



Elizabeth was born in American Samoa. At age 12, her family moved to Hawai'i where she grew up in Pearl City and graduated from

Aiea High School. Elizabeth and her husband Terry have one daughter, Ane.

She has been an exceptional caregiver since the day she signed on at Comforting Hands Senior Care in January of 2007. Her service to our clients has far surpassed the expectations of the job and Elizabeth is a constant amazement to those with, and for whom, she works.

Elizabeth's philosophy of caregiving is that everyone involved should pull together, giving lots of love, patience, and communicating to the elder that the aging process is a stepping stone, rather than a setback. "The key is love, patience, and a lot of compassion," says Elizabeth.

She moves forward each and every day with a commitment to be kind and caring because someone else may have greater difficulties than her own... and it is what makes

Elizabeth a Caregiver for All Seasons in our eyes.

Caregiver Profile

Aloha Kakou!

I would like to recognize one of our outstanding Caregivers – Elizabeth. She applies her compassionate caregiving skills which she learned while caring for her dad. Elizabeth always arrives at each client's home as scheduled, wearing a smile. If she is having a bad day, she doesn't burden the client with her problems, but instead pours out all the love and caring she can give them.

This is true love for caregiving, and why we admire and appreciate Elizabeth so much. Read more about Elizabeth in our Caregiver Profile column.

"The Perks of Growing Old" is the topic of the Finance and Consumer Resources section of our newsletter. People felt, in generations past, that the golden years was a time to take it easy and slow down. Research has shown that staying active is one of the most important parts of healthy aging. Read about services available that help older adults remain active and engaged.

In the Rotating Topic section read about what is meant by "Home Care." There tends to be confusion, even in the professional community, about what is meant by "Home Care." The article explains the three types of home care: Home Health care, Private Duty Homecare, and Hospice Care.

"Tai Chi Improves Symptoms of Parkinson's Disease" is the topic in the Senior Health and Lifestyles section of our newsletter. A research study published in the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine has shown Tai Chi may help the worst physical

problems of Parkinson's Disease. Ray Dorsey, MD, MBA, a neurologist and associate professor at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, says "The results from this study are quite impressive."

"The magnitude of the impact that they had is larger, in some cases, than what is seen with medications in Parkinson's," says Dorsey, who also directs the Movement Disorders Center and Neurology Telemedicine at Johns Hopkins.

The last article is about spousal caregiving and the importance of considering your own needs as just as high a priority as that of your spouse. In the long run, it will be to their benefit as much as your own.

All caregivers who experience elevated levels of stress are at an increased risk of physical and emotional issues.

The article provides a list of indicators and if you are experiencing two or three of these items, it is important

to get help and support.

The truth is your spouse/partner will be in better hands if you are healthy.



With much aloha,

David T. Nakamaejo,
President
Comforting Hands Senior Care



The Perks of Growing Older

Your senior years can be one of the most enjoyable and fulfilling times of your life. As the baby boomer generation gets older, the number of senior citizens in the United States is rapidly increasing, and seniors are finding ways to be more active and involved.

There are more seniors today than ever before. In 1900, 3.1 million Americans were age 65 and older; by 1994, this number had grown to 33.2 million. Researchers estimate that by 2030, 20 percent of the U.S. population will be senior citizens.

Some of the key trends in this age group:

BETTER ECONOMIC POSITION

The number of seniors below the poverty level has dramatically decreased, from 35 percent in the early 1960s to about 10 percent today.

HIGHER EDUCATION More seniors than ever before have completed high school, and a higher number have earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

LASTING MARRIAGES The majority of senior citizens younger than 85 are married. Since women tend to live longer than men, older men are twice as likely to be married as elderly women.

LONGER LIFE EXPECTANCY

People are living longer; the percentage of the U.S. population living to 100 has grown 65.8 percent over the past three decades.

BETTER SERVICES AND PROGRAMS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

In generations past, people felt that old age was a time to take it easy and slow down. But today senior citizens know that staying active is one of the most important parts of healthy aging.

Some of the services available to help

senior citizens remain vital include:

FITNESS PROGRAMS A number of local community centers, churches, fitness centers, and senior centers offer exercise programs specially designed for older adults. Regular exercise helps you stay functional and healthy.

JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES You don't have to stop working at 65. Senior citizens today are working long after that age, and many people who retire from one job end up going back to work in another capacity. Programs like Civic Ventures and the American Association of Retired Persons WorkSearch program help older people find ways to get back into the workforce.

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS An estimated one-third of volunteers in the United States are senior citizens. Volunteering can be a great alternative for your time after retirement. There are many organizations, including the Experience Corps and Senior Corps, with programs that help match senior citizens to volunteer opportunities.

LIFELONG EDUCATION Staying mentally active is an important part of healthy aging, since researchers are

finding out that when it comes to your mind, you have to use it so you don't lose it. One way to stay sharp is to enroll in adult education courses. Ask your local college, university, or public library if they offer education programs especially for seniors.

TRAVEL PROGRAMS Retirement is a great time to explore the world through travel. The Elderhostel Institute Network is a program that provides travel opportunities for people age 55 and older. The U.S. Department of the Interior offers U.S. citizens 62 and older a Senior Pass, with lifetime access to government-recognized recreation areas for just \$10.

