

THE GRAPEVINE

North Shore Caregivers Newsletter



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FEATURED STORY

“Rickety Bamboo Bridge to Peace”

by Catherine Bryson

Rickety Bamboo Bridge to Peace

By Catherine Bryson

This post concerns the issue of anger, and how to manage it in healthy ways. The cons of suppressing anger are explored, as well as its sources. My premise is that by arriving at a clearer understanding of our anger, finding its root cause, then we will be able to make wiser choices about how to express that anger.

The material and ideas for this post were drawn from the work of Dr. Gabor Maté, a Canadian-Hungarian physician, specializing in, among other things, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and addiction. His book, 'In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts', an account of his experience working in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, particularly resonated with me. His other work, 'When the Body Says No', discussed the risk of suppressing our anger, which was a real eye-opener for me.

Why write about anger on a Caregivers' Blog? Well might you ask. Because as caregivers, we so often stretch ourselves to the limit (imagine an elastic band that you stretch wider and wider) until, unfortunately, we collapse (and the elastic band suddenly snaps) because we have gone beyond our capacity to cope. Or, to use a different metaphor (I love using metaphors), like blowing more and more air into a balloon until it becomes over-inflated and pops.

As caregivers, it is essential that we learn to respect our boundaries. Previously, NSCR did a workshop on this topic. If we do not respect our boundaries, as Maté explains, the costs can be very serious (e.g. high blood pressure, stroke, or heart attack). I regret to say I had to learn this the hard way.

When someone transgresses our boundaries, we respond with the 3-fold fight/flight/freeze response—if we freeze and choose to suppress our anger, Dr. Maté suggests, we will suffer the consequences of uncontrollable rage later on.

Rage differs from anger in the sense that it often lasts much longer. Healthy anger is expressed in the moment, like a sudden wind. As soon as we assert that our boundary has been transgressed and that therefore we must protect ourselves, the source of anger vanishes soon after. As with a summer storm, there is suddenly a clear blue sky that appears and the rain dissolves into a fine mist, and there is freshness left in the air.



Comparing rage to a smouldering volcano (like Mount Vesuvius near Naples, Italy) is appropriate because, while from the outside all appears calm, on the inside things are anything BUT calm, and predictably, we suddenly 'erupt' in a fit of rage.

Dr. Maté counsels us to go back inside our bodies when we sense anger. If we are embodied (in our bodies) the anger will be expressed in healthy ways. It is also sometimes helpful to work with a therapist if the issues the anger is masking are deeper and more complicated.

But the bottom line is, that while we may enculture our children to believe that anger is inappropriate, in fact, we must do the reverse: provided the anger is expressed in healthy ways.

Indeed, Dr. Maté has researched and found that individuals who continually suppress their anger tend to be more prone to autoimmune diseases, as suppressing our emotions, according to Dr. Maté, prevents our immune system from protecting us from disease.

If you are curious and want to watch Dr. Maté explain these concepts, I recommend the two short YouTube videos (each less than 10 minutes long), listed below in the Resources section. Believe me, they are worth the time you invest in them.

Does reading this post make you want to drive to Burger King for an Angry Whopper? (I found this particular kind of psychological marketing very interesting.) Apparently, the popular food chain still makes this burger available at selected stores (and no, I am not being paid by Burger King). But really, just a brisk walk in a park does wonders for anger—with far fewer calories—such as the park where I walked with my brother when I visited him and took the picture of the covered bridge above. A bridge is, after all, symbolic of what healthy anger is all about.



And if you think of it—peace between nations these days is as fragile as peace within our own communities, rather like a rickety bridge, as the title of this post suggests.

Finally, note the following acronym 'RAIN' (mentioned by Dr. Maté in his videos) actually created by Tara Brach:

- R** Recognize
- A** Allow
- I** Investigate
- N** Nurture



Resources

Dr. Gabor Maté's Books:

'When the Body Says No: The Costs of Hidden Stress' (2003)

'In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction' (2008)

'The Myth of Normal: Trauma, Illness and Healing in a Toxic Culture', (2022)

Dr. Gabor Maté on You Tube:

Do a search for the following videos on You Tube:

(I find searching under 'Dr. Gabor Maté on anger and rage' to yield good results.)

