizza sauce
5. Simmer for 20 minutes.

## Carrot and Ginger Soup

Serves 4

### Ingredients:

2 spring onions sliced  
1 Tbsp freshly grated ginger  
12 medium carrots, peeled and sliced  
1 litre vegetable or chicken stock

**Optional seasonings:** salt, pepper, cumin, lemon juice

### Method:

1. In a large saucepan saute the green onions and ginger for 5 minutes.
2. Add the carrots and saute for 5 more minutes.
3. Add the stock and bring to the boil.
4. Turn heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes or until the carrots are tender.
5. Transfer soup to a blender or food processor and puree until smooth.



**The Mission of Carers' Society Otago is to ensure that every family carer is recognized and supported.**



**Some of our fabulous Volunteers help with the Newsletter mailout**

Do join us in the Carers' Lounge for a cuppa or a chat, a bit of quiet time, or to explore our Information Zone and Jennie Clegg Lending Library

Up the stairs or take the elevator

Community House

301 Moray Pl

Dunedin

Some of the wonderful support we receive throughout the year is from:

Presbyterian Support Otago, New Zealand Lottery Grant Board

COGS, Dunedin Casino, University of Otago, Otago Polytechnic,

William Downie Stewart Charitable Trust, Lion Foundation, Community House,  
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The Southern Victorian Trust
