It is no secret that family caregivers often have a lot on their plates. And for some the role of being a family caregiver can last for many years. So how do caregivers stay resilient? In other words, how can caregivers remain able to withstand and recover quickly from life's challenges? Here are a few ideas, based on the research and advice of psychologist, Rick Hansen, and author of the new book, Resilient.

SLOW DOWN - Rick Hansen emphasizes the importance of slowing down and really absorbing the small and big positive experiences we are having in life. . . . to really soak it in to your body, mind and emotions.

• RELAX IN THE MIDST OF ACTIVITY, even if it just relaxing your mind.

• EXTEND YOUR EXHALATION. This will allow your body to relax, which will in turn, allow your mind to relax. It is simple: “for several breaths or more, try counting softly in your mind to make your exhalation longer than your inhalation. For example, inhale for 1-2-3 and the exhale for 1-2-3-4-5-6.” Do this practice as often as you think of it.

• REFLECT BEFORE YOUR RESPOND - Cultivate your ability to respond rather than react. Responding involves giving yourself time (take a breath or two or more) to figure out what the other person is really saying, allowing the waves of flight-or-flight to pass through your body (before you speak) and “recognize and restrain impulsive works and actions that you'll regret later”. This will allow you more productive, and less stressful and draining communication with others, in effect helping you to preserve your energy. Practice being gentle toward yourself and others. Be careful of faultfinding- in yourself, in others, and in life. Instead, see if you can cultivate finding what is good, right and what is working well.

(continued on page 2)
BE NICE TO YOUR BODY- Can you offer more kindness and appreciation to your body, taking note of all the ways it serves you throughout your days, weeks and your lifetime? Rick Hansen states, “How you feel and treat your body affects your health and vitality, and these in turn affect your thoughts, feelings, and actions”. Offering your body the commonsense basics can make your body resilient, such as having a balanced and nourishing diet, getting enough rest, moderate or even light exercise, minimizing intoxicants, and acting early on potential health problems.

• MOVE- Yoga, walking, dancing, singing, and other structured forms of movement are both relaxing and energizing. Additionally, they enhance the functioning of your immune system, making you more resilient!

LET GO OF NEEDLESS ANXIETY- Rick Hansen points out, “most people feel more anxious than is necessary or helpful” and that we “tend to see the world through fear-colored glasses”. Rick Hansen adds that “needless fear makes us shift resources from approaching opportunities to avoiding exaggerated threats”. One way to let go of anxiety is to increase our resources.

• RESOURCES IN YOUR MIND- You can reflect on times when you have drawn on your inner strengths of “grit, confidence and compassion” to handle issues in the past. Know these strengths exist within you at all times and can be utilized, as needed.

• RESOURCES IN YOUR BODY- Consider how your body has served you so far. Know it can serve you now and in future. Can you tune into its “natural vitality”? Can you call on your breathe to provide you strength, calm, and focus.

• RESOURCES IN YOUR WORLD- Consider the many people in your world. Can you draw on friends, family, professionals to offer you both emotional and concrete support?

Here is a final thought on resilience from Rick Hansen:

“We, as humans, have the core needs of safety, satisfaction and connection. Repeatedly taking in experiences of safety, satisfaction, and connection develops an increasingly unconditional core sense of fullness and balance, rather than deficit and disturbance. For individuals, this is the foundation of resilient happiness.”
Keeping Your Body Cool

- Judy Ulibarri, RN

Keeping cool when temperatures reach record highs isn't just about comfort. The following tips can help you keep cool all summer long. When not cared for high body temperatures can result in heat-related illnesses ranging heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

- Alter the time day to take advantage of cooler times (early morning or late evening).
- Wear loose-fitting clothing, preferably of a light color. Cotton clothing will keep you cooler than many synthetics.
- Fill a spray bottle with water and keep it in the refrigerator for a quick refreshing spray to your face after being outdoors.
- Fans can help circulate air and make you feel cooler even in an air-conditioned house.
- Keep plastic bottles of water in the freezer; grab one when you’re ready to go outside. As the ice melts, you’ll have a supply of cold water with you.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol as these will promote dehydration.

