



Me Time Monday™ Tip Sheet for Caregivers in support of



How to Stay Connected

We know through numerous research studies and books like The Blue Zones that staying socially connected is one of the keys to healthy aging. If you are caring for someone who is older, technology can be new and sometimes intimidating but it can really open up their “window” to the world.

Here are some things to think about when helping older loved ones embrace new technology:

- Be sensitive to limitations that come with aging such as visual impairments and the glare on a computer screen – ask your local computer store about non-glare screens and have proper lighting around the computer area.
- Understand that arthritic hands may have trouble manipulating and controlling a computer mouse – there are now touchscreen computers, such as Telikin, that offer easier onscreen navigation.
- Set up the computer so that you avoid your loved one getting a stiff neck – ensure the computer screen is in line with eyesight without looking down.
- Some companies have taken the “computer:” out of the equation but left the email, digital photo sending and other communication advantages of the digital age to keep loved ones connected to grandkids or to get easy medication reminders – essentially “digital mail boxes.” Look for great computer-less printers and services from HP, Presto and Celery.
- Cell phones and smartphones are gaining in popularity among Older Americans – in fact 62 percent of those over age 74 own a cell phone. Look for models that offer larger numbers and buttons that are better for older eyes such as the Jitterbug.
- Baby Boomers are the fastest growing group on Facebook. Connecting with other caregivers has never been easier in this age of social media. You can also find great Web sites that connect caregivers and give them “communities of care” to get help that is essential for avoiding burn-out. Look for online sites such as LotsaHelpingHands.com.

Technology can be one of the greatest tools when it comes to caregiving. Keeping your loved one connected helps their overall sense of well-being and relevance in the world, and it will give you better peace of mind about their safety and happiness.

For other Me Time Monday Tips from the Caregiving Club, visit: <http://www.caregivingclub.com/me-time-monday/>

For more information about the Caregivers' Monday campaigns, visit: <http://www.mondaycampaigns.org/caregivers-monday/>.

Caregivers' Monday is part of the Healthy Mondays non-profit organization. To learn more, visit: <http://www.mondaycampaigns.org/>