

Courageous Living Column Topic #1 Courageous Living at Home
Dianne Kipp, 1/27/2006

So now that we are awake, at least to the concept of Courageous Living, let's "see" what living courageously at home might look like.

Here in Florida, many of us live with, or provide daily support to a relative or love one. If you are caring for a spouse, parent, or sibling and have little or no other assistance or support from others, the burden can become over bearing. It can render the situation more daunting, full of dread, and create an atmosphere of anxiety, stress and resentment. The courageous act here would be to ask for help or for a break! An afternoon off to enjoy a heart felt pleasure for yourself, or a chance to see a movie once a week would change the picture dramatically. Look for support opportunities among friends, co-workers, and remote family members. You might form a support group with others who are dealing with the same challenges and help one another take a break! Be courageous and be creative, amazing solutions will appear!

The fact is we are human and can only "do" so much. When we admit this, to ourselves about ourselves and about others, it opens up the possibility for "being" courageous enough to ask for help. Finding a person to talk with on the phone once a week regarding how things are going can provide a relief. It allows us to know that someone else is listening and cares that you are doing all you can.

Are you living alone? Well that is pretty courageous right off the bat! Looking further into this scenario, we see it also requires a lot of courage to ask for help or support or assistance when we need it. Most of us cringe at the idea of asking for help for our normal duties and tasks, because there is some unwritten rule, that as adults, we SHOULD be able to DO IT ALL! Truth is, it's a crazy idea and just not true! Asking for support can greatly improve our chance for success, and in the process, we give the greatest gift of all; the opportunity for someone else to "give" by helping out. We experience a sense of EASE and less anxiety about getting it done, and aren't four hands better than two? Another bonus will be the GRATITUDE you find in sharing conversation and comradery while getting the job done!

A *courageous* perspective is one that allows us to see that we are all on our own Hero's Journey. We are *courageous* when we acknowledge the Hero in others by **contributing compassion** rather than *criticism*, **love** rather than ridicule, and **encouragement** instead of *disregard*. Try it for just a week, observe what happens when you show up courageously.

Choosing to be *conscious* of how we "show up" allows us to *act* from our *heart*. It demonstrates our *willingness* to honor the Spirit in each person we encounter and to *be* honored in return. I challenge each of you to "look and see" where you might make a *courageous* move to increase the *compassion* you offer to the world. Be brave....go ahead, "look and see"!