Share the Care an organized way to lend assistance

I can't wait to share this with you.
Recently I learned about a program that can make your life easier.
Really.
So read on if you are taking care of a spouse/parent/neighbor/friend who is facing major health issues/aging issues that are so overwhelming for them that they need your help.
Read on if it is becoming so much for you that you are finding your life completely absorbed by them and you wish you had help. You may even find yourself crying for help. It's called "caregiver burnout" for a reason.
Read on if you know there are other family members/children/neighbors/friends who could help, but don't, or if their idea of helping isn't what you really need.
Read on if you can't think of anyone to turn to, but you know you need help.
You don't have to do this alone.
You can put together a group of people to help. It's called Share the Care. Today we'll see how it's done.
Ready?
First, do some homework. Don't read this and think you should just get some friends and family together to help. Nope.

Jean Long Manteufel
For the Post-Crescent

The Share the Care plan walks these two key people through the first meeting who to invite, how to brainstorm on needs, how to find the best fit for each member — whether they live in town or across the country; essentially, learn how to turn a diverse group into a functioning caregiving unit.

It is important to include the person receiving help. They need to know there are people who want to assist; they need to hear why people want to help them and why it is important to those people; and they need to articulate their boundaries, like "I don't want personal care, but I want you to visit."

We don't want to do this to them or for them — rather, with them.
With forethought and organization, there will ultimately be an assorted group of caring individuals working together as a team to help the person with need. It also will free up the primary caregiver to concentrate his/her efforts where they are most needed.

In the book, they say: "A little help can make a huge difference."
People want to help. Let them really make a difference.

—Jean Long Manteufel, senior move manager and CEO of Long's Senior Transitions in Appleton, writes a column on the first Sunday of each month about life changes associated with aging. She can be reached at 920-734-3260 or JeanLM@longmoving.com