

# Powerful Tools FOR Caregivers

*"After taking this class,  
I am a more confident caregiver."*



The six-week PTC series of classes is conducted by certified trainers and has been shown to have a positive impact on caregiver health for a diverse group of caregivers including rural, ethnic minorities, adult children of aging parents, well-spouses/partners, caregivers at differing stages in their caregiving role, living situations, financial and educational backgrounds.

## **Class Descriptions**

### **Class #1: *Taking Care of You***

In this class the focus is on "YOU", the caregiver, not on the family member receiving care; caregivers will develop a "box of self-care tools" and make a weekly action plan for self-care.

### **Class #2: *Identifying and Reducing Personal Stress***

Four steps for effective stress management: (1) Identifying early warning signs, (2) Identifying personal sources of stress, (3) Changing what you can change and accepting what you cannot change, and (4) Taking action. Tools to reduce stress are also discussed.

### **Class #3: *Communicating Feelings, Needs, and Concerns***

You will learn how to communicate feelings, needs, and concerns more effectively by using "I" messages.

### **Class #4: *Communicating in Challenging Situations***

Participants practice two communication tools, assertiveness and Aikido, which are helpful in difficult situations. They learn a four-step process, called DESC (Describe, Express, Specify, and Consequence) for using the assertive style of communication. With Aikido, participants learn how to align and find "common ground" with a person who is distressed. The segment highlights guidelines for communicating with a person who is memory impaired.

### **Class #5: *Learning from Our Emotions***

The overriding theme of this class emphasizes that feelings occur for a reason and that feelings are neither good nor bad. Focus is on identifying constructive ways for dealing with difficult feelings – especially anger, guilt, and depression – and resources for professional help.

### **Class #6: *Mastering Caregiving Decisions***

Focus is on the internal emotional process caregivers go through when they experience a life change. Tools for dealing with changes and for making tough decisions – including a decision-making model and the family meeting – are discussed.

To find a class in your area go to <http://caregivercollaborative.org/events/> or  
Call the Senior LinkAge Line 1-800-333-2433.

