The Helping Hand

Neighbors Helping Neighbors for Over 25 Years

Grab a Cup of Tea and Chat With Us

This week on Lunchtime Chats:

Tuesday at 1pm: A Royal Visit and the Decision to Build Albany’s Empire State Plaza with Hon. Jack McEneny, NYS Assemblyman (ret.)

Friday at 1pm: Decluttering, Organizing and Spring Cleaning with Lynda Schrager of At Home for Life.

Anyone can dial in to the call at 518-261-2761. No other codes are needed. If you would prefer to receive a call at 1pm, instead of dialing yourself, please contact Community Caregivers at 518-56-2898 or email us at info@communitycaregivers.org. Upcoming topics include Resiliency and Self Care on April 21st with David Rosetti and Behind the Scenes at the Altamont Enterprise with Editor Melissa Hale-Spencer on April 24th.

We are Just a Phone Call Away

If you or someone you know would like ongoing conversational support from one of our volunteers, please call us at 518-456-2898 or email info@communitycaregivers.org. We also offer a support group for caregivers of folks with memory loss issues as well as a group for people dealing with grief. Call our office if you would like to join one of these groups or if you have an idea for one. These times are especially difficult for all of us, but especially so for those who may live alone. Remember, we are here to help, so call today.
"We do not have to become heroes overnight. Just a step at a time, meeting each thing that comes up...Discovering we have the strength to stare it down."

-Eleanor Roosevelt

Staying Physically Active During COVID-19

Maintaining our health is a top priority during this unprecedented time. In addition to protecting yourself by avoiding those who are ill, washing your hands, cleaning commonly used surfaces, and other preventative measures, it is important to maintain your physical and mental health. The benefits of physical activity include improved strength and mood, a strengthened immune system, and reduction of the long-term risks associated with chronic health conditions, falls, and other medical burdens the elderly may face.

Fortunately, these benefits can be derived from mild to moderate activity. And being active does not have to mean doing strenuous exercise. Below are some ideas for how to stay active while staying safe from exposure to COVID-19. Adjust these exercises to your ability. Discontinue the activity and consult your doctor if you feel pain.

Home-Based Activities:

- Go for a walk in your home
- Clean and organize your living space.
- Play music and dance!
- Build strength by lifting weights if you have them, or a heavier object from your home.
- Try new stretches.

1. Neck Stretch: From a standing or seated position, position your feet at shoulder width apart. Turn your head to the right and hold in a comfortable position for 10 seconds, then turn your head to the left and hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 3 times.

2. Back Stretch: Speak with your doctor first if you have had hip or back surgery. While sitting in a comfortable and sturdy armless chair, place your feet flat on the ground and shoulder width apart. Lean forward while keeping your back and neck straight. Bend farther forward and slide your hands down your lower legs. Hold for 10 seconds and slowly straighten back to the starting position. Repeat 3 times.

3. For other stretches and images of what these stretches look like, the National Institute of Aging at the NIH has many options on their website (https://go4life.nia.nih.gov/exercise-type/flexibility/).

4. Heel to toe walking can help improve balance. For extra balance, use a wall or chair to help maintain your stability during the exercise. Focus on a spot in front of you to maintain balance, and place the heel of one foot to the toe of your other foot. Repeat this step 20 times.

5. Workout videos on Youtube for seniors by Dartmouth Hitchcock Health:

6. Seated Exercises: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BePHWG0O44
7. Standing Exercises: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQLzNf8VOIc

8. Yoga videos on Youtube for seniors by Johns Hopkins University, specifically for those who suffer from arthritis: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBSfTPesZVU

Outdoor Activities:

1. Go for a short walk. Maintain at least six feet between you and other pedestrians. And consider going in the morning when there are fewer pedestrians.
2. Walk in your backyard or front yard if you have one.
3. Gardening and yard work.
"Best of" Websites – Staff Picks

For those who don't sew but want to make a COVID-19 protection mask, here is a simple no-sew pattern. All you need are two elastic hair ties and a bandana! 

Click Here for the pattern.

Most small businesses are struggling. But many are offering alternate ways to receive or use their products and services. Visit the Guilderland Chamber of Commerce Small Business Hub to connect with the businesses you know and love!

Click for The Perfect Scam

Listen to AARP's latest podcast, The Perfect Scam. Experts recount some of America's biggest scam stories. Interviews with con artists as well as tips on how to avoid falling into a trap.

"Please, Be My Eyes..."

