

# Daughterhood the Podcast

## Episode #61

### Supporting Your Mental Health While Caregiving with Susan Weinstein, Esq.

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#### **Christopher MacLellan 00:00**

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#### **Rosanne 01:06**

Hello and welcome to Daughterhood the Podcast. I am your host. Rosanne Corcoran, Daughterhood circle leader and primary caregiver. Daughterhood is the creation of Anne Tumlinson, who has worked on the front lines in the healthcare field for many years and has seen the multitude of challenges caregivers face. Our mission is to support and build confidence in women who are managing their parents' care. Daughterhood is what happens when we put our lives on hold to take care of our parents. We recognize this care is too much for one person to handle alone. We want to help you see your efforts are not only good enough, they are actually heroic. Our podcast goal is to bring you some insight into navigating the healthcare system provide resources for you as a caregiver as well as for you as a person, and help you know that you don't have to endure this on your own. Join me in daughterhood.

Susan Weinstein, ESQ is co-executive director of families for depression awareness, ffd a national suicide prevention nonprofit that educates and equips family caregivers to provide effective support to their loved ones living with depression or bipolar disorder. She oversees development and delivery of FFDA's programs and publications. Hosts national webinars and livestream broadcasts, interviews, experts and facilitates on site and remote workshops about stress, depression, suicide, prevention and wellness. In this episode, we discuss the difference between depression and malaise, how to spot depression in our cells and our care partners, and practical strategies and resources to support our mental health on a daily basis. I hope you enjoy our conversation. The term mental health is more than just a kitschy catchphrase. Mental Health, encompassing emotional, psychological and social well being, is not just a theoretical concept. It profoundly influences how we think, feel and act and even guides our responses to stress, relationships and health choices. Susan, given this understanding, how can we care for our own mental health while caring for others?

**Susan Weinstein** 03:11

That's a small topic, but we'll be able to handle it in this time. No, I really appreciate you giving me the chance to talk with you about this. Absolutely thank you, because it's just so important to understand that your mental health is also a key to your physical health. It's a key to your ability to think through challenging situations. It's your ability to prioritize. It's it. Having good mental health means that you're more ready to take on the world, which is something that you're going to be doing anyway. So it's really beneficial to you to have an idea of the kinds of things that make you feel well, and also the kinds of things that make you not feel well, so that you can figure out ways to feel well after those things.

**Rosanne** 04:03

Well and it's tough because, you know, as caregivers, we're in charge of everything.

**Susan Weinstein** 04:08

That is true. I don't like it when people say you need to take care of yourself so you can take care of others, right? You need to take care of yourself because you need to take care of yourself exactly. If you're taking care of yourself, you'll have more capacity to take care of others, you'll have more patience, you'll have more perspective, and you'll just be able to handle the adversities that come up better. So I do believe that you can't pour from an empty cup, but but you're pouring for yourself and others, right? Because we're part of this, our lives are still we still have lives while we're caring. Our lives have changed significantly, but we're still part of that equation, yeah, and I think that's it's a fascinating thing, because so often. Often we get so consumed by all of the demands on us, by all of the things for which we feel responsible, for all of the things for which we probably are responsible, you know, and so sometimes it's hard to see through that and also to understand that, you know, your responsibility is also to yourself, and that means that you need to find time. And everyone who