SENIOR DISCOUNTS There are numerous senior citizens discount programs everywhere. If you are a member of AARP, for instance, you can save up to 60 percent when you shop online at the Everyday Savings Center, which features retailers like Target and Sony Electronics. In addition, many local movie theaters, museums, and restaurants offer discounted rates for seniors.

One of the best ways to stay in good mental and physical shape as you age is to get out and enjoy yourself. Take advantage of the many programs and services now offered to senior citizens.

Reprinted from www.everydayhealth.com
<http://www.everydayhealth.com/senior-health/be-good-to-yourself.aspx>



ROTATING TOPIC

Understanding "Home Care"

There tends to be confusion, even in the professional community, about what is meant by "Home Care," when that term is used. There are three types of home care: Home Health Care, Private Duty Homecare, and Hospice Care. This article outlines the parameters of each type of care.

HOME HEALTH CARE

Home health care is medical care in the home for homebound patients.

It is a benefit of Medicare, Medicaid, and most private health insurances if the patient meets very specific criteria. Home Health provides Nursing, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Social Work, and Home Health Aides.

To qualify, a patient typically has had an acute health change requiring hospitalization, and home health is initiated upon hospital discharge. The patient must be homebound, meaning they only leave the home for

for medical appointments. It must include either nursing or physical therapy to obtain services. Home Health must be ordered by a physician to be covered by insurance. The goal of home health is to improve health outcomes. Their services are guided by Medicare guidelines. Home Health is set up on a 60 day basis. If the patient continues to have significant health needs that cannot be improved in the 60 day period, home health can recertify the patient beyond the 60 days.

PRIVATE DUTY HOMECARE

Private duty homecare is non-medical. The services are provided by caregivers and/or certified home health aides (this may be dependent on individual state regulations). The services provided are considered custodial care, and do not require a physician's order. Services are designed to help the care recipient remain in their home as independently as possible by providing hygiene, meals, light housekeeping, companionship, errands, and medication reminders. Some agencies

or individuals providing services include transportation of clients.

Private Duty is not covered by health insurance. Most Private Duty Homecare services are paid out of pocket, but may be covered in part or whole by long-term care insurance or Veterans benefits. Private Duty often works in collaboration with Home Health agencies because the services are very different in nature and typically if someone needs home health, they also need assistance with activities of daily living (ADL'S).

Private Duty Homecare is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Clients can obtain services long term or short term. Some agencies require a minimum number of hours either per shift, per day or per week, some do not. Medicare does not cover these services.

HOSPICE

Hospice is care for the dying. Hospice can be provided in homes, hospice facilities, long term care facilities and in hospitals.

Medicare, Medicaid and most private insurances cover hospice care. This also requires a physician's order, but does not require the patient to be homebound. It is initiated based on a terminal diagnosis.

Hospice consists of Nurses, Home Health Aides, Social Work, Spiritual Care, and Volunteers, as well as a Bereavement Counselor. Patients may use all or some of the services based on their needs and preferences. Visits are short, typically between 45 minutes and 1.5 hours.

Private Duty will often work in collaboration with Hospice, to provide care when families are unable or need respite. Private Duty follows the direction of the Hospice team to maintain comfort and support for the patient. Rather than contacting EMS or the client's physician for help with changing status, Private Duty caregiver's contact the Hospice nurse for instruction.

Excerpted from “Misunderstanding Home Care,” by Angil Tarach-Ritchey, from <http://www.senioritylifecare.com/misunderstanding-home-care/>

Senior Health & Lifestyles

Tai Chi Improves Symptoms of Parkinson's Disease

Tai chi, a type of exercise that guides the body through gentle, flowing poses, may help the worst physical problems of Parkinson's disease, a study shows.

Experts say it appears that tai chi might be an effective therapy for improving a person's balance, ability to walk and move steadily. Tai chi may also reduce the chances of a fall.

“The results from this study are quite impressive,” says Ray Dorsey, MD, MBA, a neurologist and associate professor at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore.

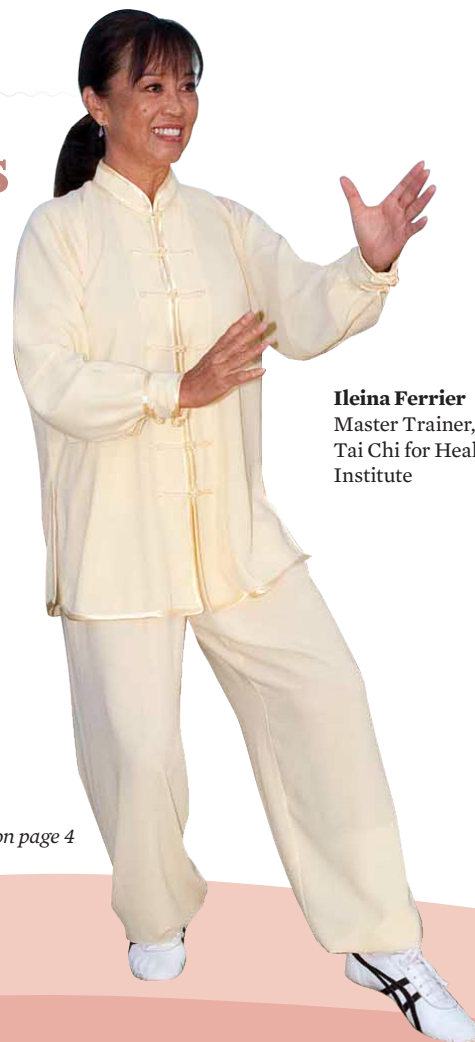
“The magnitude of the impact that they had is larger, in some cases, than what is seen with medications in Parkinson's,” says

