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Athens Care Advocate

A guide for family caregivers

Maximizing your resources



When we think of “resources,” as family caregivers we might think of money. Or time. But there is another resource we’re using every day that is often overlooked: Emotional energy.

Our emotions and mood contribute mightily to our ability to deal with challenges. When circumstances are difficult, it’s hard to generate enthusiasm or initiate projects. Truth is, even at

a most challenging time, it’s likely there’s still something positive in your life. If you can focus there, you can kickstart your resilience and your capacity for addressing problems.

It isn’t that you need to don rose-colored glasses. But training your brain to realistically perceive the good experiences that exist—even on dog-wearying days—allows you to build an emotional reservoir. Like an emotional savings account.

To build your emotional reserves

- **Acknowledge past coping strategies that were constructive.** This probably isn’t the first time you have dealt with difficulties. How have you managed in the past?
- **Savor compliments received from others.** Past or present, those around you have probably commented positively at one time or another.
- **Consciously train yourself to notice what is going well now.** No matter how small. It’s like people who train themselves to notice money on the sidewalk. They find coins and even paper bills that others overlook.
- **Expand the experience.** Take a moment to concentrate on the good thing. Don’t discount it to focus only on your worries. Stop and savor that positive. What physical sensations, what specific emotions, are associated? “See” the moment in your mind’s eye. The more you linger with it, the more lasting power it has.
- **Name it.** What is pleasant about it? What is unique about it as an experience? Which of your personal qualities does it highlight? Giving it particular meaning strengthens the positivity muscle in your brain. Journal about it for added staying power.

Drawing upon your savings account. When you next find yourself frustrated or perplexed, pause. Bring to mind a positive experience—perhaps a time when you received appreciation, felt accomplished, or exuded compassion. Use the emotional energy of that memory as the boost you need to find a new approach to the challenge at hand.



"As I strive to stay balanced and resilient, I find I need to do what I can to boost my emotional reserves."

706-810-3203

About Us

a•bridge: Aging Life Care Management provides guidance and support for older adults and their families. Learn more about us and about our services by giving us a call at 706-810-3203.