



Here's what people are saying about Powerful Tools for Caregivers delivered by the YMCA of the Inland Northwest:

"Because of this class I am now able to set limits as to what I can realistically do vs what I think I *should* be doing. It helped me to reframe how I look at and respond to stress. It helped me to see the value of staying calm when communicating and gave me tools to do that instead of blocking feelings and then giving way to anger."

"The caregiver's class was an insight into how I viewed our current situation. Even though I have a background in nursing the information, exercises, and group discussion was eye-opening. Thank you for your time working with me to improve the care I provide to my spouse."

"The timing of this course helped me to transition from a 36 year career to retirement and caring for my husband while gently guiding me to prioritize me. That was a huge win!!!! That switch in mindset has made me a better caregiver as I have fewer feelings of resentment and more patience."

"I thought this class was absolutely lovely and taught me how to like taking classes again! It was so helpful to have a moment each week of genuine healing and guidance when we can feel so disconnected from our communities. Having this safe space to grow was such a joy. I will continue on with the lessons I have learned from this class, mainly checking in with myself weekly in a gentle way that sparks new growth."

"I am a more confident caregiver as I feel more empowered to set boundaries with the methods we learned. I also really like the self-accountability aspect of the class which is at once gentle enough to not feel like a burden and firm enough to actually be done. Each week we got to come up with our own goals and I think that was wonderful. This is something I have translated into my own life."



"It's mostly just reassuring to know that my experiences aren't isolated. The work of caregiving can be isolating, but then bearing the emotional toll without any fluency in the language surrounding the role, and without knowing anyone who can deeply empathize, makes the work feel bleak. Even the rewards and meaningful experiences can feel quite hollow when they occur under circumstances that I feel like only I understand. Interacting with empathetic people (not only the other participants, but notably the leaders of this course) made these struggles and rewards more meaningful, made my world feel a bit more populated, and provided a basis from which I could build a greater sense of satisfaction and worth. And ultimately, this has made and will continue to make my engagement with my loved one more fulfilling."

"I now know that when I decide to just walk away, I'm doing it for good reasons. I know that when I speak out to establish conditions, I'm doing it for good reasons. I didn't know anything about this stuff before. I would just get angry and lash out."

"I have a clearer and more realistic notion of my role."

"As an intervention researcher, I was also very impressed with the program as a whole -- the goals were clear, it was well-organized, and it provided the information and tools needed by caregivers."

"I have learned more ways to answer, listen and react to situations of every day life."

"I can now recognize problematic situations and have some tools to navigate them. I have a better scope of what caregiving involves, the demands, and how to maintain my strength, energy and positivity in the midst of it."

"This class helped me to be more peaceful when caring for my mom with dementia."



"I'm less reticent to broach sensitive subjects with my wife. I can also understand more concretely how important taking care of my own needs is to my ability to take care of her."

"As a result of this class, communication with my care receiver is better. I feel less frustration."

"This class helped me to be a better listener and supported me in learning how to communicate my needs; learning how to ask for help; learning how to assemble the family team. I am more confident because I can set boundaries for myself and making time for self-care helps me be a better caregiver."

"The facilitators were very supportive, caring and clear in their communication. It was helpful to meet others in different, but similar circumstances."

"I feel I have better communication techniques and tools for addressing stressful situations and issues. I feel I have a better self-care routine and I realize how important it is to have one as a caregiver."

"I feel that I'm more equipped as a future caregiver myself for my husband and my sister and I'm a better accredited visitor for the caregivers in the hospital."

"There a great need for caregivers to better understand dementia, it's symptoms, how it progresses and how to better react to the patient's behavior. These classes provided many useful insights and practical information for those of us with little time to do the research. Also, they made us feel that they were accessible if we needed additional help and resources."

"I was grateful for the provided book since many subjects beyond the class will help me along the journey I face as a caregiver, and I will reference them often to help me."



"I feel confident that I am going to get through all the seasons ahead of me with tools from this class. The feedback from the facilitators was both compassionate, caring and thought provoking ...especially as to the action plans each week. I learned so much about how I talk to my spouse about his health issues and feel like I can weather the challenges ahead of me as things change."

"The class helped me understand some of the stuff my mom is going through. It also helped me deal with some of my feelings/emotions, and helped my communication."

"I thought it was a really valuable class...on many levels. Regardless of your particular situation or need.....I have highly recommended the class to many others who are caregiving. You don't have to be a full-time caregiver to benefit from this class. Those of us who are dealing w/ elderly impacted parents regardless of their living situation, could greatly benefit from the class."

"I am more aware of where to seek additional resources to help me and my husband as care giving becomes a larger part of our lives. After the class I feel more comfortable and less guilty in making sure I'm taking care of myself."

"Thank you for offering this class and for the safe, nurturing environment that was created by the facilitators. This class can be a lifeline for those who don't know where to turn for help. Also, the workbook is excellent and will continue to be a resource as the journey continues."

