



*A Bi-Monthly Newsletter for
Family Caregivers*

Sauk County ADRC:

(608)355-3289

www.co.sauk.wi.us/adrc

f @adrcsauk

National Caregivers Day is observed on the third Friday in February – on February 17 this year. The day honors individuals who selflessly provide personal care, and physical- and emotional support to those who need it most. There are different types of caregivers who are not just limited to the health sector. The types are: **family caregiver**, professional caregiver, independent caregiver, private duty caregiver, and informal caregiver. Some of them are not always paid, which is why it is essential to appreciate and thank them for their long-term commitment.

So a belated Thank You for your commitment to caring for your loved one. Being a family caregiver can be rewarding and challenging at the same time. If you are feeling like you need a little more support, please see Page 2 for a Powerful Tools for Caregivers workshop the ADRC will be hosting starting in April. I encourage you to consider taking the workshop to help improve your own self-care. Caregiving is like the oxygen mask on the airplane rule - you must put your own mask on FIRST before helping those around you. If you do not take care of yourself, how can you take care of your loved one to the best of your ability? Please give me a call with any questions about the workshop!



Sincerely,

Marina Wittmann

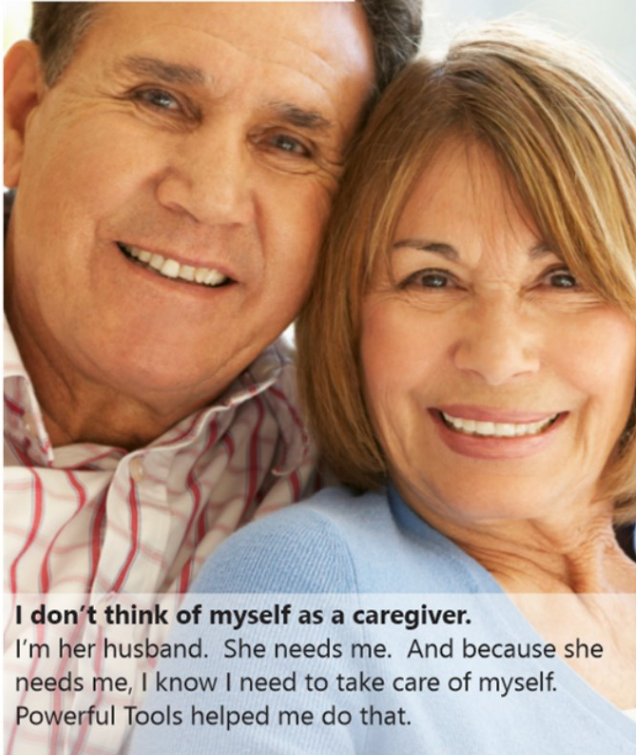
Aging Program Coordinator

Caregiver Support Program Coordinator

marina.wittmann@saukcountywi.gov



Powerful Tools
FOR Caregivers



I don't think of myself as a caregiver.
I'm her husband. She needs me. And because she needs me, I know I need to take care of myself. Powerful Tools helped me do that.

There's a Powerful Tools for Caregivers workshop starting soon near you!

ONLINE VIRTUAL WORKSHOP!

Starts: Tuesday, April 4, 2023

Time: 1:00 – 2:30pm

6 consecutive weeks

We have tablets and iPads to use for FREE to take this workshop! If you would like a Zoom tutorial before the workshop begins, let us know at registration.

Suggested donation of \$20 for the workshop

Call or email Marina Wittmann at the ADRC to register.

ADRC: (608)355-3289

marina.wittmann@saukcountywi.gov

Caregiving is rewarding.

But it can be challenging too.

Caring for someone with an injury or illness — such as dementia, cancer, heart disease, Parkinson's disease, stroke or others — can be physically, emotionally and financially demanding.

Taking care of yourself is important.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers (PTC) can show you the way!

What is Powerful Tools for Caregivers? And why should I take it?

Powerful Tools focuses on **your** well-being. The class meets once a week for six weeks and has been studied and shown to help family caregivers:

- Reduce stress, guilt, anger, and depression and improve emotional well-being
- Manage time, set goals, and solve problems
- Master caregiving transitions and be part of decision-making
- Communicate effectively with the person needing care, family members, doctors, and other helpers
- Find and use community resources



Ask Kurt

Kurt Goeckermann

Dementia Care

Specialist



Dear Kurt,

What do I do if my loved one refuses outside help? I need a break but they won't let anyone else in the house?

