



CAREGIVERS

VOLUNTEERS ASSISTING THE ELDERLY

Fall 1996

Volume 13, Number 4

Building Self-Esteem Leads to Self-Confidence

And Maybe Happiness

Special to CAREGIVERS
by Laine Waggoner

I don't know anyone who is completely self-confident. Do you?

All of us have grown up with self-doubts and concerns about our physical appearance, our abilities, our intelligence, our performance or how we are perceived by others.

Some of us are adept at hiding our shyness and lack of self-confidence under the cloak of great poise or aloofness. Often we are misunderstood and others think we are just plain stuck-up, unfriendly or uncaring. They withdraw from us and we become even more isolated.

Self-esteem is your internal barometer of the value you place on yourself and it has a very strong impact on every part of your life.

We do better in our work, studies and personal relationships when we have high self-esteem.

And we are more likely to achieve what we want out of life when we have a strong sense of ourselves and our own worth. When we have self-esteem others are also likely to think well of us.

If you rely on the opinion of someone else to define your worth, you're asking for trouble, according to Barbara Cuban, a Palo Alto clinical social worker.

Unfortunately, whether we like or dislike ourselves is a product of spoken and unspoken messages we received from our parents. If they were hypercritical, unloving and did not appreciate our good qualities, we tend to have a negative self-image or low self-esteem.

But psychologists feel that self-esteem is not fixed, it can fluctuate from day to day depending on

a variety of factors, such as how we think we look that day, how others respond to us, if we feel well, how prepared we are for the day's work and whether or not we are hopeful about the future.

The good news is that by changing our attitudes about ourselves and our lives we can maintain an "up" happy feeling for a greater percentage of our days.

The secret is to get rid of negative, perfectionist, self-defeating thoughts and to stop being harsh in your judgments about yourself and those around you, writes Joseph Perino in his new, very-readable paperback, *I Think I'm Hopeless... But I Could Be Wrong*.

Perino outlines several exercises for getting rid of negative thoughts and developing self-



Continued on page 2

Volunteer Spotlight: Maureen O'Brien

by Carol Basralian

Not having a driver's license or a car was not a deterrent to Maureen O'Brien's becoming a volunteer. About a year ago, she walked into our office and asked if anyone needed her assistance. Coincidentally, that same month, a neighbor, Irene Esperance, also called seeking to have a visitor. The timing and location of these two requests was uncanny. And so began their wonderful friendship.



Irene Esperance (left) and Maureen O'Brien share a cup of coffee.

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Self-Esteem – from Page 1

confidence. And, he notes that perfection is an unrealistic goal. "You are who you think you are. Nothing more, nothing less. In that case why not think big?"

Is a fear of rejection causing you to avoid social situations? Everyone dislikes rejection so they need to feel you like them. When you meet new people, project a sense that you think they are worthy of your friendship. Therefore, smile, make eye contact and show interest, even if you are experiencing some of the common physiological aspects of low self-confidence, such as increased pulse rate, perspiration, dry mouth, nervous stomach, increased fatigue, tremors, skin tingling or blushing. Unless

extreme, they are not noticed by others, states Perino.

You can improve your self-esteem:

- Be generous with yourself and focus on things you like about yourself. Emphasize your strengths. Give yourself a compliment every day. Identify what would make you feel better about yourself and make those things happen.
- Associate with people who are caring and supportive of you. Avoid people who undermine you or let them know you won't tolerate negativism anymore.
- Tell people what you want and need directly, in a non-aggressive way. Don't hope they will intuitively pick up on nonverbal signals.

- On the other hand, be liberal with your praise of others. Let them know what you like about them. They will start to reciprocate.

Try to have a few enjoyable moments for yourself every day. And, if these techniques don't work, consider talking to a professional counselor, writes Cuban. Asking for help is a sign of strength, not a weakness.

Perino sums it all up by writing, "Building self-confidence is like acting in a play. You are currently acting the part of an unimportant, insignificant person, an individual with poor self-esteem. All you have to do is turn in the script for a different part. When choosing a new character, pick one that is more confident, assertive and outgoing."

Test your Self-Satisfaction:

Circle the number in each category that you feel best describes you. Decide which categories make you feel good about yourself and which you want to improve.

