



eCarer

- a newsletter for caring Christadelphians

Number 1, August 2009

Welcome!

This is the first edition of *eCarer*. It is designed to help Christadelphians (and anyone else) learn more about their ability to care for others. *eCarer* will be published every month or so. It will be available via email. Please feel free to forward it to anyone you think would like to receive a copy. We hope you will benefit from reading of the experiences of others. We would also would like to receive your suggestions and contributions.

Who publishes eCarer?

The newsletter is published privately but has an informal editorial committee of trained carers who advise on policy and content.

About caring

Sometimes we feel very inadequate when trying to help someone – young or old. How often, for example, has a member of an ecclesia, or a work friend, been diagnosed with a major illness and we want to say something but are unsure what to say? So, nothing is said or done. Because we lack confidence, the ill or old person, or anyone who has difficulties – loss of employment, bereavement, families problems – may not be helped when help is needed, or worse, may feel hurt if we choose to say nothing. At the very time (s)he needs a thoughtful word from the people (s)he cares about, and who could help by appropriate words, nothing is said or done.

The art of caring involves being sensitive to the needs of others. We can only be sensitive if we listen. Once we listen we try to understand and then respond in a caring, thoughtful way. We will carry this listening and responding theme through the next few issues of *eCarer*.

Saying ... doing... or both?

Caring is not only about saying appropriate words. Sometimes, the most effective caring can be simply the silent visit to a sick friend, a hug, or a warm and meaningful handshake. It might also be an offer to drive someone to a medical appointment, or cooking a casserole. It's the little things that count. They show that we have compassion in a very practical way. Send us your ideas of some simple, practical ways we can help others.

Some Scriptural passages for comfort

It is always useful to have some short Bible readings handy when you are talking with someone who may need some comfort. Here are a few.

- Praise e.g. Psalm 66:1-4;
- Plea for help e.g. Psalm 34:1-10;
- God's presence e.g. Isaiah 55:1-9, 12-13;
- Glories of the Kingdom e.g. Isaiah 35.

'Jesus ... was moved with compassion' (Mark 6:34)

What would I say when ...

In each *eCarer* we'll try to provide an answer to a common question. You might like to send in a question and one of us will provide an answer. Here's one to start.

An older brother says he is of no value any more. He cannot exhort; 'this year', for the first time, he wasn't elected as an AB; he cannot preside. He carried out these responsibilities for over 50 years.

There are many facets of this fairly common occurrence in ecclesial life. One observation to make might be that the ecclesia recognises the example he has set over many years. Reinforcing his achievements and example could help him to feel that he has made a significant contribution and that this is appreciated. Can you think of other things that might help him overcome his feeling of 'loss'?

Being an example

A life committed to developing the compassion and mercy demonstrated by our Lord is a prerequisite to our attempts to help others. Those we are trying to help will receive from us greater encouragement if they see in our example the warmth and compassion that they need. We need to show our compassion all of the time, not just occasionally.

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Extras!

From time-to-time we will let you know about various articles that you may find interesting and valuable. The first article, available now, is the first in a series of seven under the heading *Christlike Caring*. The articles try to encourage us to show Christlike care and compassion in many aspects of our lives. The first instalment, *Compassionate Caring*, suggests a foundation for all forms of caring. We have as the ultimate example that of Jesus. But we often need further encouragement and skills to make our caring more effective. One question the article examines is 'How do we recognise and learn about the needs of others?' Send an email to the address below with *Christlike Caring* in the subject line and we will forward the article to you.

A little humour

We'll always try to finish each *eCarer* with something to smile about. (Carers need to keep a sense of humour!) Here are some quotes taken from ward notes written by nurses.

- Patient has two teenage children, but no other abnormalities.
- Patient was alert and unresponsive.

Oh, well ...

Laurence Lepherd