Sincerely, Feeling Tired

There are two primary questions here. One involves getting the loved one the help they need. The other is taking care of yourself. Since we cannot do a good job as a caregiver if we ourselves are struggling, let us address that first.

Caregivers have lives and each is an individual. They can only do what they are able, both practically and emotionally. Practically speaking, a first task may be to identify what potential caregiving support exists. Are there family members who could be asked to provide regular assistance or even respite? Even from a distance could someone agree to make a phone call to check in on the loved one twice a day? Did the loved one belong to a church, community organization, have friends that may be willing to help in some form? Sometimes a family meeting may be helpful. All family members may not all be fully aware of what is going on. The loved one should be involved to the greatest extent they are able or willing. There are more formal supports available as well. Individuals or agencies could be hired to provide needed caregiving or respite. The ADRC will provide listings of these. Paying for caregiving can be costly. The ADRC staff can help determine if the loved one is eligible for any financial support. On the self-care side, caregiving, while it can be rewarding, can also be physically and emotionally draining. The Dementia Care Specialist can point you to in person or online support groups from multiple wonderful sources. The knowledge and support of those in similar circumstances can be very beneficial. The ADRC is hosting a Powerful Tools for Caregivers Workshop in April that will address more specifics on many of the above suggestions. See Page 2 for workshop details!

Much of this may be for naught if the loved one will not accept any assistance beyond the primary caregiver. Approaches will vary greatly depending on the individual, the type of dementia and the extent of progression. There are, however, some basic things we can try to increase the likelihood of your loved one accepting help. The first is not to increase both parties' frustration by arguing or repeating difficult conversations. In previous articles it was noted that trying to "convince" a person with dementia is often futile. Even if you momentarily get agreement, you will find yourself repeating the argument again and again due to memory deficits. Therefore, it is often better to discuss once and then just try whatever approach is decided on. Depending on the individual, a family member or familiar party, when available, may sometimes be more accepted than a stranger. In certain circumstances such as bathing or personal cares the gender or age of the person may be a factor in acceptance. Depending on the response consider trying an approach several times. Vary the introduction, the time of day, who is there to introduce the new caregiver. Consider prioritizing needs and starting small. If the loved one will accept an hour or once a week, that can be expanded on as comfort grows. You may have to be there for the first time or two to have a familiar, comforting presence available. Utilize a "we are just trying this" approach. Often with dementia a one time "try" can just continue indefinitely. Sometimes, the primary caregiver can be viewed as the one "forcing" the help. Consider making an outside party the bad guy. Enlist the loved one's doctor in encouraging more assistance. After an appointment, a caregiver could say, "Remember, your doctor said you need to accept some help so you can stay in your home as long as possible".

With dementia it may take multiple tries and adaptations to see what works. There are times when a loved one will just not accept needed help. If the situation is of immediate or serious danger to the person, there are resources the caregiver can be directed to. In most instances however, there are approaches that can make the situation better. The Dementia Care Specialist is available to you offer suggestions toward that end.

Sincerely, Kurt

~ Asking for Help ~

Everyone needs help from time to time. Sometimes a crisis occurs – an accident, major change in health or the death of someone close. Sometimes it is just a tough week when lots of little things go wrong. And still other times we simply find we are unable to do all the things we used to do. As a caregiver, the responsibilities can feel purely overwhelming at times. Whatever the case, we all find ourselves in a position where we need a little bit of help.

It can be so hard to ask for help! We are taught to take care of ourselves and see asking for help as a sign of weakness. We may tell ourselves that it will get better or that there isn't anything anyone else can do anyway. As a caregiver, we may feel that no one else can really do our job. We may even talk ourselves into thinking we actually don't need help, but deep down, we know we could use some assistance. Admitting that we need help is the first step to getting help.