hears this is going to say, Yeah, but there's no more time, right? Well, I mean, we're talking about mental health and it, and it can be, you know, that you're, I say loved one, you say care partner, but your loved one is experiencing some sort of mental or physical health condition that doesn't require you to be in the appointment with them. So you drop them off for the appointment, and during that half hour that you have, you do something for yourself. You take a walk around the neighborhood, you go and you get a smoothie or a cup of coffee or whatever it is that makes you feel, you know, a little bit calmer, a little bit more in control. You call someone because isolation is really pervasive among caregivers, and also an indication, or, you know, has a reciprocal relationship with depression. And so you know, if you can make a connection, if, you know, if go browse in a bookstore, you know, whatever it is that can make you feel a little lighter for that time when you don't have your person with you, you know, let's, let's take advantage of those kinds of opportunities. You know, you're, you're, you're in the shower. You know, be a little mindful about it, not in the sense of, okay, I wash my hair. Now it's time to do my faces that got mindful. But, you know, take a moment, feel the water on your skin, smell the body wash that you're using, you know, be in the moment and just take advantage of that time. I loved it once when I when someone described the ability to do mindfulness when you were washing dishes, because, again, it's the same kind of thing you feel, the bubbles, you smell, the you know, what are the things that you can see, smell, taste, hear, feel, you know, in that moment. And just sort of take yourself out of all of the other things that are worrying through your through your mind. Just give yourself a moment to reset, right? You know, so, so I think we can steal these little moments. We can also, you know, try and schedule it in that, you know, either every day or every other day, or, you know, Monday, Wednesday, Friday. We take a half an hour and we do this or more time or less time. You know, whatever it is that that we're just able to consciously do something that makes us feel better than we do otherwise, or is a relief from what we're doing otherwise. It's just a break from what we're doing otherwise, and we're recognizing that this is time for us now, I say, you know, make conscious effort. Schedule it whatever. You're not always going to be able to do it. No. So the thing that you need to remember and repeat to yourself, probably often, is you're doing the best you can. Be forgiving with yourself, be compassionate with yourself. You're a person that if someone else told you that they were doing the same things that you're doing, you'd be like, Wow, you're really carrying a lot. Are you getting any support around that? And you'd want to help them too, because that's the kind of person you are, right? But, but understand that, you know, if you were talking to a mirror, you would be saying that to yourself and so extend yourself the same kindness that you would to somebody else.

**Rosanne** 08:46

It's a start. I mean, it's a start, and it's something that you have to work on every day or three times a week, something something to give yourself something back.

**Susan Weinstein** 08:54

Give yourself something back. Yeah, I agree with that, and I and I also think that, you know, you may try doing something every other day and it doesn't work out. Okay, let's try something different. Let's try that once a week, and let's think of something else that is workable or more rewarding, or, you know, more of a relief for us for some other times during the week. You know what works for you in one situation may not work for you. In another situation, probably won't in a lot of situations, and you know, different people need different things at different times. Yeah, and understand that. You know you're allowed to try different things. You're probably encouraged to try different things because you never know, right? Because you never know what will work for you at any given time. So if somebody says to you, oh, I just tried doing this thing, you know, I took a break and I went outside and I watched the clouds for 15 minutes, really, you took the time to do that. Yeah, and then you think about it, like, Okay, well, then I'm breathing fresh air, I'm distracting myself. I'm being creative. Because I'm like, oh, what does that look like? You know, I'm appreciating nature, and you're just, you know, you're taking a break from the other stuff that you're doing. So I mean, even something like that, even if it's not 15 minutes.

**Rosanne** 10:22

Right, whatever you can spare, whatever and whatever gives you that recharge. Well, you mentioned something, and I was wondering, how do you tell the difference between depression and malaise?

**Susan Weinstein** 10:34

Okay, so it's hard, it's hard to distinguish between some of these. I mean, we work a lot with teens, and the big question is, you know, what's the difference between teen angst and depression? That's the same kind of theory. So the idea is that depression is some number of symptoms that usually involve isolating yourself, having a down, angry, irritable kind of mood having sustained the those kinds of baseline differences for you for at least two weeks now, we'll also look at things like, is your eating pattern the same? Is your sleeping pattern the same? I mean, I mean, I'm not going to say, are you eating enough, right? Yeah, it because we're really looking for changes from baseline. You know, what's your body telling you? Are you experiencing aches and pains that you can't explain otherwise? And so with something like moles, I think that it's probably not all the time for two whole weeks. There are probably some times where there's a break from that. But you know also, if you're concerned, talk to a doctor, your primary care provider should know about these kinds of things. You know, most prescriptions for antidepressants are written by primary care providers, but just because you are depressed doesn't mean you need medication. It might. It might mean that you would really benefit from therapy, but you don't have to be diagnosed with something to benefit from therapy. Talking with a counselor can help you get through some hard times. Can help you figure out new strategies for dealing with your challenges. So not all depression needs you know immediate strong intervention, okay, but it does need to be recognized so that we can be

