

**Caring  
Hearts  
Ministry**

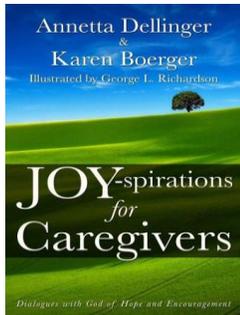


## ***Nuggets of Hope***

A Newsletter for Caregivers

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### **Our Book Was Chosen to Go to Germany!**

We had no clue that any of this was going on, but Annetta received a call last week from a publishing company in Atlanta that their reviewers think our book should be included in the International Book Fair in Frankfurt, Germany, this fall. It draws about 300,000+ people from around the globe in a week's time. Oh, my, I wish we could afford to go, but our book will represent us and YOU, our caregivers and family, who inspired us to write this book. Rejoice with us!

### **Top 8 Truths of Dementia Caregiving**

by Carol Bradley Bursack, author, speaker, columnist and eldercare consultant, [agingcare.com](http://agingcare.com)

1. **What type of dementia does your loved one have?** Alzheimer's is the most well known type of dementia, but there are many others. Vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia (LBD), Frontotemporal dementia (FTD), Parkinson's disease with dementia and mixed dementia are some of the most prevalent. For this reason, it's important that the physician who tends to your loved one knows the different [signs of dementia](#), and is qualified to treat his or her specific case. Educating yourself about the type of dementia that your care receiver is coping with will help you understand his or her behavior and allow you to provide more compassionate care, as well.
2. **Be as flexible as possible.** People with dementia often change not only day to day, but moment to moment. If your loved one is having a bad day it's most likely not your fault. Do what you can to help while hoping that tomorrow will be better. Watch for patterns, but know that some days will be better than others. Caregivers may have to shift a shopping day to another time because their loved one is having a particularly bad day. Try not to let these small disruptions

become larger than they really are.

3. **Accept that others will offer advice.** People with no understanding of what caregiving entails will be more than happy to tell you how you should handle your caregiving life. Since they haven't been in your shoes, they can only guess at what they think they'd do under similar circumstances and in their minds, they are right. Take a deep breath and smile while they have their say. Then do what you feel is right for you and your care receiver. If you feel you need advice, find someone with similar caregiving experience and ask for their perspective.
4. **Detachment is vital for our mental health.** We need to detach from our care receiver enough to keep our own sense of self and not allow their needs to define our whole lives. If we have a controlling, cranky elder we cannot please, we can't let their behavior saturate our sense of self to the point that we feel we are failures
5. **Empathy is necessary for compassion.** No, this is not a contradiction of my point above, nor is empathy the same as sympathy. While we must detach from our care receiver to remain a separate being and have perspective in our lives—and we likely feel sympathy for their pain, their confusion and their loss of dignity—empathy is what makes us a compassionate caregiver. When we empathize with someone, we put ourselves in their place. We consider how we would act if we were in a similar situation. What would we want someone to do for us so that we could feel better?
6. **Self-care is not a luxury.** If we neglect our own health, we will pay a price. There are certain [routine medical tests caregivers need](#). If a middle-aged woman doesn't have a recommended bone density scan, she could find that she has developed osteoporosis the hard way - by breaking a bone as she shifts her care receiver to a new position. Take care of your own needs; for your personal benefit as well as for the benefit of your care receiver.
7. **Don't judge your caregiving skills by the response of your care receiver.** People with dementia are going to have bad days. If you are educating yourself on how to cope with negative behavior, and asking for help when you need it, you are likely doing fine. Try to remember a good day when your care receiver seemed to find some enjoyment and see if you can replicate that to some degree.
8. **Know your limits and ask for help.** Nearly everyone who is trying to care for a person with dementia is eventually going to need some help and it's vital to keep in mind that [caregiving needs to be a team effort](#). Whether help comes from respite care provided by friends or family, hired in-home caregivers, adult day care, assisted living or a nursing home, dementia caregivers need assistance. Without at least occasional breaks, neither the caregiver nor the care receiver is likely to have the best quality of life that can be realistically expected.

Many of your truths may be different, my friends. But I believe that a number of them will be similar to mine. It's what we caregivers share – that fellowship of having given of ourselves to help our vulnerable loved ones and others.



## Recipe Corner

### Zucchini Puffs

*Zucchini, zucchini everywhere, and all available to eat! I've been making different recipes using zucchini. Many more to go! My favorite way is to just make the simple Zucchini Puffs. The recipe is not exact because it works out fine with different amounts.*

2-3 cups shredded zucchini (do not peel)  
1 small onion, diced (optional)  
2 eggs  
1-2 tsp salt  
¼ tsp pepper (optional)  
½ tsp paprika  
½ - ¾ cup flour – Use enough until it holds together. (I use Bisquick.)

1-2 TB butter  
Maple syrup

Combine all ingredients. Melt butter 1-2 TB in non-stick skillet; then spoon dollops of mixture into skillet and flatten a little with a fork. Fry to golden brown on both sides. Can be served with maple syrup, if desired.



## Meditation Corner

*Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me,  
For you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. – Psalm 25:4-5*

*I will ask where the good way is, and walk in it. – Jeremiah 6:16*

I love an organized life with everything unfolding according to plan, but life doesn't work that way. Some days it would be nice just to know the plan. However, God is far more interested in teaching us to hear His voice than making our plans unfold the way we want.

As caregivers, we get so caught up in the schedule of meds, baths, walks, doctors' visits, and much more. In addition we must fit in everything for our own living. It's not always easy. Our personalities speak to how we will handle all of it. Sometimes frustration, then guilt takes over.

I'm grateful when God instills in my heart the things that are to come. But if Jesus is our Lord then it is He who reveals the plans for us or not. I think the best plan to follow is this: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding."* – Proverbs 3:5

Some text taken from *Prayers for a Woman's Soul*, Julie K. Gillies, 2013.