



Carers 4 Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

September 2022



It's always sad to see the summer decline and autumn approach but it's been quite a summer. Of course, autumn brings its own riches as the countryside turns golden.

It's hard to believe we resumed our meetings a year ago. Since then we have met new carers and companions, each coping with their own set of challenges. In view of the long periods of isolation we've experienced throughout the lockdowns, we have spent more time than usual on promoting carer wellbeing. If carers struggle emotionally or physically, then both they and their cared-for suffer. We hope what we have brought to you has helped. We are now starting to plan next year's programme. While we have lots of ideas up our sleeves, we want to make sure we are organising what **you** want. So please let us know. You can email, phone or fill in a comment slip at one of our meetings.

We have always aimed to help carers with transport needs and supported them to use VASA voluntary transport. Now, to enable wheelchair users to access us more easily, we are booking a Back&4th minibus each month starting in October. This will be available for anyone travelling from Wellesbourne, with pick-ups from home at a very affordable cost. Priority will be given to wheelchair users but there should be room for everyone who wants it. You will need to book your place no later than a week before the meeting. For more details please email or phone or speak to either Lisa or myself.

OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

Carers4Carers meets on the **fourth** Friday of the month, except in December, when it's the second Friday. We meet at Kineton Village Hall, Mill Street, Kineton, CV35 OLB, 10.30 a.m. until 12 noon. We start with time for coffee and chat and then the main part of our meeting will start at about 11 o'clock.. Anyone wishing to bring their loved one to attend the Companionship Group, especially for the first time, is asked to contact us in advance so that we can be sure that we can provide appropriate care.

Friday 23rd September— There will be no meeting at Kineton Village Hall this month. The hall is closed for car park resurfacing but it is also the day of our visit to the British Motor Museum at Gaydon. I'm afraid the deadline for booking will have passed by the time you read this.

Friday 28th October— Penny Varley returns

to help us complete our anniversary work of art. We'll be decorating the tiles we created earlier. If you missed out, don't worry as there will be some spare tiles. There will, of course, be time for some talking therapy.

Friday 25th November—it's our 10th birthday and we'll be celebrating. Yes, there will be cake!

Carers4Carers is part of the network of Omega Care for Life Meeting Point Support Groups Reg. Charity No. 1120322

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IDEAS FOR MOTIVATING YOUR LOVED ONE

At our July meeting, we planned to talk about ideas to motivate our loved ones. As not many attended, Lisa has produced an article so that everyone can benefit from it. We hope it will help.

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Motivation - the desire or willingness to do something; enthusiasm

I know I'm not always motivated to do things. What motivates *us* can be a useful starting point before we think about how to motivate the person we care for.

Do I really want to do it? *** Does it interest me? *** Do I have to do it or is it optional?
I want to do it later, but not now *** I'm too tired *** I feel fed up *** I need to eat first
I want to do it, but not with the person who's asking *** I don't want to do it on my own
Does it offer me some comfort or the opposite?
Do I need or want a reward for doing it?

We're all individuals and we all have different levels of motivation at different times. Our loved ones are no different and there may be even more factors to consider:

Their mood – are they fed up or even depressed? Are they anxious?

Have they had enough sleep? Are they tired or fatigued?

Do they sit around a lot – the less they do, the less they may want to do.

How often do they see daylight or experience fresh air?

Is their diet poor; could they be dehydrated?

Medication, or the timing of their medication, may have an effect

Some long-term conditions affect motivation levels because the very areas of the brain that influence motivation are affected.

Therefore, if the person we care for seems to lack motivation, there might be more to it than the fact they can't be bothered or they're being "bloody minded."