Category	Low	Satisfaction	High
1. Intelligence	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
2. Competence	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
3. Work Performance	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
4. Takes Initiative	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
5. Can Say "NO"?	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
6. Accepts Compliments	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
7. Appearance	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
8. Fitness Level	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
9. Ability to Socialize	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
10. Friendships	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
11. Self-confidence	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
12. Self-respect	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10

Resources

I think I'm hopeless... but I could be wrong, by Joseph G. Perino, Ph.D. -1996, River Press. (\$15.76 for book, tax, shipping & handling by mail. Call General Technologies at 1-800-328-6684)

Self-Esteem, by Barbara Cuban for the American Diabetes Association, Advanced Information Series, 1990. For information, Call 1-800-232-3472.

Alzheimer's Seminar – November 13th

A seminar for personal and professional caregivers of Alzheimer's patients will be presented by the Alzheimer's Association of Ventura County on Wednesday, Nov. 13 in Thousand Oaks. The topics to be addressed include improving communication with doctors, increasing safety awareness in the home, managing difficult behaviors, legal planning for long term care and treating Alzheimer's Disease with medication. Call 643-2614 for information.

Maureen O'Brien – from Page 1

Maureen grew up in Ireland and lived in England for 40 years before coming to this country two years ago. She was married, had seven children and was widowed about 13 years ago.

Native-born Irene is also a widow who has two children. In recent years, she has experienced two strokes. Irene lives alone and, even though she has Lifeline from the local hospital, she wanted a trusted friend. Irene says, "We both pour our hearts out to one another. It's good therapy. She is exactly what I needed to keep me going. I really look forward to her coming every week!"

Maureen starts out Irene's mornings with a telephone call, "Good Morning, this is the Queen," which makes them both laugh hysterically. Maureen puts it in her own way, "We all need an hour of chin wagging!"

Just another instance of how the world becomes a happier and more loving place through the kindness and generosity of our volunteers.



Executive Director's Message



Pat Meredith, Executive Director

October is the month when we at CAREGIVERS express our appreciation for the outstanding service our volunteers provide to this community.

We hope that you know how much your service means to the elders who benefit from your caring friendship. We know you do a thousand things that are never acknowledged, little things that the rest of us do automatically and take for granted. To your older friend they may mean the difference between life and mere existence. Even just visiting and telephoning can bring about a great improvement in feelings of well-being in a home-bound senior.

Our service statistics for last year show that volunteers provided 11,500 hours of friendly visiting, did 6,100 errands, and made 8,700 phone calls to their elderly friends. A total of 52,700 hours of service and 91,000 miles of transportation were donated.

For a small program such as CAREGIVERS those are mighty impressive statistics!

We are grateful, also, to the volunteers who help with bulk mailings and other office tasks that enable us to fulfill our mission of service. Five people deserve special recognition for their faithfulness, above and beyond the call of duty: **Keith York**, our computer consultant who can fix absolutely anything; **Sherry Lyons** of the CPA firm of Vance, Thrift and Biller, who prepares our monthly financial statements; **Joyce Cantrell**, who has organized our bulk mailings for the past several years; **Bertie Gaertner** and **Donna Kimber**, who appear regularly in the office, willing to do whatever boring job needs doing. I don't know what we'd do without all of you!

Special thanks go to the hard working members of our Board and Advisory Board, who deserve recognition for their efforts and guidance. It's their leadership that, in the end, provides the momentum that keeps this organization running.

On a more personal level, I'd like to thank our staff, **Maria Ridge**, **Cecilia Ollivares**, and **Pat Ogg** for their loyal and conscientious support. **Carol Basralian** especially deserves the appreciation of all of us for her tireless and devoted efforts to provide the elders in our program with the assistance that will keep them in the comfort of their own homes longer than might otherwise be possible.

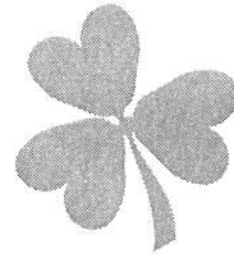
Save the Date!

Mar. 17th

CAREGIVERS' fifth annual "Wearin' of the Green" golf tournament

Monday,
March 17, 1997.
Shotgun start,
7:30 a.m.

Buenaventura Golf course, with Irish buffet lunch at the Wedgewood Banquet Center.



Volunteers Needed

We have 25 seniors waiting to be matched with a volunteer. Can you give two or more hours per week to help an elder in need? You can help someone improve his or her quality of life, and you can make a wonderful new friend in the process. Their needs range from transportation to the doctor, to help with writing out checks to pay monthly bills, to minor household tasks such as changing a light bulb. Volunteers are never put in a position beyond their capabilities, nor are they ever asked to do any kind of nursing care. You decide what tasks you can help with and how much time you can spend each week. Please call 652-0566 for more information.