When you are ready to ask for help, be specific in what you need the most. Sometimes you need something tangible like a ride to the store or an appointment, your lawn mowed, your house cleaned, a meal prepared or just a little break from caregiving. Other times you may just need someone to talk to or a shoulder to cry on. If you can't figure out what you need, ask a friend, relative or counselor to help you. Write down your needs. Allowing yourself to name your needs can be hard, but it is a necessary step to getting help.

While you review your list of needs, determine the times you need help the most so that you may arrange for help ahead of time. Then think about the people you know who you might be able to help. Consider asking neighbors, people you've met at church or community centers as well as family and friends. Many people would feel honored to be asked to help. There also may be people at the Aging & Disability Resource Center or local volunteer agency that could offer assistance.

The next step is directly asking for help. It is best to be specific in your request, "Could I get a ride to the grocery store sometime today or tomorrow?" or "Would you be able to rake my leaves this weekend?" or "Would you like to have coffee with me tomorrow – I need someone to talk to." By being specific, it is more likely for your need to be fulfilled and it also makes it easier for the person helping to know exactly what you want. If the answer to your request is no, don't get discouraged. It may take a few tries to get someone who can assist you.

Sometimes when people offer to help it may catch you off guard and you can't think of anything you need right at that moment. To remedy this, keep a pencil and paper handy and write down the various things you could use help with as you think of them. Then when people ask, "How can I help you?" you can simply consult your list and give them a specific task. Writing things down as you think of them helps you remember the things you would like assistance with and it also allows people to choose something that they feel most comfortable with.

Once you have successfully allowed others to assist you, continue to evaluate your situation. Needs change. You may find that you no longer need the help you did before. Or there may be different areas where help is needed. Just make sure you are getting all your needs met so you can be as healthy and happy as possible.

Jane Mahoney
Older Americans Act Consultant
Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources



Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance 2023 Virtual Conference

Understanding Alzheimer's Disease, Dementia, and Memory Loss

Thursday, March 16

8:45 Workshop Opens

8:55 Welcome: Heather Moore, ADAW Dementia Outreach Specialist

9:00-10:15 There/Not There: Grieving What is Lost, Celebrating What Remains, and Finding Meaning Through Dementia

Presenter: Carissa Hodgson, LCSW, OSW-C

- Many people think of grief only in relation to death. Grief is actually a natural part of living, experienced within relationships, identities, and normal life transitions. When someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia, they and their loved ones experience a myriad of losses, many of which are confusing and frustrating. Learn more about grief in its many forms, including ambiguous, anticipatory, and disenfranchised grief as it relates to dementia. Understand how the grief framework allows you to clarify confusing feelings, identify resources to help you cope with discomfort, and find meaning in the midst of uncertainty.

10:15-10:30 Questions & Answers

10:30-11:45 Dementia 101 and Risk Prevention

Presenters: Bonnie Beam-Stratz and Ben Biddick

- During this session, attendees will gain a better understanding of: Wisconsin Dementia Statistics, What is "normal" vs. "not normal" aging of the brain, 10 Warning signs of dementia & types of dementia, Pseudo-dementia Causes, Risk Factors, Risk Reduction/ Prevention Strategies

11:45-12:00 Questions & Answers, Wrap-up, Evaluations

Friday, March 17

8:45 Workshop Opens

8:55 Welcome: Heather Moore, ADAW Dementia Outreach Specialist

9:00-10:15 Communication Strategies in Dementia Care, Presenter: Heather Moore, LP

- Communicating with someone living with dementia has its unique challenges. There's potential for misunderstanding, confusion, or frustration in both directions – making communication even more difficult. Here, we will discuss understanding how dementia affects communication, how to carefully observe, listen and interact effectively with persons with dementia and learn practical strategies and tips.

10:15-10:30 Questions & Answers

10:30-11:45 A MOSAIC Approach to Engaging those with Dementia

Presenter: Justine Barton, BMS

- Engaging those with dementia in regular cognitive, physical, and social activities has been shown to be a promising strategy for delaying the progression. It's essential to meet the core psychological needs of those with dementia, and this can be done through engaging activities. Learn different ways to engage those with dementia to meet all their core psychological needs while bringing them moments of joy.