Another way of viewing motivation is that it may be internal (in the form of a "push" from inside ourselves) or external (a "pull" outside us from a person or situation.) Our loved-ones may have more difficulties motivating themselves (the push motivation) and instead may need to rely more on external motivation (the pull of others.) Some suggestions:



- What's previously motivated your loved one and would this still work? Are you trying to motivate them to do something they never would have wanted to do, using techniques they'd have never liked?
- A key factor may unlock everything (such as one of those mentioned above) or a multi-pronged attack may be needed. For example, regular fresh air (outside or by an open window) may help with sleep, improve appetite and therefore energy levels and motivation.

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- Seek out professional advice eg GP, community nurse, condition-specific helplines for more ideas.
- Consider your own communication – perhaps your loved one doesn't understand what you're inviting them to do - show them what you mean or use pictures (this might be particularly helpful for people with dementia or other conditions that affect communication)
- Use a "carrot" or reward eg getting up for something or somebody. "Have a shower and then we'll go to the garden centre."
- Use other people to motivate. Can another family member or friend persuade a companion to do something that a wife or husband cannot?
- Employ someone. Not always an option, but there might be a volunteer "sitter" who could fulfil this role.
- Encourage rather than insist. Start something and invite the person to join you or "help".
- Gently tell rather than ask. Instead of asking someone to get up, say, "it's time to get up". This is a classic strategy to try with people with dementia.
- Can you break it down into smaller steps and start with the first step? Find things that the person likes to do and can easily manage and build on this.
- Pay compliments and giving positive feedback. We often forget about this with loved ones. That's the thing about unconditional love. We often talk differently to those closest to us compared to our friends.
- Doing small things together to give someone a role may lift mood - folding washing, drying up, making the bed (or just plumping pillows), watering indoor plants and picking off dead leaves, dusting, laying the table, putting away the shopping, pushing the trolley in the supermarket.
- Use wellbeing techniques such as mindfulness, gratitude or listening to music. For example, at the end of the day talk about what went well, what were the highlights, what are you both grateful for, what can you look forward to tomorrow or next week, however small? Share these thoughts as a couple, "wasn't it lovely when the sun came out?"



Above all, take a break and manage your own wellbeing. If the person you care for doesn't want to do something and it's getting you down, try to find time to do things that *you* like. Take a walk with a friend; chat on the phone; listen to music.

Remember, looking after yourself will help you in your caring role.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS AND LINKS



- Carers Trust Heart of England— www.carerstrusthofe.org.uk; 024 7663 2972 (option2)
- To make a consumer complaint, obtain consumer help and advice or report an issue to Trading Standards, please contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.
- For consumer or business help and advice, including details of an approved trader scheme, please visit our website: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards>
- Advice on scams and rogue traders: Report fraud directly to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0800 223 1133. More advice available at: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/doorstepsellers ; www.actionfraud.police.uk/.
- Healthwatch Warwickshire— www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk ; 01926 422823 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays) and email info@healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk
- **Silverline**—available 24/7 as well as a befriending service www.thesilverline.org.uk/ . Email: info@thesilverline.org.uk or phone 0800 4 70 80 90
- Warwickshire County Council: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ 01926 410 410 . For social media go to their facebook page: www.facebook.com/WarwickshireCountyCouncil or search 'Social Media' on the website for details of dedicated links such as Instagram and Twitter.
- **Searchout Warwickshire**—the replacement for the Warwickshire Directory can be found at <https://searchout.warwickshire.gov.uk/>
- **AbilityNet** offers free help with all things digital to carers, older people and disabled people of any age. Phone 0800 048 7642 during office hours.

UNPAID CARERS INCLUDED IN AUTUMN COVID-19 BOOSTER CAMPAIGN

Carers UK have been campaigning for some time for unpaid carers to be included in this campaign and welcomes the news. It's vital that unpaid carers can protect themselves as well as those they care for. Carers UK also see it as a welcome opportunity for identifying carers. It also helps carers feel better valued because they are now part of a priority group. Make sure you roll up your sleeves when you are called.

POSITIVITY CORNER

A time to reflect and perhaps to smile
No deep thoughts this time, just a smile!