'Dr. Gabor Maté on How to Process Anger and Rage' (2023)

'Healthy Expressions of Anger' (2023)

Warning Signs, Self Care, & Senior Residence Checklists Workshop

With **Stephanie Chan** (MyCareBase & Home to Home)

Sept 10, 17, & 24 | TUESDAYS | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

3 Part Workshop | **FREE** | On Zoom

- **10 Warning Signs It's Time to Get Some Home Help:** 10 categories within your daily lives to pay attention to
- **Caregiver Self Care:** Practical tips, self-assessments, and tools that focus on YOU and your wellness
- **Seniors Residence Checklist:** Considering a move in the future? Things you should be looking for and how to evaluate all options



**For more
info contact:**
Vic Gailiunas
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Events Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Tues
03 | Caregiver Support Group Meeting (Zoom)
with guest speaker Ayda Fathi | 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM |
| Thurs
05 | Men's Support Group Meeting (In Person) | 10:30 AM - 12:30 AM |
| Wed
11 | Korean Group Meeting (In Person) | 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM |
| Mon
16 | Persian Group Meeting (Zoom) | 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM |
| 10, 17,
24 | Workshop: Warning Signs, Self Care, & Senior
Residence Checklists | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM |

OCTOBER

- | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Tues
01 | Caregiver Support Group Meeting
(In Person & Zoom) | 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM |
| Thurs
03 | Men's Support Group Meeting (In Person) | 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM |
| Tues
08 | Bereavement Support Group Meeting (In Person) | 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM |
| Wed
09 | Korean Group Meeting (In Person) | 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM |
| Mon
21 | Persian Group Meeting (Zoom) | 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM |
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Embracing Caregiving Through Technology

By Neeki Alavi

Caregivers face numerous daily challenges as they strive to provide the best possible care for their loved ones. Oftentimes, balancing personal and professional commitments can become overwhelming. In today's fast-paced world of technology, we have been introduced to new innovative solutions that can aid and enhance the quality of care as well as the caregiver's well-being.

Medication Management Apps

Medication management is a critical aspect of caregiving, especially for those managing multiple prescriptions. Phone applications such as Medisafe and MyMeds available on both iPhone and Android phones offer comprehensive solutions to this issue. They provide reminders for medication times, dosages, and refill schedules. These solutions can allow both caregivers and loved ones to stay organized.

Home Automation Systems

Another new advance in the world of technology, many homes are being equipped with home automation systems. Smart home devices such as Amazon Echo, Google Home, and smart thermostats allow caregivers to control the home environment remotely. This can also be beneficial for the individual being cared for as well if they experience physical disabilities. Smart lighting can also improve safety throughout the home to ensure well-lit pathways. These devices not only make a more comfortable environment for the individual being cared for, but also enhance safety and convenience for caregivers and their loved ones.

Monitoring Devices

Health monitoring devices have revolutionized the way caregivers can keep track of their loved ones' health. With the increase of medical technology in the market, wearable technologies are on the rise. The most common, smartwatches and fitness trackers, can monitor vital signs like heart rate, blood pressure, and oxygen levels in real-time. For example, devices like Fitbit or Apple Watches not only track daily activity, but also send alerts for irregular heartbeats or falls, ensuring timely intervention. These devices can bring a peace of mind to caregivers, knowing that they can receive live updates on their care receivers' health status.

Monitoring devices can also be extended to GPS trackers to provide real-time location updates and alerts the caregiver when the wearer wanders outside a designated area. Similarly to the Fitbit and Apple Watch, which also provide GPS services, other products like AngelSense GPS or Apple Airtags

have the sole purpose of providing real-time location services. This technology ensures that caregivers can quickly locate their loved ones and bring them to safety, reducing the risk of accidents and enhancing overall security.

Another major concern for caregivers is the risk of falling, especially for elderly individuals or those with mobility issues. Fall monitoring devices offer a crucial safety net. These devices are typically worn as a necklace or wristband and use advanced sensors to monitor the wearer's movements and detects falls. For example, Lifeline's Medical Alert Systems and TELUS Health Medical Alert provide devices that have automatic fall detection, GPS tracking, and an emergency call button. Whether the wearer falls or presses the button, they get connected to a 24/7 monitoring centre who will quickly assess the situation and dispatch help. By integrating this technology, caregivers can enhance independence of their loved ones while managing their own responsibilities.