Dorsey, who also directs the Movement Disorders Center and Neurology Telemedicine at Johns Hopkins.

Parkinson's disease involves the slow destruction of brain cells that make the chemical dopamine. Nerve cells depend on dopamine to send messages that guide muscle movement. As the cells die, movements may become shaky, stiff, and unbalanced. Walking may be harder.

Medications may help control some things, like tremors, but many drugs are not as good at helping the so-called axial symptoms of Parkinson's disease, which include problems with balance and walking.

Continues on page 4



Ileina Ferrier
Master Trainer,
Tai Chi for Health
Institute

TAI CHI COMES OUT TOPS

For the study, doctors assigned 195 people with mild-to-moderate Parkinson’s disease to one of three groups: The first took tai chi classes, the second exercised with weights, and the third was assigned to a program of seated stretching. All the groups met for 60-minute sessions twice each week.

After six months, people who had been taking tai chi were able to lean farther forward or backward without stumbling or falling compared to those who had been doing resistance training or stretching. They were also better able to smoothly direct their movements and take longer strides than people in the other two groups.

Like resistance training, tai chi helped people walk more swiftly, get up from a chair more quickly, and increased leg strength.

Perhaps the most impressive benefit of tai chi, however, was related to falls. Falls are common in people

with Parkinson’s, and they can cause serious injuries, including fractures and concussions. Falls are the main cause of hospitalizations in Parkinson’s patients. People in the tai chi group reported half the number of falls compared to those who were taking resistance training and two-thirds fewer falls than people who were doing light stretching exercises. The research is published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

MIND-BODY BENEFIT?

“This is a very encouraging study,” said Chenchen Wang, MD, MSC, a rheumatologist at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston.

“Most of our previous studies have measured pain, depression, and anxiety, which are subjective measures. These results are very impressive because they used objective measurements,” Wang said.

Researchers say they believe tai chi’s effectiveness probably has something to

do with the mind-body connection that’s encouraged throughout the poses. “It’s intentional movement. So every step you take, you are aware of it. We put quite a bit of emphasis on the self-awareness of the movement,” says Fuzhong Li, PhD, senior scientist at the Oregon Research Institute, a nonprofit center for the study of human behavior in Eugene, Ore.

Additionally, Li says, tai chi has some practical advantages over other kinds of exercise.

“You don’t need any equipment. You can practice anywhere, anytime. It’s low cost. It can easily be incorporated into the rehab setting, as well,” Li says.

By Brenda Goodman, MA
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<http://www.webmd.com/parkinsons-disease/news/20120208/tai-chi-improves-symptoms-parkinsons-disease>



SPOTLIGHT ON CAREGIVERS

Is Spousal Caregiving Becoming Too Risky for You?

Caring for a spouse in need is very demanding, and can be stressful enough to threaten your own health. It is important to consider your own needs as just as high a priority as that of your spouse—in the long run it will be to their benefit as much as your own.

As a caregiving spouse, you may begin to feel very isolated from friends and feel guilt about your own unmet needs. There can also be a sense of loss, especially if your spouse suffers from dementia or Alzheimer’s disease.

So how do you know if caregiving is becoming too risky for you? Examine this list and see how many apply to you:

- **Missing or delaying your own doctor appointments**
- **Ignoring your own health problems or symptoms**
- **Not eating a healthy diet for lack of time**
- **Overusing tobacco and alcohol when you feel stressed**

- **Giving up exercise habits for lack of time**
- **Losing sleep**
- **Losing connections with friends for lack of time to socialize**
- **Bottling up feelings of anger and frustration and then being surprised by angry, even violent, outbursts directed at your spouse, other family members, co-workers - even strangers**
- **Feeling sad, down, depressed or hopeless**
- **Loss of energy**
- **Lacking interest in things that used to give you (and your spouse) pleasure**
- **Feeling resentful toward your spouse**
- **Blaming your spouse for the situation**
- **Feeling that people ask more of you than they should**

- **Feeling like caregiving has affected family relationships in a negative way**
- **Feeling annoyed by other family members who don’t help out or who criticize your care**

All caregivers who experience elevated levels of stress are at an increased risk for physical and emotional issues.

Even if you are only experiencing two or three of these items, it is important to get help and support. If you are experiencing many of the symptoms on this list, it may be time to seriously consider alternatives—whether that be relying on supplemental caregivers or full time care at home or in a facility for your spouse.

The truth is your spouse/partner will be in better hands if you are healthy.

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