

# Adult Day Self-Care Newsletter

January 2024

## Happy New Year!

What is your hope for 2024? At COPSA and Care2Caregivers, our hope is that you (all our friends in Adult Day Centers) are able to make time in your day for self-care. We know that the past few years have brought many challenges, including staff turnover. This is not unique to your program, or even to New Jersey. While data specific to Adult Day programs are not readily available, recent data suggest turnover rates of [over 50%](#) for nursing home staff and [65%](#) for home care staff turnover. A [recent study](#) on eldercare found that one of the main factors contributing to turnover intention (preparing to quit) is job burnout. Multiple factors can lead to burnout—physical and emotional demands of the job, a negative workplace culture, perceived lack of support from colleagues and management, lack of skills and knowledge to do the required job tasks, and difficulty managing stress. While most of these factors are best addressed through an organizational approach, stress management and self-care can be encouraged and supported at the individual level. As we begin 2024, we encourage all our readers to set a small achievable goal for self-care. Our Self-Care resources include a [manual](#) for professionals (also in [Spanish](#)) and [videos](#) about self-care practices that are easy to incorporate into your day.

## New Year, New Beginning

The beginning of a new year is often a time to reflect on your life as it is and how it might be different. January 1 is a “fresh start day.” In the words of Charles Spurgeon, “Begin as you mean to go on, and go on as you began.”

But change is not so simple! Sometimes, people feel pressured into setting a goal, such as a new year’s resolution, but they’re not committed to the change—it’s something they believe they *should* do, not something that is truly important to them. Thinking about it or even setting a goal does not always create change.

Some research suggests most new year’s resolutions are followed for only six months or less—nearly a quarter of new year’s resolutions are only success for a week! For people who succeed at changing their behavior, it may take five years of choosing the same resolution before a change is solidly in place.

Be patient with yourself. Set small goals. Take small steps. Celebrate small successes. Persevere.



## The Fresh Start Effect

People are more likely to start working on a new goal at the beginning of the year, the first of the month, the start of a new week, or right after a birthday. A fresh start day provides an opportunity to try again, even if a previous change effort did not succeed. New behaviors take a while to become habits, so a reboot, or do-over, may be the ticket for success!

Dai, H., Milkman, K. L., & Riis, J. (2014). The fresh start effect: Temporal landmarks motivate aspirational behavior. *Management Science*, 60(10), 2563-2582.

## Keys to Self-Care

Healthcare and human services work brings risks and rewards. In Adult Day Centers, staff are exposed to loss and sadness, unpredictable events, lack of defined accomplishments and successes, feeling unappreciated, doing too much with too little, and (often) low pay.

**Refocus on rewards:** To counter the negatives, notice daily positives. Remind yourself that you are helping—at least you provide respite for participants' families. Use your experiences to cultivate patience and compassion. Let yourself care. Create (and value) moments of joy.

**Find healthy escapes:** Use time outside of work to recharge. Do things that capture your attention and give you a fresh perspective. A hobby or craft can [provide](#) feelings of control, purpose, and competence. Time in [nature](#) can clear your mind and lift your spirits. [Music](#), singing, and dancing, can enhance support healing and enhance your wellness.

**Connect with others:** Support your co-workers. Accept support. Nurture relationships outside of work. Make time for friends and family. Play. Laugh. Eat together. Listen. Love. Work on finding balance in what you give and what you get from the people in your life.

**Listen to yourself:** Consciously change your thoughts from critical to compassionate to appreciative. Instead of hanging on to anger at someone, consider they might be having a bad day or experiencing a tough time. Think kindly and wish them well. Remember that feelings are contagious—for better or for worse!

**Appreciate others:** If you can, go a step further and recall something they did that helped you someone else. If you can, and when your ready, share that appreciation. Your warm words will help shift your outlook and may be the start of a wave of positivity.

## For More Information

Much of the information in this issue is adapted from the work of psychologist John C. Norcross:

- Norcross. (2013). *Changeology: 5 steps to realizing your goals and resolutions*.
- Norcross & Guy. (2007). *Leaving it at the office: A guide to psychotherapist self-care*.
- Prochaska, Norcross, & DiClemente. (1994). *Changing for good*.

## Care2Caregivers Website

You can find the [Adult Day Resources pages](#) on our website through the drop-down menu in the Professional Resources section.

As always, you can access the Self-Care resources on our website for free. Use our NEW link:

**Self-Care for Professional Caregivers**  
<https://care2caregivers.com/professional->

### Upcoming Caregiver Education 2024

#### Letting Go for Caregivers

January 17, 2023 1:00pm

Click [HERE](#) to register



#### A Valentine for Caregivers: Supporting Heart Health

February 14, 2023 1:00pm

Click [HERE](#) to register

For more info email Mary Catherine:  
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or call Care2Caregivers at 890-424-2494



visit our website [www.care2caregivers.com](http://www.care2caregivers.com) for information on caregiver support groups

**1-800-424-2494**