Technology has the power to transform caregiving by providing tools that enhance safety, efficiency, and emotional well-being. Embracing this new roar of technology in our everyday lives ensure members of our community are leading healthier, and more fulfilling lives.





CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

North Shore Community Resources (NSCR) offers a monthly support group specifically for family caregivers who support their loved ones – either living together or apart.

The group's goal is to create community and offer a time of sharing, listening, and connecting for anyone with the unique experience of caregiving for family members.

Program participants are welcome to encourage and invite others they feel might benefit from joining the group.

Monthly Meetings

Next 2 meetings:

September 3 - on Zoom (with Guest Speaker Ayda Fathi on 'Caregiver Burnout: Symptoms, Impact, and Coping').

October 1 - In-Person at our Community Room AND on Zoom

Meetings are currently on the first Tuesday of each month from 6:30 – 8:30pm.

For Zoom links, please contact NSCR directly.



Contact

For more information, details, or to find out more about NSCR's caregiver support programs, please contact:

Vic Gailiunas (Caregiver Support Program Coordinator) ~ Vic.Gailiunas@nscr.ca

Or Phone: 604-982-3320



PERSIAN WELLNESS AND EDUCATION GROUP

North Shore Community Resources (NSCR) offers a wellness and education group specifically for the Persian community on the North Shore.

The group was designed to create community and offer a time of sharing, learning, and connecting for our Persian community.

Program participants are welcome to join us for a 2-hour session, held entirely in Farsi, with guest speakers, resources, group interaction, and music.

Monthly Meetings

We are currently meeting in person or on Zoom. Our meetings run on the third Monday of each month from 6:00-8:00pm.

Next 2 Meetings:

September 16

October 21

(photo credit – Paul McGrath)



Contact

For more information and details, contact:

Noushin Beheshtipoor (Group Leader) ~ noushinbeheshtipoor@gmail.com

Vic Gailiunas (NSCR Caregiver Support Program Coordinator) ~ Vic.Gailiunas@nscr.ca



MEN'S CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

North Shore Community Resources (NSCR) offers a support group specifically for male caregivers who support their spouses/partners, either living together or apart. The group was designed to create community and offer a time of sharing, listening, and connecting for men with the unique experience of caregiving for their partners.

Program participants are welcome to encourage other men they feel might benefit from joining the group to join us.

Monthly Meetings

We currently meet in-person at the NSCR Community Room on the first Thursday of each month, from 10:30am-12:30pm.

Next 2 meetings:

September 5

October 3



(photo credit – Paul McGrath)

Contact:

For more information and details, contact:

Vic Gailiunas (Caregiver Support Program Coordinator) ~ Vic.Gailiunas@nscr.ca

Pat Dean (Group Leader) ~ pdean@telus.net



KOREAN WELLNESS AND EDUCATION GROUP

North Shore Community Resources (NSCR) offers a wellness and education group specifically for the Korean community on the North Shore.

The group was designed to create community and offer a time of sharing, learning, and connecting for our Korean community.

Program participants are welcome to join us for a 2-hour session, held entirely in Korean, with guest speakers, resources, group interaction, and creative arts.

Monthly Meetings

We meet in person in our NSCR Community Room. Our meetings run on the second Wednesday of each month, from 2:00-4:00pm.

Next 2 Meetings:

September 11

October 9



Contact

For more information and details, contact:

Yoonwon Lee (Group Leader) ~ infocwtc@gmail.com

Vic Gailiunas (NSCR Caregiver Support Program Coordinator) ~ Vic.Gailiunas@nscr.ca



CAREGIVER BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

North Shore Community Resources (NSCR) offers a support group specifically for people experiencing grief in the loss of a loved one. The group is designed to create community and offer a time of sharing stories and resources, listening, and connecting with others with similar experiences.

**Tuesday, October 8, 2024 Group Meeting In Person at our NSCR
Community Room, 11:00am-1:00pm**



As we move into Fall, things can seem more pronounced for those experiencing loss. It is a good time to consider our well-being, how to find meaning in grief, but also in hope, rejuvenation and renewal of spirit.

For more information, to register, and for details, please contact:

Vic Gailunas
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604.982.3320
vic.gailunas@nscr.ca

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North Shore
Community
Resources

If you'd like to help support NSCR and the work we do you can follow the link below to donate

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