alert for other changes, and for how long it's going on and how it's impacting your life. I mean, that's the other thing about depression, is that it really affects, I mean, as you said at the at the outset, it affects the way you think, yeah, it. It affects your, you know, intellectual processing abilities, yeah, no, we came up with a shorthand for it. You know, it affects reasoning, organization, tension and memory, just so that people understand the scope of how depression can affect your thinking, making choices in the grocery store. When you're depressed, it's it can be paralyzing, so that you just walk out without getting anything because there's too many choices. I can't decide, yep. So there are just all kinds of ways with depression, it's also going to affect your functionality. If you're not living through your life functions or it just becomes too hard, you know, if you're not motivating to get out of bed or or tend to your personal hygiene. There are a whole lot of clues about what is depression, but I really want to underscore that if you have concerns about yourself or someone else, don't just sit on them. You know, if it's been going on for two weeks, don't just sit on it.

**Rosanne 14:00**

It's kind of hard. I mean, listen everything, everything that you just said is is spot on. But I feel like a lot of times caregivers, this is how we feel. We're pushing ourselves okay. We're getting out of bed because we have to care for the person down the hall, or we have to drive over to see them or or whatever, however we care for for our care partners, so we can't stay in bed, so we're getting out of bed to do that, but we're dragging ourselves out of bed, and we're not joyful, and we're not let me get something to eat. Who cares? All of those things come into play. And I don't know how you parse that out, because is that, is that depression, is that grief, is that I don't know how I'm going to continue doing this, like how, and then trying to get to the doctor, on top of all of this, and then you get in there, and as women, we know this, right? You get patted on the head and said, Well, maybe it's your hormones, or maybe you're depressed. Here. Take this. And go on your way like so it's very and I don't mean to be flippant that. I mean that's that's real life. That's what happens when we go in there.

**Susan Weinstein 15:09**

So let me just start with this. I think telehealth can be a real benefit, because it's a lot easier to fit in an appointment when you don't have to drive to it totally you don't have to see a primary care provider or medical doctor. You can talk to a mental health person, and there are a lot of different kinds of mental health people. You have your licensed clinical social workers, you have your marriage and family therapists, you have your counselors of various kinds. But you know something that you can just start with is, for example, on our website@familyaware.org we have a mood test, okay, or depression and bipolar disorder test. It's the same thing that you would get in your doctor's office. Oh, that's great, yeah, because they're gonna it may actually even be longer than what you get in your physician's office, we use the one that's 10 questions, you know, so rather than they make one that's a shorter version. But actually, I think that there are now laws that require them to do depression screenings that doesn't mean that

they're going to process them well, that they're going to respond to them well, but, but it is part of what they're supposed to be doing. So, you know, start with something like taking one of those tests. Okay, there are other organizations that have ones about anxiety, about substance use, you know, there's the eating disorders. There's all kinds of tests out there. Sure, we just stuck with the one that's very straightforward. That's great. Actually, one other thing that we have on our website is the perceived stress scale, and that's a little quiz that you take, and then it tells you what your stress levels are. And that's not enough for you to know, because we also tell you some things that maybe you can do to make it a little bit lower. So it's helpful, in the sense of, like, if you take it one month and then the next month and you see the changes in your score, but also that you get a reminder of the kinds of things that you can do that can help you manage your stress. That's fantastic. Susan, yeah, yeah. We're really pleased, yeah. So again, family aware.org, yep, you know? I mean, I think, I think that there's, there are lots of things out there that can help you kind of distinguish what it is that you're dealing with. And I know for a lot of people, it's not easy to find a provider. It's not easy to get an appointment. It's there are a whole lot of things that aren't easy, but I think that you need to remind yourself that you're a priority, and that you know, maybe instead of taking a walk one day, you're able to get to the doctor that you time it so that you can do that you make compromises because you understand that that's what you need to do to get through Yeah and again, just remind yourself that you know I'm compassionate with myself, because I know I'm doing a lot.

**Rosanne** 18:17

And to try to move yourself up that list, because we're usually The Last on our own list.

