



## ALS Support Group of NWWI

A Gathering of Individuals Touched by ALS  
Share Joy, Sorrow, Laughter, Tears, and Hope.

Receiving a diagnosis of ALS is challenging and can be very overwhelming. The ALS support group provides a safe place where patients, families, & friends Gather to share information, support, and resources with others who understand.

**Our Next Support Group Meeting will be THURSDAY, 10/13/16.**

(Second Thursday of each month, 1:00pm – 3:00pm at Chippewa Valley Bible Church,  
531 E. South Ave. Chippewa Falls, WI 54729)

*~ September 2016 ~*

*10 individuals gathered*

*Several new families attended this month's support group, which is always so bitter-sweet for all involved. But none the less, we commend you for your bravery in entering the dreaded unknown. We hope you found some comfort amongst the veterans and maybe made a friend or two to share the burden. The room was filled with faces of many different backgrounds coming together with a common goal of living well with quality care and dignity while we make our way along this ALS journey together!*

\*\*\*\*\*

*Take good care of each-other!*

*Deb Erickson, LPN*

*ALS Outreach Assistant*

[www.alsnwwi.org](http://www.alsnwwi.org)

**ALSNWWI Support Group** is a non-profit organization that has been operating in the Chippewa Valley since 1992, serving over 9 counties. Services include: Monthly support group meetings; Outreach support service for home visits; local resources & referrals, Educational materials; financial assistance for items not covered under Medicare or private insurance; Community advocacy. Annual Walk & Wheel-A-Thon is held the second Sunday in June (6.11.2017) at the Northern Wisconsin State Fairgrounds in Chippewa Falls.

*Questions, concerns, or input please contact:*

*Julie Chamberlain, LPN, 715.271.7257 or [alsnwwi@gmail.com](mailto:alsnwwi@gmail.com)*

---

## Events:

### The Healing Place One-day retreat – Courage & Resilience October 8

The Healing Place is offering a one-day retreat called Journeying with Courage and Resilience that will help participants renew their heart, mind and spirit and journey with courage and resilience. The day will provide an opportunity for rest, renewal and re-engagement with identity and integrity.

Skilled facilitators will help create a quiet, focused and disciplined space in which the noise within will subside to allow participants to hear their own inner voice. The retreat is based upon the work of educator, social thinker and writer Parker Palmer.

Using carefully designed individual and shared activities, poetry, stories, wisdom traditions, nature and hands-on experiences, participants will be invited to renew their hearts, mind and spirit. This retreat will be led by Laurie Hittman, Ph.D., and Mary Peters, M.S.E. Both Hittman and Peters are Courage and Renewal Facilitators.

The retreat will take place October 8 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at The Center, located at 3701 Hwy 12, Eau Claire. The cost is \$15 and includes lunch and materials. To register, call The Healing Place at (715) 717-6028 by October 1.

#####

## *Informative Articles & Info:*

### Dealing with Caregiver Guilt

Today's Caregiver.com Sept 22, 2016

By Malika Brown, MSW, LSW

Caregivers often carry around undeserved guilt, believing that they aren't doing enough for their loved ones. This guilt can make the caregiving role even more stressful than it already is. One might ask why a caregiver feels guilty when they're doing such a courageous job. Here are some reasons:

- **Resentment for personal time lost** – It's normal to feel like you're missing something when so much of your time is taken up taking care of someone else. The caregiver thinks that they shouldn't feel this way.
- **Unresolved issues** – Many times, there are issues stemming from childhood or arguments in the past that hinder the caregiving process. Many caregivers feel guilty about this.
- **Comparing yourself to others** – Some caregivers will look at another caregiver and think that they could never accomplish what that other person did.
- **Knowing placement is inevitable** – There can be tremendous guilt involved when a caregiver has to place their loved one in assisted living or a nursing home.
- **Dealing with your own issues** – You may be dealing with personal or health problems yourself, which takes away from your caretaking responsibilities.

#### Ways to Cope with Caregiver Guilt

- **Acknowledge the guilt** – It's normal to feel guilt from time to time. Once it's recognized, we are better able to deal with it.
- **Look at the bigger picture** – Although you may be stressed with a particular situation now, it will not last forever. Look at the sacrifices you make for your loved one and realize that you are doing a great job.
- **Accept that you're human and have flaws** – All of us make mistakes from time to time. Some of us may be good at the physical aspects of caregiving, while others may be better able to handle the emotional toll. Recognize your strengths and don't focus on the negative.

- **Make time for yourself** – This is easier said than done, but it's a must! Even if it's just an hour or two a week, go out and have coffee with a friend, catch a movie, attend a caregiver support group, or just curl up and read a book. Taking time out helps you put your situation in better perspective.
- **Know that you are making the best decision for you and your loved one at that time** – This can be hard to accept, especially if you've made a promise to a loved one in the past that you can no longer keep. A change in a situation may force you to break that promise, but realize that the promise was made under different circumstances. You are making the best decision with new circumstances.
- **Deal with unresolved issues or accept them for what they are** – Many times, we may be taking care of someone who we resent, for many reasons. You can choose to try and resolve those feelings from the past to allow you to care for that person fairly. You can also choose to allow someone else to care for that person because you know you cannot rightfully do so. Either way, this is something you need to consider if your past with that person is an issue for you. Talk to a professional if necessary to make the best decision for both you and your loved one.

Reach out for support from family and friends; seek caregiver support groups or professional help to work through your feelings of guilt. Know that you are not alone in your caregiving journey and the help is available. Most of all, remember that you are doing the best that you can!

# *ALS From Both Sides*

*By Diane Huberty*

*Diane is a Neuro RN and ALS Patient. Diane provides valuable insight and information in caring for an ALS patient. Diane's Personal Story & Thoughts on various topics: Cramping/Spasticity; Choking; Swallowing Problems; Feeding Tubes; Swollen Feet; Blood Clots; Osteoporosis; Toilet Troubles; Respiratory Options; Remodel or Move?; Equipment Needs; & ALS In-service can be found at the following website...*

<http://www.alsfrombothsides.org/index.html>

*Thank you Diane!*