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CLIPPINGS

A Weekly Column from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

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For Immediate Release

Caregiver Appreciation

Lori Hayungs, Human Sciences Specialist, Family Life

Did you know that November was Caregiver Appreciation Month?

More than one in six Americans who work full or part-time report assisting in the care of an elderly or adult-child family member, relative or friend. Research tells us that employed caregivers struggle to balance their time and energy between work and caregiving. They may become exhausted and stressed, which can lead to poor health, mental distress and less life satisfaction for the caregiver.

In the United States, over 61 percent of caregivers are women and more than half of them have had to make changes at work to meet the needs of caregiving demands. According to a survey conducted by AARP, 64 percent of current family caregivers in Iowa are women. The typical Iowa family caregiver is a married woman between the ages of 55 and 64 who works full or part-time and earns less than \$60,000 per year.

It can be challenging for caregivers to find the support that they need. That is why Iowa State University (ISU) Extension and Outreach offers resources and programs to meet the needs of caregivers. Caregivers are better equipped to take care of others, if they first take care of themselves.

Here are the top five tips that I can offer to family caregivers:

1. Take Care of You.
2. Identify and Reduce Personal Stress.
3. Communicate Feelings, Needs and Concerns.
4. Set Regular Personal Goals for Self-Care.
5. Utilize Family and Community Support and Resources for Caregiving Decision-Making.

Also, please be on the lookout for these upcoming programs in Northwest Iowa. We would love to have you join us!

- **Finances of Caregiving**

Five Sessions Total, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. (Three Online Sessions on March 29, April 5 and April 12; Two Sessions at Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon on March 22 and April 19). For more information and/or to register, call 712-957-5045 or email xobrien@iastate.edu.

Finances of Caregiving helps you understand your current situation and what the options are. We'll guide you through finding and collecting information and help you prepare for the

future, for the best possible outcome for you (the caregiver), as well as the person you are caring for.

- **Caring Relationships: Conversations on Aging**

These one-hour conversations can be geared towards various audiences, and are focused on aging and providing care. These workshops can be scheduled through any local ISU Extension and Outreach office.

- **Powerful Tools for Caregivers**

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is being planned for LeMars and Spencer in the Spring of 2017. For more information contact Lori at 712-737-4230 or lhayungs@iastate.edu.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is designed to empower family caregivers of adults with chronic conditions to take better care of themselves which enables them to be better equipped to care for others.

One last note, if you are a family caregiver, remember that you are not alone. Call 866-468-7887 to get help. LifeLong Links™ is Iowa's network of Aging and Disability Resource Centers, whose purpose is to expand and enhance the state's information and referral resources for older adults, adults with disabilities, veterans and caregivers as they begin to think about and plan for long-term independent living.

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