"I have a much better understanding of the types of communication issues that I face and will be facing. Being able to ground myself in self-care practices empowers me to approach care with more kindness for myself and my parents, to set boundaries, and identify and address the emotions that throw me off balance. I have better language to approach difficult conversations with more respect and patience."



"I didn't realize at first how much of this class was about self-care, and how important that is to the caregiver. It is easy to get trapped in a mindset that prioritizes only the needs of the person receiving care, and that as caregivers, the right or only thing we can do is put our own needs last. This class helped me understand why my self care is important for my family, and how necessary it is to create time and space for myself. There are so many layers of inner conflict that I have to navigate, and giving myself the space to respect them helps me to give myself grace, which in turn allows me to be more present to family when needed."

"The class was supportive in learning to effectively communicate difficult decisions, process and recognize challenging emotions and knowing what is normal and acceptable in this role as caregiver."

"It is very, very useful to know that others are dealing with the same issues/questions in this uncertain world of caregiving. I actually didn't not if I qualified as a caregiver prior to the class because my mother is still living independently, and I live in another state. However, there is a whole constellation of questions and challenges arising as she ages, has sporadic health crises, is less able to do things, and my siblings and I look down the road to what could come next. This class is surprisingly helpful for coping with these types of demands/concerns, both in terms of a temporary community of fellow caregivers and focusing on the demands of caregiving. It prompted me to rethink how I am communicating with my mother, my siblings, and how caregiving impacts my life. I feel more agency around my role, and more hope that the next chapters will indeed be navigable."

"I have a better ability to take care of myself without feeling selfish or guilty, which makes me more patient and effective with my parents. I've also gotten more tools with which to listen to them, to help frame conversations in a more positive way, and to accept what I can't change without as much frustration."



“The facilitators were wonderful: professional and organized, but also very approachable and caring. The handbook is a great resource; I'll be sharing it with family members. I'll definitely recommend this program to others.”

“This class gave me better tools to roll with a changing landscape and permission to have even better boundaries.”

“I am so thankful that I was involved in this course at the end of my husband's life. I truly think that participating was the most important reason I was able to maintain my composure and deal with all the emotions and decisions that were required. I highly recommend this, and have given the information to several other people who are caregivers.”

“I have learned from this program that I need to make my selfcare a priority. I've noticed that when I take time to care for myself, I'm a more patient and understanding caregiver. This program has also helped me with reasonable goal setting.”

“My communication skills have improved, and I am more aware and intentional about how I use those skills. I am more able to listen to others and still bring up issues and hold my ground in a positive way when I know there is a concern to address or a difficult decision to be made.”

“The class helped me gain perspective on my situation and its challenges and gave me a sense that the struggles I have are shared by others. I also recognized the things that I am already doing that accord with what is suggested in the course. It helped me see more the specific challenges of my situation, and the ways I can be grateful for those parts that are “easier” than what some need to confront (though I am dealing with plenty of other things). I gained a feeling of more “permission” for some of the uncomfortable feelings I sometimes have, and more compassion for myself and probably also for the care receiver.”



"I really appreciated this opportunity--the chance to spend some time every week with this focus, in a course that was also a "support group" of sorts just by the nature of the subject and format. That, for me--attending the class and doing the reading for it--was the most significant thing I did differently, rather than any external action plan. I did emerge feeling more grounded in this caregiving experience than I did when I came in, and more connected with others, and more prepared to deal with possible future challenges, and think it is a very worthwhile course. Thank you!"

"I am more confident as learning the types of communication skills and practicing them consistently are skills I will use more successfully in the future. I can see that LISTENING as part of the communication skills will be critical for success. I see value in almost every facet of the class beyond "Caregiving." The book will remain "MY KEEPSAKE" whenever I need to return to a topic or practice those communication skills once again."

"Even though I am not currently caregiving, I know that it will be in my future either for my spouse, a sibling or a friend. I would want to be the best that I can be in that role. And if the role were reversed, I also learned skills as to how to be the best care receiver, and I hope I will remember! Truly, the skills are powerful far beyond for just current caregivers. I am grateful I was part of this class with professional, caring and supportive facilitators, as well as for those in the small group breakout room discussions. "

"I believe the class was excellent, and I have already suggested to friends that they engage in the next class. I believe that almost everything presented in the class was not only good information for caregiving, but, extends to almost all aspects of living and getting along: Marriage, rearing children, running a business, being a boss, employee, customer, friend, etc. I think the course could also be labeled 'Life Lessons'. Good information overall."

"Thanks so much for your guidance and support during a very difficult time and adjustment in my life."



“While taking this class, I was not actively caring for anyone. In the past I was involved in caretaking for my mother and anticipate potentially needing to be more involved in other caregiving. The class facilitators obviously spent a lot of time preparing for the classes. They provided follow-up and additional information/direction on where to find needed help. That information wasn't just for local participants, but for those attending from across the nation. I have never attended any class, where a better attempt was made to provide information the class members needed. Every class was followed with additional help and useful information. The class textbook, The Caregiver Helpbook, will be extremely helpful in the future.”