We all have a story to tell. That is why earlier this year, we asked our volunteers to send us some of their own. We received wonderful anecdotes and would like to share some with our Helping Hand readers. Here is one:

Even though I was working full-time and planned to wait to volunteer until after I retired, a very sad event was the catalyst for getting involved sooner. On Easter Sunday, 2006, my brother Peter, only 49, died suddenly of a heart attack. Since he always made time for volunteering, I decided to honor his memory by becoming a CC volunteer. One fringe benefit was that I instantly felt better because I was channeling my grief into something positive. Another fringe benefit has been meeting so many wonderful people! One client I had, a young mother, was blind so I drove her and her daughter to the daughter's dance class. I remember getting very choked up when the mother said, "Will you please be my eyes and tell me how she's dancing?"

-Submitted by Cindy, a Community Caregivers volunteer

If you are connected with Community Caregivers and would like to share a related story, email kathy@communitycaregivers.org or write to us at Community Caregivers, Attn: Kathy Brown, 2021 Western Ave., Albany, NY 12203

Guilderland Library - Resources
Even though the building is closed, the Guilderland Library remains in full swing. Patrons can still borrow movies, audio books, and other virtual items with a UHLS card. Read *The New York Times*, listen to jazz, learn a language, read a classic or watch a silent film... For more information visit [www.guilderlandlibrary.org](http://www.guilderlandlibrary.org).

We Continue to Lead, Care and Serve

Guilderland Town Supervisor, Peter Barber, recently recognized Community Caregivers as a leader in our community’s response to COVID-19. We are grateful for his affirmation of our work as we continue to ensure that our clients receive the food, medications and the reassurance calls they need during this crisis.

We ARE working so we can continue to serve and so we can continue to care about our clients. We are especially monitoring the health and wellbeing of our elderly, and more isolated clients. For some, Community Caregivers is their only help and support at this time.

Our need for your support is considerable and once again, we invite you to join with us to ensure that our doors stay open and our services meet the ever-increasing need. Your gift of any amount is your affirmation of the fine work we do.

(You may send your gift via check, credit card or online at [www.communitycaregivers.org](http://www.communitycaregivers.org). We are now accepting donations through PayPal as well. Or you may call our offices at 518-456-2898 for additional information--we’d love to speak with you! Thank you.)

Creative Concoctions from Your Pantry

If we weren't comfortable in our kitchens before COVID-19, most of us probably are by now! Baking, cooking and creating dishes to share virtually on social media has become all the rage. In fact, our own Laura Jonas did just that on Facebook. To check out her recipe for Chickpea Curry, see her latest post on our Facebook page! Be sure to "like" our page and "share" with friends!

Links to Local Resources and More

Below are internet sites that provide basic information
about food availability and access, Medicare assistance, and local charities ready to help now!


The Times Union has also made a list of grocery stores that are offering senior hours on select days. Click here: https://www.timesunion.com/7dayarchive/article/Stores-offer-senior-shopping-hours-during-15151232.php

The United Way is offering assistance to meet the needs of anyone in crisis. Click here for more information: https://www.unitedwaygcr.org/call-211

The Medicare Rights Center Consumer Helpline is up and running to help Medicare eligible seniors navigate their coverage as it relates to the COVID-19 outbreak. To speak with a Medicare counselor please call 800-333-4114.

The information provided within is potentially outdated by the time it is delivered electronically. Please check with each organization to be sure that their information has not changed.

Coffee Break, Anyone?

Join us on Thursday, April 16th from 2-3pm for a virtual coffee break. We will share ideas about how we are making use of our time and resources at home, revisiting old hobbies or starting new ones and finding creative ways to have fun! Simply call 518-261-2761 at 2:00pm to join the audio conference.

Official Websites for COVID–19 Information

The following are official websites that will provide you with the most up-to-date information available:

- New York State Department of Health
- US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- The World Health Organization

New York State COVID-19 Hotlines

New York State has established a COVID–19 Hotline (1–888–364–3065) that can provide additional
information related to travel and symptoms.

New York State has established an Emotional Support Hotline for persons experiencing increased stress and anxiety. Over 6,000 experienced volunteers are ready to help. Call 1–844–863–9314 to speak with a trained professional.

All of us at Community Caregivers understand that these are uncertain, difficult and confusing times. But we want you to know that everyone here is working together to provide ongoing support and assistance to our clients and volunteers. While we have suspended all in-person services including transportation and home visits, we will continue to strive and meet any needs that may arise.

Please call Community Caregivers at (518) 456–2989 M–F, 9AM–4PM.
A staff member will answer or return your call promptly.