

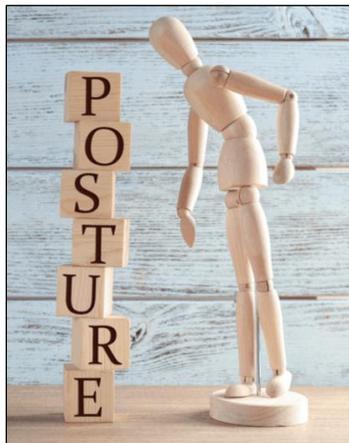
## The Importance of Good Posture

“Sit up straight!” “Don’t slouch!” “Head up!” I heard this all the time from my parents when I was a kid. Can we all relate to this?

Turns out this nagging we all used to get from Mom and Dad was great advice.

Now fast forward to today with technological advances over the years, and it is even harder for all of us not to suffer from Upper Cross Syndrome with forward head posture and internally rounded shoulders. Too much sitting using computers, sitting in overly soft chairs while either on the couch watching TV or reading, or looking down staring at our phones all the time has magnified the opportunities for much of our time during our day being spent demonstrating poor postural habits (nearly 3 hours per day for the average adult!)

Short term effects of poor posture may include headache, neck pain, and back pain. However long-term effects can lead to what’s called hyperkyphosis, which is accentuated thoracic curvature (hunch back). This can decrease our respiratory function, decrease our balance, and may lead to a loss of our ability to perform activities of daily living.



So how can we begin to fight this? I believe it starts with awareness. In 1916 the *Journal of the Osteopathic Association* defined normal posture as “an equilibrium in which there is no strain on the ligaments and minimal expenditure of muscular force over and above the energy called muscle tone, a nice balance in which the center of gravity passes in the correct relation to the bony structures.” Simply put, proper postural alignment supported by an equal contribution of our muscles throughout our bodies.

With everything pulling us forward these days, how do we know we are in proper alignment?

(Continued on page 2)

## Family Caregivers: What You Should Know About Burnout

Providing care for a family member in need is a centuries-old act of kindness, love, and loyalty. And, as life expectancies increase and medical treatments advance, more and more of us will participate in the caregiving process, either as the caregiver, the recipient of care, or possibly both.

Unfortunately, caregiving can take a heavy toll if you don’t get adequate support. Caregiving involves many stressors: changes in the family dynamic, household disruption, financial pressure, and the sheer amount of work involved.

As the stress piles up, frustration and despair take hold and burnout becomes a very real danger. But you can prevent caregiver burnout by following a few essential guidelines:

- **Learn as much as you can** about your family member’s illness and about how to be a caregiver as much as you can. The more you know, the more effective you’ll be, and the better you’ll feel about your efforts.
- **Know your limits.** Be realistic about how much of your time and yourself you can give. Set clear limits, and communicate those limits to doctors, family members, and other people involved.
- **Accept your feelings.** Caregiving can trigger a host of difficult emotions, including anger, fear, resentment, guilt, helplessness, and grief. As long as you don’t compromise the well-being of the care receiver, allow yourself to feel what you feel.

(Continued on page 2)

## Brain Teaser

Based on the laws of the U.S. Constitution, there are five requirements a person must meet in order to become President of the United States.

The candidate: must be at least 35 years old, must be a citizen of the United States, must have resided in the United States for at least 14 years and must have been born in the United States. There is one more requirement. What is it?

(Answer will be posted on *Connected Living* on November 10<sup>th</sup>.)

*(Good Posture—continued from page 1)*

During our classes here at the Fitness & Wellness Center, one thing you will hear us stress during all of our classes (both Land and Aqua) is to stand or sit up tall, keep your shoulder blades back, eyes up, and chin down. Over the last month, I have asked many of the participants of my Land Classes to try a self-assessment. This can be done standing with a flat wall or doorway right behind you. The goal is to attempt to have three points of contact with the wall—your heels, your butt, and the back of your head. That sounds much easier than it actually is! It may be difficult to do without either tilting your chin up or bringing your feet forward away from the wall and leaning back against it. However, the more we do these quick 5 second self-assessments, the more our awareness is increased and along with proper strength training exercises may lead to improving our posture.

If you have any questions on exercises you can do to help improve your posture please come down to the Fitness & Wellness Center and our staff will be happy to assist you.

See you all soon, Tyler.

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*(Family Caregivers—continued from page 1)*

- **Confide in others.** Talk to people about what you feel; don't keep your emotions bottled up. Caregiver support groups are invaluable, but trusted friends and family members can help, too. You may also benefit from seeing a therapist or counselor.

## **10 Tips for Family Caregivers**

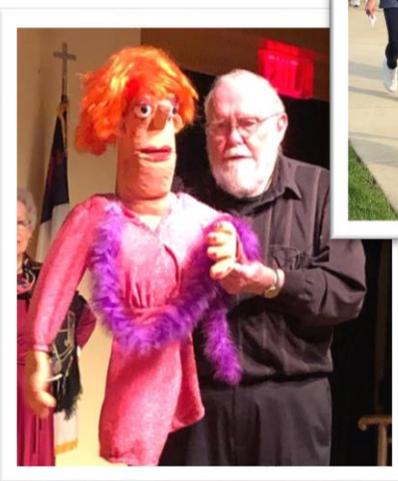
- Caregiving is a job and respite is your earned right. Reward yourself with respite breaks often.
- Watch out for signs of depression, and don't delay in getting professional help when you need it.
- When people offer to help, accept the offer and suggest specific things that they can do.
- Educate yourself about your loved one's condition and how to communicate effectively with doctors.
- There's a difference between caring and doing. Be open to technologies and ideas that promote your loved one's independence.
- Trust your instincts. Most of the time they'll lead you in the right direction.
- Caregivers often do a lot of lifting, pushing, and pulling. Be good to your back.
- Grieve for your losses, and then allow yourself to dream new dreams.
- Seek support from other caregivers. There is great strength in knowing you are not alone.

- Stand up for your rights as a caregiver and a citizen.

## **Active Aging Week**

We hope you enjoyed Active Aging Week 2019 as much as we enjoyed organizing it for you. Remember, this is an annual event so if you have ideas for the future, please let a member of the team hear them. Be it rock climbing, sky diving, or auto racing, we will do our best to make it a possibility.

*Tyler, Kim, Eliza and Deb*



***"I suppose real old age begins when one looks backward rather than forward." —Mary Sarton***