



Seniors and Families at the Heart of Argenteuil

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Taking Care of Yourself to Take Care of Others

Did you know that 80-90% of the assistance and care for older people who are ill or disabled is provided by family and friends?¹ Although the need to care for a loved one or a relative can occur at any stage of life and be assumed by a man or a woman, the fact remains that, women for the most part, often seniors themselves, are the ones who support a relative in need.

The role of caregiver generally requires a change in lifestyle and a reorganization of personal and/or professional schedule(s) in order to appropriately provide care to a relative. A fatigue can be felt very quickly, especially if the caregiver takes care of the person alone. That is why knowing which resources are available in the region is important. A brochure and website were created in Argenteuil to that effect. You will find all the information here: www.prochesaidantsargenteuil.ca.

Entering a caregiving relationship and feeling useful to someone can be rewarding and even give meaning to life. However, it also has its share of emotional stress and challenges, especially during periods when episodes of adversity seem to outweigh the moments of tenderness and gratitude. For that reason, support groups who listen and provide information often are beneficial in such situation. They also provide opportunities for well-deserved breaks for caregivers to catch a breath and regain footing in light of physical or emotional exhaustion.

After caring for several months or years for a relative, the caregiver often encounters a huge void and deep sorrow when the relative passes. Grieving in isolation is very difficult; it is suggested to join a grief support group, or find people you trust to express the emotional baggage related to such a loss. Taking care of yourself and seeking support when you need it is critical during all stages of caregiving. After a relative or loved one passes, a new quest begins for the caregiver; find a new meaning in life, embrace this new intangible relationship, and make the most of this newfound freedom. Finally, being a caregiver is a work of dedication and personal growth, is it not?

November 2-9 marks the National Caregivers week in Quebec, and I invite you not to miss the Caregiver Appreciation Day in Argenteuil on November 6th! For more information on services, call your liaison officer at 450 562-2474, ext. 2304 or the Centre d'action bénévole Solidarité Argenteuil at 450 562-7447.