**Susan Weinstein** 18:21

Of course, we are, you know, like, what other option is there? Right? Because we do have all of these responsibilities, and we have ones that we that we put on ourselves too, because we want to do the best job that we can for the people that we care about, or the people that we care for, regardless of how we feel about them, right, right? But it's, you know, it's just reminding yourself that you're one of the people on the list that needs to get cared for.

**Rosanne** 18:48

Well, how do we identify depression in our care partners?

**Susan Weinstein** 18:51

I mean, it's the same factors that you're going to be looking at. Are they having this prolonged mood issue? Are they losing interest or pleasure in the things that they used to enjoy? That's a big that's a big key. Are they having trouble concentrating and remembering that? That's a hard one for a lot of people, because they're dealing with, you know, they're supporting their elderly parents, or maybe even not elderly parents, but because there's just so many ways that people's memory and thinking are affected, right? Do they have little energy? Again? If you're

dealing with an older person, that can be a constant, yeah, but you know, feelings of worthlessness or guilt, that's another sign. Sleeping a lot more or a lot less than usual, eating a lot more or a lot less than usual, having a big change in weight, one way or the other, if they're abusing alcohol or drugs, prescription or non prescription. Okay, you know, and it. If there are aches and pains that are just not otherwise explained, and certainly if they're talking about not wanting to live, of course, you know, you'd be so much better off without me. I'm not going to need this much longer. Why don't you take this thing that I used to really treasure, right? And just again, we're talking about a change from baseline. So if their baseline is that they're naturally grouchy, right? That's not the thing you're going to measure. Gotcha, you got to look at some of the other other you know, potential symptoms or signs,

**Rosanne 20:34**

Okay, right. And you know your person best. And, yeah, I got you.

**Susan Weinstein 20:39**

Exactly. And so and so. What we're looking for are changes that affect their ability to function in life.

**Rosanne 20:45**

Okay, now there's, there's something called the self care wheel to look at the the grand scheme of things, of what can help me and what am I supposed to concentrate on? The self care wheel kind of pinpoints that tell me about that.

**Susan Weinstein 20:59**

Yeah, so the self care wheel, and let me give credit right off the bat, it comes from somebody. The one that I use comes from someone named Olga Phoenix. Like Phoenix, surprising. So Olga phoenix.com you can find and you can download your own. But what it reminds us is that each of us has several dimensions to our being like we're not just one thing. We have a physical, we have a personal, we have a spiritual, we have an emotional, we have a psychological and we have a professional aside to us, and each of those can benefit from some nurturing. And we want to be more. We want to see ourselves as more than caregiver to this person. We can't let that define who we are, because we're a whole person. And so having the self care wheel reminds us that we have different dimensions to ourselves. And let me just, let me just the self care wheel is actually a circle. It's just to be clear, with people around the outer edge, it identifies the different parts of self, different parts of identity. So again, physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, personal and professional. In the center, it talks about life balance, but for each of those aspects of self, it gives some examples of ways to approach that dimension of yourself. So for example, on the spiritual part of oneself, it gives you ideas like sing, dance, play, be inspired. Those are things that we can do. You know, you have to change the sheets, sing while you're doing it. Those kinds of things, you know, watch a sunset. Just to

give you an idea, there are several that Olga Phoenix offers in each of these dimensions, but it can help prompt us that, oh, maybe that's something I can do. And am I checking all of the slices of the wheel so that I recognize that I'm a whole person? Now, it may be that you don't have much of a spiritual self, or you don't see yourself, or you're not currently having a, you know, professional responsibilities, I would question that, but nonetheless, just because you're not getting paid for it doesn't mean it's not a kind of professional word. Fully agree. So there may be ones that we emphasize more than others, but also, don't count yourself out. Just because it's called spiritual doesn't mean that it's necessarily religious. It doesn't mean that's aligned with a particular way of celebrating things or thinking about things. So, you know, give yourself some freedom again about how you approach this. And you know, what is it that that's on this that makes you think maybe that's something I can try, and sometimes it's even something that you can try with your kids or with your spouse or partner, and sometimes doing those can help alleviate some of the stress of the household. You know, everybody needs their own tools, and so maybe they'd benefit from it too.

