

# CAREGIVER NEWSLETTER

## Meet the Caregiver Support Team



### What is the Caregiver Support Program?

The Caregiver Support Program (CSP) is comprised of two programs :

The **Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS)** is open to Veterans of all eras who are enrolled in the VA Health Care System.

The Caregiver Support Program empowers caregivers with a wide range of resources through the Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS). All caregivers who provide personal care services to Veterans enrolled in Veterans Affairs healthcare have access to PGCSS.

Caregivers who enroll in PGCSS have access to education, training, and support services.

The **Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC)** is open to eligible post-9/11 Veterans enrolled in the VA Health Care System.

Caregivers of eligible Veterans seriously injured on or after September 11, 2001 may additionally qualify for:

- ◆ A Monthly Stipend
- ◆ CHAMPVA Healthcare coverage
- ◆ Mental Health Services
- ◆ Respite Care Services
- ◆ Travel, Lodging and Per Diem during required training and Veteran medical appointments

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# CAREGIVER SPOTLIGHT



*Let's get to know ....*

**ANNE**

*My Veteran's Name:* Dave

*Branch of Service:* Marine Corps

***I have been a Caregiver since:*** I have been a caregiver since 2012 but didn't realize it until 2015 when I talked to the VA Caregiver Support Coordinator.

***I enjoy:*** lifting weights. I started lifting a little over 3 years ago because I kept hurting myself when I had to lift or move my husband. I ended up loving it and now it's what I do for my self care.

***My favorite part about being a Caregiver is:*** the strong bond my husband and I share. We've been through a lot together and have grown so close despite the challenges we face. I'm honored to be able to help give back to someone who gave so much for his country.

***I take care of myself (and my family) by:*** practicing Whole Health.

Before Whole Health I knew things weren't quite working but didn't know where to start. Because of it, in the past few years we got control of our finances, I got in shape, we eat better and have healthier relationships with others, among other amazing improvements. It's been the best thing that's happened to our entire family, not just me.

***I would like other Caregivers to know:*** they aren't alone.

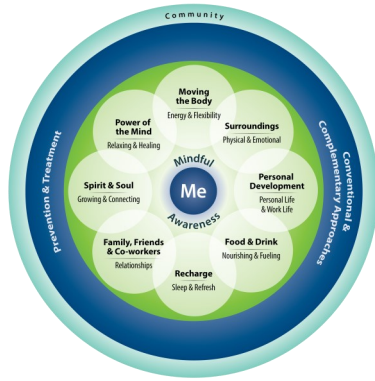
There are people who care and resources to help. I encourage them to check out [hiddenheroes.org](http://hiddenheroes.org), join the Hidden Heroes Caregiver Community Facebook group where military and veteran caregivers help encourage and share vital information and programs with each other. I'd also encourage them to participate in the offerings provided by the VA Caregiver Support Program. The staff I've worked with are amazing and have changed our family's life for the better in so many ways. Before the Caregiver Support Program I just flew by the seat of my pants and it was very stressful. Now I feel confident as a caregiver, I have learned how to navigate this wild caregiving life and know the staff at Caregiver Support Program are always there to help when I hit a road block. I'd also encourage them to dive into Whole Health.

I applied to be a Dole Fellow because I wanted to be able to use my experience as a veteran caregiver to help others in our situation. I spent years feeling extremely isolated and that no one understood what our family was going through. The Dole Fellowship is giving me the opportunity to make lemonade out of the lemons of those first few hard years of becoming a caregiver. The Elizabeth Dole Foundation is a positive force for good and I can't wait to be a part of the changes they're helping bring about in military and veteran caregivers lives.

Click this [Hidden Heroes link](#) to read Anne's Caregiver Story.



# WHOLE HEALTH CORNER



## How do YOU define Self-Care? By Judy Ulibarri, RN

As caregivers we have certainly heard about it, perhaps read about it, and have even talked about it. Yet, all too often I see many of us caregivers over-committing to our already overflowing schedule. Sometimes even over indulging in habits that are not really healthy, and seldom the only time one is alone and quiet is when we are in the bathroom, and even then they may still be looking at our iPhone.

As many of us do try our best to practice self-care, I think it is worthy of discussion, **self-care is not a one-size-fits all**. Sometimes deciding what would be kind, or supportive to myself is actually challenging, even difficult. Sometimes it's easy, but, "what if" I just want to stay up late and binge on Netflix? Point being, it is one thing to ask myself what I need, but it is yet another thing, to actually listen to myself!

As caregivers, people who care, it can feel all too easy to do for others, than to do for ourselves.