11:45-12:00 Questions & Answers, Wrap-up, Evaluations

Register by March 2!

www.alzwissc.org/2023-dementia-conference

Program Sponsored by:



Caregiver Support Meetings Around Sauk County

General Family Caregiver Groups

- **First Congregational Church** in Baraboo, 2nd Monday @ 2pm | Contact Mary Larson, 254-7002
- **VA Clinic*** in Baraboo, 3rd Monday @ 1:30pm | Contact Meghann Schmitt, 256-1901 ext. 12308
*caregiver of enrolled veteran or enrolled veteran who is a caregiver

Parkinson's Specific Groups

- **First Congregational Church** in Baraboo, 3rd Monday @ 2pm | Contact Sylvia Kriegl, 356-7096

Dementia Specific Groups

- **Maplewood** in Sauk City, 4th Tuesday @ 3pm | Contact Theresa Grimes, 643-3383
- **Virtual Morning Coffee Connect**, Every Monday @ 10am | Contact Pam Kulberg, 548-3954
- **Reedsburg Library**, 3rd Wednesday @ 12pm | Contact Janet Wiegel, 697-2838
- **Spring Green Library**, 4th Monday @ 1pm | Contact Janet Wiegel, 697-2838

Huntington's Disease Specific Groups

- **Monk's Restaurant** in Sun Prairie, 3rd Saturday @ 10:30am | Contact Deb Zwickey, 414-257-9499
*All are welcome - those with HD, family and friends
- **Virtual Huntington's Disease Group**, 3rd Tuesday @ 6:30pm | Contact Deb Zwickey, 414-257-9499, dzwickey@hdsa.org

Memory Cafe's

A safe space where caregivers and loved ones with dementia can socialize, listen to music, and have fun!

- **Sauk Community Center**, 3rd Thursday @ 9:30am | Contact Janet Wiegel, 697-2838
- **Fusch Community Center**, 2nd Friday @ 10am | Contact Janet Wiegel, 697-2838
- **Reach Out Lodi**, 4th Friday @ 1pm | Contact rkearney@alzwissc.org
- **Woodman Senior Center, Richland Center**, 4th Thursday @ 10am | Contact heather.moore@alzwissc.org

Alzheimer's Association Virtual Statewide Groups | call 800-272-3900 to register

- **For Persons Living with Mild Cognitive Impairment**, 2nd Wednesday @ 10am
- **Family Caregivers for Loved One with Dementia Living at a Facility**, every other Friday @ 10am
- **Family Caregivers for Loved One with Frontotemporal Degeneration**, 3rd Wednesday @ 6pm
- **Family Caregivers for Loved One with Dementia in the Early Stages**, 4th Tuesday @ 10am
- **Grief & Bereavement Group** | contact Shai Wise 414-775-7578

Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance: www.alzwissc.org | Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org/wi

ADRC Support for Caregivers

- Powerful Tools for Caregivers, Caregiver Lending Library, Respite Funding and more available!
- Contact Marina Wittmann at the ADRC: marina.wittmann@saukcountywi.gov | ADRC (608)355-3289



STAY MENTALLY AND SOCIALLY ACTIVE

Article by: Alzheimer's Association (alz.org)

Embrace lifestyle habits that improve your overall health, such as exercising, consuming a nutritious diet – and staying cognitively and socially active. Science suggests these may support brain health as well. It's never too late to make changes to achieve a healthier lifestyle – or too early to start.

Mental Activities

Mentally challenging activities, such as learning a new skill, adopting a new hobby or engaging in formal education, may have short and long-term benefits for your brain. To keep your mind active, it is important to participate in activities that expose your mind to new topics.

Challenge yourself to games with strategy or high-level reading material or determine how to approach a familiar task in a more effective way. Selecting activities you enjoy will increase the likelihood that you will continue to engage in them over time.

Another way to stay mentally active is to get as much formal education as you can, at any point in life. Formal education is classroom-based learning administered by professionally trained teachers. Engaging in this type of education will help keep your brain healthy and may protect your brain from developing dementia. This could involve taking a class at a local college or community center that teaches a new topic, skill or hobby (e.g., learning a language or how to play an instrument).

Social Activities

Social engagement is associated with reduced rates of disability and mortality, and may also reduce risk for depression. Remaining socially active may support brain health and possibly delay the onset of dementia. There are many ways to stay socially active in your community, and these activities will provide the greatest connection to others.

