

Listening 2

Kind: captions In this morning's Healthwatch, Alzheimer's Disease and caregivers. Part 2 of our special series focuses on the 11 million relatives or friends who take care of someone with Alzheimer or another form of dementia. Our doctor Jennifer Aston has one story out of many. Jennifer, good morning. Good morning Harry, We wanted to look at Alzheimer's through the eyes of a caregiver and thanks to one, generous, compassionate Ohio husband, we experienced the devastating impact this disease has on millions of Americans. I've been married for 46 years. Our eyes met and the relationship took off. Where is your brush my dear? We have supported each other since day one. Things for us started to change in 2005. We were on a trip to California, visiting family. She started confusing my cousin Barbara for her cousin Andrea. At that point I realised something was wrong. The diagnosis of Alzheimer's came about three days after her 68th birthday. When she was first diagnosed, we had three sources of healthcare coverage. In 2008, the first one canceled. In 2009 we lost the second. January of 10 we lost our long term care insurance and it is a financial hardship for us. It has changed our lives drastically. The way which I cope with this disease is to use my experience as a marathoner to deal with it one day at a time, one mile at a time. It's difficult to watch her now, knowing how she was before. This disease has taught me that emotional challenges help us to grow, to learn, to love and most of all to accept what comes. Sorry. And of course our hats are off to Eugene Fields for the wonderful way he's caring for his wife. So interesting and she was diagnosed at 68 and it is a marathon for someone like that oh my Gosh. It is a phenomenal task to take care of somebody with Alzheimer's but there is such a thing as caregiver's burnout. What do people need to look out for in case... because their own health is at risk. Absolutely they do and there are some key signs Harry, if you're taking care of someone with Alzheimer's or really any chronic disease. The first one is depression. We can all get down in the dumpsters when you're caring for someone, especially someone you love so much and who's struggling, but depression is a big one. Anger especially inappropriate anger can be another sign, sleeplessness, insomnia, difficulty with concentration and physical problems Harry if you find an exacerbation of things like headaches or physical ailments, you should probably take care of yourself. I've just looked at that list, those symptoms look real to me where do I go for help? Educate yourself Harry, know your resources, go to your doctor's or the Alzheimer's association's and remember that part of living with the disease is living you have to take care of yourself too.