***I define self-care as the practice of taking an active role in protecting my own well-being. Using the resources I have to respond to times of stress so that they don't result in reacting, or sickness.***

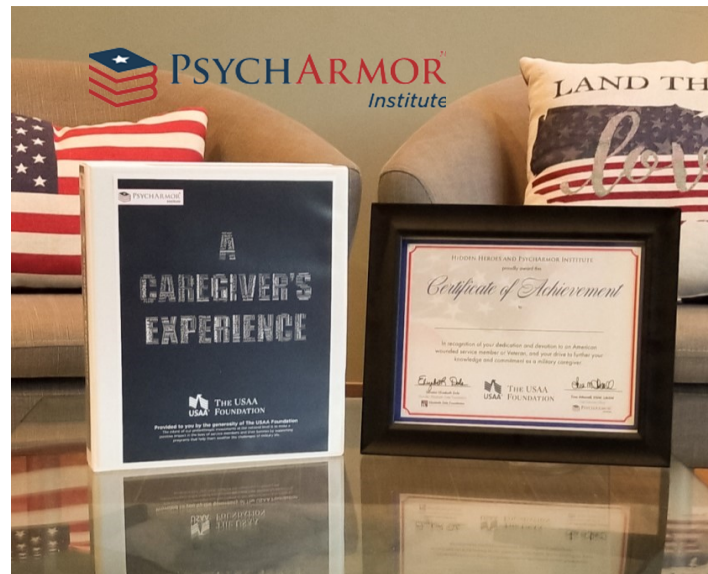
Often my self-care is doing something that feeds my spirit; move my body, gets me outdoors, seek comfort, or simply take some deep, slow breaths.

As you think about and define self-care for you, the CSP staff would love for you to share your definition of self-care with us.

### Self-Care Ideas

<b>Meditate</b>	<b>Go on a walk</b>	<b>Take a bubble bath</b>
<b>Watch a happy movie</b>	<b>Listen to Music</b>	<b>Star Gaze</b>

# CAREGIVER SPOTLIGHT



## PsychArmor

PsychArmor is dedicated to providing education, resources, and strategies for those who provide care for our nation's wounded, ill, and injured service members and Veterans. The caregiving journey can be challenging — we're here to provide support.

Thanks to the generosity of The USAA Foundation we are pleased to offer the Caregiver Recognition Program, which includes a certificate of achievement and a three-ring resource binder for a central place to keep important documents, valuable resources, and notes from our courses.

### PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. Create an account at **[www.psycharmor.org](http://www.psycharmor.org)**
2. Complete **four** of our caregiver courses at:  
**[www.psycharmor.org/caregivers](http://www.psycharmor.org/caregivers)**
3. Join the Hidden Heroes Community to access resources that raise awareness, inspire action, and connect military caregivers:  
**[www.hiddenheroes.org/registration/](http://www.hiddenheroes.org/registration/)**
4. After completing the above steps, email our Clinical Team at **[support@psycharmor.org](mailto:support@psycharmor.org)** to receive your binder and award.

“These resources are provided as a courtesy of VAPORHCS. None of these agencies or providers are affiliated with VA. Use of any of these services or providers is at your own risk.”

# CAREGIVER SUPPORT

## VA MISSION ACT UPDATES

The **Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers** is currently only available to eligible Veterans injured in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001, but that is expected to change through the VA Mission Act!

Click on the button below to read more about the VA Mission Act.

UPDATES

## Easy Summertime Recipe

### REFRESHING SUMMERTIME SALAD

- ◇ 4 cups mixed baby greens
- ◇ 1/2 cup diced mango
- ◇ 1/2 cup cubed seeded watermelon
- ◇ 1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint
- ◇ 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- ◇ 2 tablespoons minced red onion
- ◇ 1 tablespoon white balsamic vinegar
- ◇ 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ◇ 1 tablespoon frozen mango juice concentrate, thawed

Combine the baby greens, mango, watermelon, mint, feta cheese, and minced onion in a mixing bowl. Whisk the vinegar, olive oil, and mango juice together in a small bowl and pour over salad. Toss gently to evenly coat.

Yields 4 servings

110.5 calories; 3.3 g protein; 9.9 g carbohydrates; 14 mg cholesterol; 195.1 mg sodium

Original recipe located at [www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com)

### Need Support?

Call the **Portland Caregiver Support Program Mainline at 1-503-273-5210**

Your local Caregiver Support Coordinator (CSC) is a licensed professional who can support you by matching you with services for which you are eligible, and providing you with valuable information about resources that can help you remain smart, strong and organized as you care for your Veteran.