



**Spiritual Gifts & Burdens of  
Care Giving**




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Care Giving**



a presentation for the  
6<sup>th</sup> Annual Black Hills Brain Injury Conference  
by  
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**For One Who Is Exhausted**  
by John O'Donohue

When the rhythm of the heart becomes hectic,  
Time takes on the strain until it breaks;  
Then all the unattended stress falls in  
On the mind like an endless, increasing weight.




The light in the mind becomes dim.  
Things you could take in your stride before  
Now become laborious events of will.


Weariness invades your spirit.  
Gravity begins falling inside you,  
Dragging down every bone.



The tide you never valued has gone out.  
And you are marooned on unsure ground.  
Something within you has closed down;  
And you cannot push yourself back to life.




You have been forced to enter empty time.  
The desire that drove you has relinquished.  
There is nothing else to do now but rest  
And patiently learn to receive the self  
You have forgotten in the race of days.



At first your thinking will darken  
 And sadness take over like listless weather.  
 The flow of unwept tears will frighten you.


You have traveled too fast over  
 FALSE ground;  
 Now your soul has come to take you back.



### Servitude



SERVITUDE connotes bondage, slavery, labor

- . Person acts out of duty & fear
- . Is unhealthy & demeaning
- . Creates more difficulties than if no service had happened at all
- . Caregiver takes on the problems of the one cared for at the expense of losing his/her own identity (Overidentification)




### Servitude (Continued)

- \* gain emotional solidarity but forfeit objectivity & no one benefits
- . Caregiver compensates for frustration or anger by covering up feelings (Superficial Sweetness)
- . Caregiver may allow the one cared for to abuse the relationship (Being Manipulated)
  - \* being treated like an object
  - \* is a one-sided relationship



### Servitude (continued)

- \* is demeaning; work is drudgery
- \* when you let it happen, you are saying, "I am your plaything, I have no value"



### Servitude (continued)



- . Caregiver may complain about their caregiving relationships (Begrudging Care)
  - \* you do the work but complain about the people & the relationships

### Servanthood, on the other hand...

SERVANTHOOD incorporates willingness, choice, & voluntary commitment

- . Caregiver acts out of commitment & love
- . Is healthy & uplifting, involving challenges

- . Involves being connected to spirit, higher self, our calling
- . Responds to another's plight with empathy

### Servanthood (continued)

- \* is not jumping into the mud with the other but holding fast to a tree, while having an outstretched hand
- \* you retain your objectivity so you can communicate, "Let's get our of this together & get the person out on stable ground"



### Servanthood (continued)

- . Rather than superficial sweetness that masks anger at having to care for someone, the caregiver is Genuine which comes from congruency – acting in a way consistent with what you believe. Genuineness is contagious – it gives others permission to be who they are, with no masks



### Servanthood (continued)

- \* Genuineness involves vulnerable openness which makes you approachable and "real"
- . Servanthood meets one needs, not their wants & with forthright confrontation, the caregiver escapes from being manipulated
- . Look for ways to find joy in bearing the burden avoiding bitterness, dread, & resentment

### Servanthood (continued)

- . The Servant has a sense of calling, i.e. a sense of purpose connected to something beyond herself and may be perceived as one possessing wisdom, and balance, worthy of knowing, worthy of emulating
- . One who is a Servant Leader seems strong and approachable



### What is in Your Spiritual Umbrella?



### Elements of One's Spiritual Umbrella

One's Spiritual Umbrella contains what you do to feel happy, whole, healthy, balanced, & peaceful with a sense of well being:

- . Walk in nature . Play music, sing
- . Yoga . Draw, Paint . Meditate . Sew
- . Pray . Bead . Run . Walk the dog
- . Go to Church . Write . Play with your child



### Make Your Own Plan of Care When Compassion Doesn't Come Easily

- . Make priorities
- . Communicate that you need help
- . Use community resources
- . Maintain your health
- . Do relaxation exercises
- . Laugh a lot!
- . Avoid destructive behaviors
- . Build Self Esteem

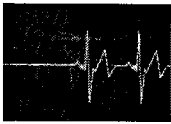


- . Care for your Spirit – do the things listed in your spiritual umbrella
- . Care for your Body
- . Avoid taking work home



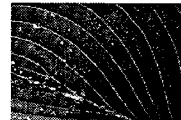
### Remember the words of Dom Helder Camara

Do people let you down?  
 Don't carry them on your shoulders.  
 Take them into your heart!



### For One who Is Exhausted by John O'Donohue

Take refuge in your senses, open up  
 To all the small miracles you rushed through.  
 Become inclined to watch the way of rain  
 When it falls slow and free.



### For One who is Exhausted by John O'Donohue (continued)

Imitate the habit of twilight,  
 Taking time to open the  
 well of color  
 That fostered the  
 brightness of day.



Draw alongside  
 the silence of  
 stone  
 Until its calmness  
 can claim you,  
 Be excessively  
 gentle with  
 yourself.



Stay clear of those vexed  
in spirit.



Learn to linger around  
someone of ease



Who feels they have  
all the time in the world.

Gradually...you will return to yourself,  
Having learned a new respect for your heart  
And the joy that dwells far within slow time.

