Certified Caregiving Facilitator Training

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About Me

- Sold CareGiving.com in March 2020 to focus on training
- Launched CCC training in 2016 and CCF in 2018
- Regularly share insights with reporters
- 2017 Influencer in Aging
- Cared for my mom until her death in 2022 and for my dad until his death in 2023.

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The Caregiving Years

- Six Stages
- Normalizes the universal caregiving emotions
- Progressive experience which changes the family caregiver

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Your support group may attract family caregivers in various stages.

4

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The Stages

- Expectant
- Freshman

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The Stages

- Entrenched
- Pragmatic

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The Stages

- Transitioning
- Godspeed

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The Tools

- Conversation starters
- Share before or during a meeting

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You are fostering healthy relationships through meaningful conversations.

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Healthy Relationships

"Both persons within the relationship feel seen in a safe and satisfying way." ~ Shasta Nelson

Learn more: www.shastanelson.com

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The lack of connections and understanding mean your support group members may be really lonely.

Our loneliness is one reason we feel at our worst during our caregiving experience.

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Loneliness is feeling alone or disconnected from others. It is feeling like you do not have meaningful or close relationships or a sense of belonging. It reflects the difference between a person's actual and desired level of connection. This means that even a person with a lot of friends can feel lonely.

~ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Social connection with others can help:

- Improve our ability to recover from stress, anxiety, and depression.
- Promote healthy eating, physical activity, and weight.
- Improve sleep, well-being, and quality of life.
- Reduce our risk of violent and suicidal behaviors.
- Prevent death from chronic diseases.

CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/emotional-wellbeing/index.htm

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Your group will be successful when participants:

- Feel understood
- Connect consistently
- Trust the safeness of your group

(Inspired by Shasta's definition of success: Positivity + Consistency + Vulnerability)

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Let's create that success for your group. Consider:

- Environment
- Facilitation
- Communication
- Resources

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Environment — In-person

- Circle
- Name tags
- Simple snacks break the ice

16

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Environment — Virtual

- Video can be optional
- Anonymous names are okay
- Encourage conversation in the chat room (a Zoom feature)

17

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Environment

- Your goal:
  - Everyone feels welcome
  - Everyone belongs

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Environment

- You arrive early, ready to welcome
- You commit to learning names and stories
  - Everyone is important

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Environment

- Rules for the group
  - We listen to understand
  - We support not judge
  - We encourage rather than compare
  - We embrace everyone's journey and appreciate the challenges and blessings of each

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Environment

- Rules for the group
  - We wish everyone well
  - We allow everyone a chance
  - We remind each other that everyone gets a chance
  - Our discussions remain confidential

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Environment

- Rules for the group
  - Phones on vibrate
  - Leave as you need
  - Respect everyone's personal wishes (discussed during first attended meeting)

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Environment

- Rules for the group
  - Our role is to listen and support each other, not to coach each other.
  - "If this group is the not the right one for you, I'll refer you to another resource."

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Facilitator Characteristics

- Curious
- Calm (inside)
- Concise
- Composed (outside)
- Engaging

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You can be impatient on the inside
as long as you're patient on the outside.

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Facilitation Skills

- Engaged without controlling
- Open-ended questions
- Accepting the conversation
- Nurture the conversation

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Facilitation Skills

- Group leads the conversation
- You guide the discussion
- Group knows the answer

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If you're talking, you're not facilitating.

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Family caregivers want a listener.

How do you ensure everyone has a chance to be heard?

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Listening Activity

- Members pair up
- Each shares an update for 2 minutes
  - The Speakers remind Listeners about the words of support they like to hear
  - The Listener only asks questions and offers words of support
  - You track time

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Managing the participants

- Talker
- Take-Over
- Over Steps
- Tough One
- Spotlight
- Quiet One

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Managing the participants

- Ego
- Dysfunction
- “It Won’t Work”
- Distressing Stage Combinations

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Talker

- Oversharing can be a symptom of loneliness.
- Allow “too much” a few times.
- Is this temporary?
- Is this a habit?

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Talker

- If it's a habit, interrupt when you can tell everyone feels it's "too much."
- "Forgive me for interrupting, Jane. I want to give everyone a chance to contribute. Frank, when do you feel challenged during your day?"
- "Got it. Take us to today."

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Take-Over

- Acknowledge their expertise.
- Invite them to share that expertise with you after the meeting.
- "That's wonderful, Judy. I'd love to learn more. Let's connect after today's meeting for a few moments."

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Over Steps

- Talks over others; believes boundaries are for others; minimizes the experiences others have.
- Set new boundaries and reinforce.
- Share consequences:
  - "I'll remove you if this happens again."
  - "I'll ask you to leave if this happens again."

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Tough One

- Acknowledge the tough times.
- “You’ve had such a tough time, Sue. It just isn’t fair.”

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Spotlight

- Give her a moment in the sun.
- “You’re amazing, Andrea.”
- Then move on.

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Quiet One

- Check in: “How are you?”
- Thank them for being such great listeners.
- “We’re grateful that you join us and share.”

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Ego

- Un-engage.
- Thank and celebrate.
- Then move on.

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Dysfunction

- Disengage from judging the choice.
- “I’m so sorry for your tough day.”

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“It Won’t Work”

- Accept that, for him or her, it won’t work.
- “You’ve got a tough situation.”
- Then move on.

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When the combination of stages stresses a member:

- Speak privately after the meeting
- “How do you feel about our conversations?”
- “How can I support you if it feels like the conversation is too overwhelming?”
- “Every situation is different. What plans would you like to put in place to help avoid these situations?”
- Brainstorm ways for the support group member to remain engaged without absorbing TMI

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Be ready to refer to another support group if yours isn’t the right fit.

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Additional challenges

- Cliques
- Life of a group

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Body language

- How do you know when the group is engaged?
- How do you know when the group has checked out?

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Go-to tips

- Express gratitude
- Rest into the silence

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Managing the group means
minimizing the chaos and dysfunction
while maximizing the connections and support.

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Resources

- Know about the resources in your community which can help
- Develop relationships with the resources which can help
- Have group discussions about which resources in the community can help

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Let's practice.

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Your turn

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Your Curriculum

- 12 months

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After your meetings, reflect:

- How understood did your members feel?
- How much did the members trust each other in order to share?

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Engage

- Members take turns leading the meeting (you still facilitate)
- Members drive the topics
- Members take turns “drawing” notes on a Flipchart
- Break up into small groups for more personal discussions

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Innovate

- Journaling Support Group
- Happiness Project Support Group
- Knitting Circle
- Doodling Support Group
- Photography Support Group

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Grow Your Group

- Ask members to promote and invite
- Share on social media
- Email monthly reminders which are easy to share

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Promote Your Group

- NextDoor
- meetup.com
- Local social service agencies and employers

Your Important Work

Your group can offer your members a cure for their loneliness.

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Certification Next Steps

- Pass the CCF Exam.
- Participate in a four-hour training session
- Join caregiving support groups (online or in your community) for two hours
- Host a FB Live, Instagram Live, in-person or Zoom meeting

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Our Affiliate Program

- Earn 15% when you share about our program
- Use coupon code CCF for a 15% discount on our program

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