• Instead of hot foods, try lighter summer foods including frequent small meals or snacks containing cold fruit or low fat dairy products. As an added benefit, you won't have to cook next to a hot stove!
• If you don’t have air-conditioning, arrange to spend at least parts of the day in a shopping mall, public library, movie theater, or other public space that is cool.
• Use common sense. If the heat is intolerable, stay indoors when you can and avoid activities in direct sunlight or on hot asphalt surfaces.
• Don’t forget that pets also need protection from dehydration and heat-related illnesses too.

Heat exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is one part of the spectrum of heat-related illnesses. The body cools itself by sweating and allowing that sweat to evaporate. This requires enough fluid in the body to make sweat. Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include: profuse sweating, weakness, nausea, vomiting, headache, lightheadedness, and muscle cramps.

Please note that when a person develops a change in mental status, becomes confused or lethargic, this is a serious condition and emergency medical attention is needed immediately.
Join us for:

Mindfulness-Based Caregiver Support Program Drop-In Support Group

The Caregiver Support Program now offers a weekly Support Group that provides a safe, supportive, and confidential environment for family caregivers to share their individual stories and receive support that promotes empowerment and emotional health.

The groups are designed to enhance mindfulness skills, self-reflection, and build community support through an interactive dialogue.

Mondays: 10—11am
Bldg. 101 Room 207
Open to Family Caregivers of Veterans of all eras
Please RSVP to the:
Caregiver Support Program
(503)-273-5210
Helping vs Enabling

**Helping**
- Aids progression
- Encourages independence
- Lifts the person up
- Gets the person moving
- Adds value to life
- Supportive
- Strengthening

**Enabling**
- Keeps people stuck
- Encourages dependence
- Holds the person up
- Keeps the Caregiver moving
- Reduces value to life
- Sends message of incapability
- Debilitating

Questions a Caregiver should ask:
- Are my actions helping this person to feel more self-empowered?
- Are the circumstances staying the same, worsening or improving?
- Is this person doing his/her absolute best to help him/herself?

Source: http://www.thechangeblog.com/when-helping-hurts-a-lesson-on-enabling

Effective Ways to Provide Care without Enabling:
- Assist with tasks that are outside the scope of individual’s ability but not tasks individual can accomplish on his/her own.
- Resist urge to complete tasks just because it may take them a little longer or is may be difficult (e.g. making phone calls for the person).
- Assist with reducing avoidance (e.g., going with them to the grocery store instead of to going the grocery store for them).
- Encourage engagement in activities outside the home.
- Allow them to experience the natural increase and decrease in anxiety while completing tasks. (just because something feels uncomfortable does not mean it should be avoided).
- Assistance should be decreased over time (e.g., gradually encouraging them to do activities on their own once they have been doing them with you for a while).
- Encourage engagement in treatment. Recommend evidence-based treatments.

Best results (and first-line treatment recommended) is engagement in evidence-based treatments (CPT, PE, EMDR). VA/DoD guidelines found that supportive therapy is not effective for the treatment of PTSD. However, it is better than no treatment.

Summer Poetry

Enjoy these selected poems, and perhaps, feel inspired to write your own summer poem!

Saving Daylight

by Davidson Pickett

Suppose for a moment you live in a land, amazed at what happens during summer solstice.
   Very strange things begin to occur,
        instantly, there is little darkness.
   Night that we are so used to gone; what is left is the brilliant colors.

Daylight from dusk to dawn to dusk again, a light in all its energy and brightness.
   Yes, we are north of the sixtieth parallel; land of the midnight sun.
I have been here before and seen things, gazed upon the horizon, waiting for darkness to reappear.

Holding on to summer in all its life, love and beauty.
   To see it ebb once more as daylight fades to night.

A Summer Night

by Elizabeth Drew Stoddard

I feel the breath of the summer night,
   Aromatic fire:
      The trees, the vines, the flowers are astir
           With tender desire.

      The white moths flutter about the lamp,
          Enamoured with light;
      And a thousand creatures softly sing
           A song to the night!

      But I am alone, and how can I sing
          Praises to thee?
      Come, Night! unveil the beautiful soul
          That waiteth for me.

Warm Summer Sun

by Mark Twain

Warm summer sun,
   Shine kindly here,
Warm southern wind,
   Blow softly here.
Green sod above,
   Lie light, lie light.
Good night, dear heart,
   Good night, good night.