**Rosanne 24:15**

I love that. And there's so many like, there's, you know, in in the spiritual, you know, self reflection, going to nature. Self cherish, like, wow. Self cherish, like, what I wouldn't think of, I wouldn't think of that.

**Susan Weinstein 24:29**

Yeah. And I think another way of looking at this is, you know, we all need sustenance. How can I nourish myself today? How can I replenish so there are different ways to think about it, but just you know, what's going to help me get through today? What's going to help me feel a little bit better about myself, about my situation, know about all the stuff that's going on around me.

**Rosanne 24:50**

And how do we stop the the thoughts in our minds that say you don't have time for this?

**Susan Weinstein 24:56**

It takes effort. I mean, for sure, but don't think of it. It as if I do this, I'm being selfish. No, when you do this, you're being self full. So look at it a little differently. You're you're not going to sustain yourself with what you're doing. So how can you do something for yourself? Yeah, you don't have time for it, but let's find the time. Let's find the time when you know you're in the shower and can just take a few minutes to let your mind wander. Let's you know when we're walking to the car, let's safely stop and run a census. Check, what do I what do I see? What do I hear? What do I feel? What do I taste? What do I smell, but, you know, just take yourself out of your thoughts for a moment and put your feet in the grass for five minutes, or on the sand, or wherever you are. You know, just make a connection with something outside of yourself. And it's so easy for me to sit here and say it, and it's so hard to practice it sometimes. Put up



reminders, you know, put up a post it note on the refrigerator, on the bathroom mirror, you know, whatever it is, so that you can get a prompt that says, You know what, let me take three minutes right now and do some deep breaths. Let me think about a color that nourishes me. For me, I grew up in South Florida driving to the the keys. When you're driving in the Florida Keys, you have water on both sides of you, and it's very shallow, and it's this beautiful, like pale turquoise, that is my color, that is the color that that makes me feel calm, that makes me feel good. That kind of gives me a reset. So I visualize that I'm in a room with that color, and I'm breathing it in, and I can feel it going through me, and I can feel it relaxing me, and I can feel it making me feel better. Now you can also do the thing to couple with that, where you breathe out the color that makes you feel angry, stressed, distressed, whatever it is. So, you know, maybe it's a fiery red, maybe it's a brown, you know. Maybe there are all kinds of colors that can make, make you not feel great, breathe it out, get rid of it and, you know, and it just goes out of the room, and you're left with that beautiful, calming color. Now, this is something that you can do in three to five minutes, and it'll make a big difference. It can make a big difference.

**Rosanne 27:32**

Want more Daughterhood? We are more than the podcast. We are a community that offers free nationwide virtual support groups. We call circles. These circles allow you to connect, learn and support one another through your caregiving journey. You can find more information@daughterhood.org where you can register for a circle, sign up for our newsletter and find other resources for additional support. REMEMBER to also follow us on Instagram and Facebook @daughterhood,

**Rosanne 28:04**

I think it comes back to, sometimes it comes back to the stories that we tell ourselves, where we think, well, that's not going to help me. I tried that before and it didn't help me. Or, you know, that's silly, or whatever, whatever, whatever we tell ourselves that prevents us from trying or prevents us from trying something new. And I'm sure there's a way where, I'm sure you have an idea of how we can try to check ourselves. Where it's it's almost like, Hey, thanks for thanks for the information. I'm not listening to you today. Like, how do we get out of those, those stories we tell ourselves?

**Susan Weinstein 28:41**

Well, one thing, I mean, think about it as if one of your friends was telling you this, that these were the things that were on their mind, these were the things that were affecting them. You know, would you dismiss that? Or would you say, sounds like you're going through a lot. You would probably say, How can I help, right? But, you know, say it to yourself, how can I help? How? How can I be compassionate with myself today? Also, cognitive behavior therapy is all about reframing and rethinking how we're how we're processing our thoughts. And so, you