Participation in clubs, volunteer efforts and other community pursuits may be valuable in maintaining your overall health. Many of these social activities are low-cost or free, such as joining a walking group or book club in your neighborhood. Staying socially active can also be as simple as engaging with friends and family on a regular basis.

Pursue social activities that are meaningful to you. For instance, if you love animals, consider volunteering at a local shelter or with a rescue group. Or, [get involved with our cause to end Alzheimer's](#) by becoming a volunteer or advocate, or participating in a community event.



Find all the ways to become an advocate for the Alzheimer's Association, visit www.alz.org/get_involved



2022 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures



1 in 3

seniors dies with Alzheimer's or another dementia

Over **11 million** Americans

provide unpaid care for people with Alzheimer's or other dementias



These caregivers provided more than 16 billion hours valued at nearly

\$272 billion



In 2020, COVID-19 contributed to a

17% increase in Alzheimer's and dementia deaths



In 2022, Alzheimer's and other dementias will cost the nation

\$321 billion

By 2050, these costs could rise to nearly

\$1 trillion

Between 2000 and 2019, deaths from heart disease have decreased **7.3%**

It kills more than **breast cancer and prostate cancer**

combined

while deaths from Alzheimer's disease have increased **145%**

More than **80%** of Americans know little or are not familiar with mild cognitive impairment (MCI), which can be an early stage of Alzheimer's.

Take 5!

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Solution on Page 12



There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.

~Edith Wharton



| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 6 | 9 | | | 8 | | 3 | |
| | 1 | 4 | 5 | | | | | 6 |
| 5 | | | | | | 4 | | 7 |
| | | | | | | | 1 | |
| 8 | | | 7 | 4 | | | 5 | |
| | | | 1 | | 5 | 3 | | 4 |
| 9 | 4 | | | | | 7 | | 8 |
| | | 8 | | | | 1 | 9 | |
| | | | | | | | | |

Sudoku Rules:

Fill in the blanks so that each row, each column, and each of the nine 3x3 grids contain one instance of each of the numbers 1 through 9.

Rebus Puzzles - Can you guess the words/expressions? Numbers in the bottom will not help solve the puzzle. Solution on page 10.

Million

1

gsge
egsg
gges
esgg

2

somewhere

3

penny

4

stand

5

meta
meta
meta
meta

6

7

ENTURY

8

r
o
roads
d
s

9

e

10

musically

11

history history history

12

For Grandparents and Relative Caregivers

Is Adoption or Guardianship a Better Fit?

from the Coalition for Children, Youth & Families

At the Coalition, we often get calls from families who want to understand the difference between guardianships and adoption. Often these families have recently received a recommendation from a worker and are trying to gather information.

Although much of the impact will be based on your unique circumstances, we hope this tip sheet will help give you an overview of the differences so you can best prepare your family.

This information may also be helpful when you talk to your child about what may happen. Often children have strong feelings about being adopted or having a guardian, but sometimes they don't fully understand the lifelong implications of either one. Having the conversation with your child about how this decision will affect his or her life may make ease the transition.

What Is Adoption? What is Guardianship?

Adoption creates a parent-child relationship with all the rights and responsibilities a birth parent has to a child. A child can be adopted when the rights of the birth parents have been terminated by the court. Once the adoptive parents legally finalize the adoption, it can't be reversed.

As the adoptive parent, you are financially responsible for your child. (You could be eligible for a monthly adoption subsidy, as well as access to Medical Assistance if you need it.)

Guardianship means that you have the same legal rights as the parent until a specified time—usually when the child becomes an adult or when the child goes back to live with his or her parent. The parent has the right to petition the court (paperwork that requests some action of the court) to dissolve the guardianship rights at any time. A judge may or may not grant the request.

The parents continue to retain their parental rights and may even remain financially responsible.

Because the biological parents still retain their rights, they have a right to have contact with their child (unless prohibited by a judge). As a guardian, you are able to make safety decisions and move to pause or stop contact if it is in the best interest of the child. The courts would then need to become involved in order for visits to resume.

As a guardian, you assume the day-to-day parenting responsibilities. You have the same rights as the parents. You can legally sign to consent for medical treatment or anything which requires a parental signature. Anyone can file a petition the court to make changes to the guardianship relationship.