Become a Volunteer or Join "Friends of CAREGIVERS"

We always need volunteers to help elders in need.

If you cannot volunteer as a one-on-one caregiver, but would still like to help the program in other ways, join "Friends of CAREGIVERS," an auxiliary group which provides support for community awareness and fund-raising events. To find out more or to join, please call the office at 652-0566.

*Have you remembered
CAREGIVERS
in your will?*

YOUR DONATIONS MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO GIVE A HELPING HAND TO THOSE WHO NEED IT. THANK YOU! (July – September 1996)

L. Aguilar
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Old But Blooming

When the poet Longfellow was well along in years, his head as white as snow, but his cheeks as red as a rose, an ardent admirer asked him how it was that he was able to keep so vigorous and write so beautifully.

Pointing to a blooming apple tree nearby, he replied, "That apple tree is very old, but I never saw prettier blossoms on it than those it now bears. The tree grows a little new wood every year, and I suppose it is out of that new wood that those blossoms come. Like the apple tree, I try to grow a little new wood every year."

We all ought to do what Longfellow did. We cannot head off the one great event that happens to all, but we can keep on "growing new wood," and in that way keep on blossoming to the end.





A Holiday Gift Idea – Honor Your Loved Ones

Is there a special occasion coming up and you're stumped for a gift idea? Honor a special friend or relative and make a real difference in the lives of others. Donate in their names to CAREGIVERS' honorary gift and memorial program. It allows you to support our volunteer assistance to frail, homebound elderly.

Please send your gift to CAREGIVERS along with a note stating the name of the person who is to be honored or remembered. Or call us to send you a donor envelope with all necessary information.

We will send notification of the honorary gift (but not the amount) to the honoree. Notification of the memorial gift will be sent to the family of the deceased.

Send gifts to: CAREGIVERS, 261 N. Catalina Street, Ventura, 93001; or call 652-0566.



Rummage Sale Raises \$1,400

Many thanks to the special people who volunteered their time to make our rummage sale a success:

Keith York checked out and repaired the appliances and other electronic equipment that was donated.

Jan Berry
Ginny & Bob Camarillo
Jack Collings
Sr. Barbara Dugan
Mary Hoffman
Dottie Hutchinson

Bobbie Jaedtke
Travis Jaedtke
Cecilia Ollivares
Lilian Pressel
Dave Tipton
Gerri Yokum



Many thanks to Geri Yokum, who spent many hours picking up and delivering, sorting and pricing items for this year's sale.

Meet The Board Norma Fulkerson



The newest member of the Board of Directors is a psychotherapist and clinical social worker in private practice in Ventura.

She also does part-time contract work in international adoptions and operates her own small business selling international village crafts.

An active member of Ventura's First United Methodist Church, Norma's "for fun" activities include vocal music, 'power' walking and sewing.

She and husband Hal have been married since 1983 and enjoy 4 grown children and 3 grandchildren.



Clients write:

"I am very grateful that your program is available."

"I just want to tell you how much I appreciate my CAREGIVER. She is such a sweet lady and so pleasant and helpful. Thanks so much for sending her to me."

Coming Events:

Holiday Open House
Thursday, Dec. 12, 1-3 p.m.
at CAREGIVERS office

Thanksgiving Holidays
Nov. 28 & 29
Office closed

Volunteer Recognition
Sun. Nov. 3, 4-7 P.M.
Poinsettia Pavilion

Save the Date!
Golf Tournament
Friday, March 17, 1997
7:30 a.m. shotgun start
Buena Ventura Golf Course



Board Meetings
Thursdays 7:00 a.m.
Nov. 21, Dec. 19, Jan. 16

Buena Ventura Interfaith Volunteer
CAREGIVERS

261 North Catalina Street
Ventura, CA 93001

Address Correction Requested.

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CAREGIVERS' MISSION - To provide a reliable personal relationship between one volunteer and one elder in need of assistance. Without the kind of services we offer, frail elders may find themselves living in unfamiliar, impersonal institutions, with a debilitating sense of having lost both independence and dignity. By matching volunteers with elders who need assistance, CAREGIVERS permits many of them to remain in the familiar and cherished surroundings of their own homes.

CAREGIVERS, an interfaith effort, is sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and is grateful for the financial assistance of Trinity Lutheran Church, Ventura; First United Methodist Church, Ventura; Ventura County Church of Religious Science, Ventura; Sisters of the Holy Cross; National Council of Jewish Women; First United Methodist Women; and St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Santa Paula.

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