know, think of a situation that's a challenge for you. I mean, this is a silly one in the general scheme of life. Sure, it's okay, nothing silly. I got to the point where I was really resenting that I always had to take out the trash. And I was like, there's there's got to be a better way on this. And so I thought about it, and it's like, okay, so no one else is able to take out the trash for whatever reason I am helping the family doing this, and if I take a step back, that also gives me a chance to see, like all of the things that I don't do, that other people do, and to understand that we're all working together. So my role for now is that I'm taking out the trash there are. Times when I'm going to need something and somebody else is going to be doing it, and it happens all the time without me taking notice, right? So, you know, let's just take a look at again. How can you look at it? What are the facts that support this being like something that I should resent? You know what? What's the evidence on that? Now? What's the evidence if I, if I take a bigger picture here, what's the evidence that maybe I shouldn't be resenting that? Okay, so on balance, what do I think when I have this information in front of me? Is there another way that I can approach this? Is there another perspective that maybe can make me feel better about it? The answer, the answer for me was yes on that particular thing. So trying to take a different perspective, or maybe bird's eye view, so that you get a bigger, a bigger sense of all the factors that are coming into play. And I also, I also go back to the thing, if somebody told you this about themselves, what would you say to them? I mean, unfortunately, a lot of people would answer, Oh, you think that's rough. Let me tell you what's going on with me.

**Rosanne** 31:07

Yeah, right, right. You might hear something, yeah, yeah.

**Susan Weinstein** 31:14

But actually, that can help you with your perspective too, like, oh, maybe, maybe it's not so bad.

**Rosanne** 31:21

Well, it's tough too when you're dealing with other people, like we hear it all the time in our daughterhood circles, about siblings and the interaction or lack of interaction, or involvement and all of that. And it's hard when you're in that to try to separate out and be all right, well, I'll just concentrate on what I'm doing. It's hard because it, it totally affects you, because you're like, wait, we're, we're blood here, we're, we're supposed to be on the same team and working towards the same goal. And that's not happening. And that really, it really plays with your mind.

**Susan Weinstein** 32:00

Oh, it sure does. I think one of the things that you need to remember is that different people have different strengths and capabilities. And my guess is that this behavior from your siblings is nothing new, right? That if you look back, you would have had a clue that this is how it was

going to work, right? I get you. I mean, you know, sometimes you can find a way to communicate, and maybe they can't step up, but maybe they can be a little better about appreciation, you know, or maybe they can step up in some way that is helpful, even if it just gives you a break, right? Sometimes we can't communicate with our siblings, and that's just where we are. So what can we do without them that we can still feel good about what we're doing and not obsess over the lack of support that you're getting from other people, right? Okay, so I'm not getting support from people I know. Can I take a half hour, enjoy one of these online support groups and see how other people are getting through it. And maybe even there'll be someone that I can offer a suggestion for of something that works for me, and then be reminded of other things. You know, there, there are a whole lot of communities out there and a lot is online. One of our favorite organizations is courage to caregivers, and they have support for people who are caring for someone with a mental health condition. And they have, they used to be a local to them organization in Ohio, but when covid came around, they were able to expand nationwide with, you know, Zoom support groups. I think it's incredible. There are some of the mental health organizations that have support groups for people who are living with that mental health condition, right? They have family and friends group that meets at the same time in a different room, and so if your loved one is getting support, then you can get support at the same time, and it's not the same thing for both of you, and it's a break from each other, which sometimes that hour is enough to reset us for a few days. So I would, I would say, just really look for ways that you can get support. And you're not going to necessarily get what you want from your family, but are there friends that you can have some mutual support with, right? Are there some friends who it would be really beneficial that both of you take a break and meet for coffee? You know, are you maintaining social connections at all? Because that's one of the things that can feed into depression, is that isolation, you know, online communities, meet a friend, go to the library and see who's there. You know, whatever it is that can make you feel like you're not alone in this. You know, take advantage of those opportunities.