Guardianships dissolve when the child turns 18. If your child still requires one, you can petition the court for guardianship of an adult.

What Families Say

To help better understand the benefits and challenges of both adoption and guardianship, we asked several Wisconsin families who completed an adoption or guardianship to share their thoughts on the topic.

Many of the responses that we received were similar. In several cases, something is listed as both a benefit and a challenge, which really proves how different it can be for every family. As you are reading through the lists on pages three and four, think of the things that would be benefits and challenges to your family.

Article Continued...

The overall theme in all of the responses from families was that when you are connected to children, and they are part of your family, then families do most anything to nurture those relationships, and keep it that way, regardless of the benefits or challenges of adoption or guardianship. Know the differences between these options and be ready to face the challenges that either one may bring.

Self-Reflection Questions

Following are some questions that may help you think about how this choice will affect your family. It may be beneficial to discuss these issues with your partner, your child and the child's team.

- Will it benefit your child to take your last name or keep their birth name? How will this impact your child's relationship with you and their biological parents?
- Does your child have an opinion about the matter? And if so do they fully understand the difference between guardianship and adoption?
- How will adoption or guardianship benefit or challenge your child and your family?
- How will your relationship with your child change after the child becomes an adult depending on this choice?
- What level of financial responsibility is appropriate for your family right now? Are there any resources available to assist?

There is no right answer when it comes to guardianship or adoption. Collecting all of the information and speaking to other families that have faced this choice may be helpful. Finding permanent families for children can be achieved in more than one way, but what matters is that your child feels connected to a family forever.

If you have further questions about the decision between guardianship and adoption, please call us at 800-762-8063. *Guardianship and adoption are legal relationships created through the court system. If you have specific questions about your situation, you should consult a lawyer.*

What Families Say Guardianship

Guardianship Benefits

- One of the benefits that I wasn't expecting was the added emotional connection. I was proud to be her legal guardian, and it gave us both a sense of security without threatening the relationship she had with her mom."
- Another Wisconsin foster parent says, "We built an additional emotional connection through guardianship. It forms a legal relationship that helped foster a bond and made our child feel like a part of your family."

Guardianship Challenges

- There may be limited or no funding for the child with a legal guardian, if the parents are unable to contribute.
- The child does not share your last name. This can take away from the child feeling connected to the guardian's family.

Adoption

Adoption Benefits

- The full sense of permanency and sense of who we are as a family is solidified by adoption. For us, adoption doesn't mean just here and now—it truly is about forever, for all of us as a family.
- "Our relationship is defined, permanent, and ongoing."

Adoption Challenges

- Adoption changes the family identity. This may change your child's identity, since they are no longer part of their birth family.
- A child may still want to be part of a family that cares for them, but not totally lose the connection to their identity as part of their biological family.



Coalition for Children, Youth & Families
800-762-8063 | info@coalitionforcyf.org
<https://wifostercareandadoption.org/>

Solution to Rebus Puzzle!

1. One in a million
2. Scrambled eggs
3. Somewhere over the rainbow
4. Penny for your thoughts
5. I understand
6. Metaphor
7. Jack in a box
8. Long time no see
9. Crossroads
10. Cranberry
11. Musically inclined
12. History repeats itself

ADRC
505 Broadway St
Baraboo, WI 53913

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| 2 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 6 |
| 5 | 8 | 3 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 7 |
| 4 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 6 | 8 | 1 | 2 |
| 8 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 9 |
| 6 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 4 |
| 9 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 8 |
| 3 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 5 |
| 1 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 3 |

Solution for Sudoku

EMOTIONAL SELF-CARE DAY IDEAS



MEDITATE
for at least 5 minutes.



JOURNAL
on your dreams, goals, emotions, do some gratitude journaling or write down any thoughts and ideas.

CREATE
your most favorite soul-touching playlist on Spotify, Youtube, or even just on your laptop.



TALK
to your soulmate or your best friend.



LIST
your best memories.



LIST
your best qualities, and don't be shy. It's just you and the paper.



DO
some adult coloring.



FOR MORE VISIT
WWW.INSIDEOFHAPPINESS.COM