**Rosanne** 34:55

Fully agree. You know, Daughterhood did the same thing during the pandemic. We used to be in person. We switched, switched to online. The convenience of being able to meet with people all over the country is fantastic. I mean, it's just, you know, you do see that you're not alone. And since the pandemic, it's so hard to find an appointment, get an appointment, get in with somebody. And the fact that you can now do that online, both with therapists and with mental health specific groups, I think is life saving,

**Susan Weinstein** 35:26

And I've not, I've not explored what's out there for others, yeah, because I'm in my lane, but I would be incredibly surprised if there were not groups that were for caregivers of whatever kind of person you're dealing with and whatever they're dealing with, yeah? So I think it's worth

checking around, asking others sometimes doctors offices are helpful, yeah? Not, not always. I mean, sometimes it's beyond their their scope, yeah, but I think finding a community can be really helpful, agreed, and I really appreciate people who do that, know the people who are the conveners and the supporters. It's it's not a skill that I have, and so I really appreciate it and others, which is why I'm happy to plug other organizations, because they're doing things that that's just not my thing.

**Rosanne 36:26**

Yeah, yeah. It's really important to be able to connect with other people, because inevitably, in our circles, anyway, I always hear I thought it was just me, or it's so nice to know that other people feel like this, because you do feel so isolated when you're caregiving,

**Susan Weinstein 36:43**

Doesn't it boggle the mind though, that in this world that we think they're the only one dealing with something, I mean, I mean everyone has, you know, some like variable, some variable, right, right. Um, but we're all involved in, you know, the human condition and the human experience. And there's really, you know, some common experiences that people have, and not everybody has all of them, thank God, but a lot of people carry a lot, no, and they should know they don't need to do that alone, and they don't need to feel alone because they're not alone. There are always people who will listen support, you know, I mean, sometimes that's all you need, is someone to listen to you, because you need to unburden somehow.

**Rosanne 37:33**

But I think it's fear also. It's fear of, I don't want to be judged, I don't want to say, quote, the wrong thing, because, you know, we're, we're in this world now where everything we see is a positive online, not everything, but, you know, and you're sitting there looking at this, thinking, I'm not any of those things. And to put your hand up and be like, I'm not, I don't, I'm not there, and I don't feel like I'm there, and I don't know if I want to say what's in my head, because it's not, it doesn't match what's out there.

**Susan Weinstein 38:04**

Start off with someone who's safe for you.

**Rosanne 38:07**

Yeah, absolutely.

**Susan Weinstein 38:09**

Is there one person this is not, this is not something that you necessarily put, you know, full blast on Facebook, who is someone that you feel like you can talk to, and that's your start, because maybe they have resources, or, you know, maybe they have a friend, another friend

that you don't know, that you guys can meet, and then you have someone else to talk to. So not everything needs to be done all at once. Small steps make a difference. You know, making setting goals makes a difference, but often we set our goals so high that it just becomes another source of stress and disappointment. So if you have a big goal, make some sub goals that will help you get there. And knowing that you're working towards something can be a big help. It can be very inspiring. It can help you with that perspective and also recognize when you've accomplished something. Hey, look at that.

**Rosanne** 39:09

I did it.

**Susan Weinstein** 39:10

I got that done.

**Rosanne** 39:12

I did it, yeah, I love that.

**Susan Weinstein** 39:14

Praise be.

**Rosanne** 39:15

Yeah. I love that. That's great.

**Susan Weinstein** 39:17

You know, celebrate what you can for heaven's sake, you know, acknowledge joy when you have it.

**Rosanne** 39:23

Take the win.

**Susan Weinstein** 39:24

Take the win. Perfect. I love that.

**Rosanne** 39:27

So if you have any final words for a caregiver that may be listening and thinking, Okay, I want to try this, or I can't even think about trying this, or like you can and you will, and you you can do this.

**Susan Weinstein** 39:41

What was it? L'Oreal? Because you're worth it. You know you may not feel it, but you're worth it. And sometimes you need to do for yourself what others aren't going to do for you. And sometimes you need to do your do for yourself, because you know that it's what you need. You know, ask yourself, What can I do to be good to myself today? Maybe it's something big, maybe it's something small, but what can I do? It can just help me feel a little bit better.

**Rosanne 40:12**

A big thank you to Susan Weinstein for being my guest today to find out more about Susan and access the depression screening and perceived stress scale she referenced in this episode, go to her website, [familyaware.org](http://familyaware.org), and if you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, you can call or text 988 to reach the 988 suicide and crisis lifeline. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also chat with the lifeline online at [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org)

**Rosanne 40:46**

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