

GETTING A SHARE THE CARE™ (STC) GROUP GOING- WHERE TO BEGIN©:

1. Confirm that the caregiver and the person needing care agree to accept help.
2. Order two copies of the book *Share the Care: How to Organize a Group to Care for Someone Who Is Seriously Ill* (links to purchase on www.sharethecare.org website)
3. Identify two people to organize the first STC meeting and give each a copy of the book. These can be neighbors, relatives, co-workers, acquaintances. One will serve as the Leader and the other, as the Coordinator. *Pay particular attention to Chapters 2-9 and see page 43 for desired qualifications.*

LOGISTICS FOR THE FIRST MEETING

These two people will work with the family caregiver and/or care recipient to figure out:

- **the care recipient's needs:** *see Chapter 5*
- **who to invite:** invite more than you think you will need as not all will be able to participate and invite them by phone and not by email *see Chapter 6*
- **best date for the meeting:** offer 2 dates and allow for 3 ½ hours. Select the date that most people can attend
- **where to hold the meeting:** it's important that the care recipient be at the meeting so find a place convenient for them. If their home is not an option, it is fine to hold it in someone else's home or consider a community center, office or faith institution.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE FIRST MEETING

After reviewing Chapters 2-9 the Leader and Coordinator will be able to run the meeting and:

- explain the STC systems to the group
- prepare needed forms for the meeting *download from STC website*
- Know which materials you will need to conduct suggested exercises

And it's always a good idea to bring food and beverages and/or ask others to contribute

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE FIRST MEETING

The Leader will take everyone through the exercises and the Coordinator will explain the forms, collect information and pair people into teams. The objective is for everyone to leave knowing the group is well organized, that everyone is informed of the situation (no hearsay) and feel a deep sense of purpose. The meeting flows as follows:

- **Introductions:** everyone introduces themselves and includes what they do for a living (this helps identify possible resources or needed skills)
- **Explain the situation:** the care recipient (or caregiver) shares details of the illness
- **STC systems:** Leader runs through the exercises and how the group will function *see Chapter 7*
- **Volunteer opportunities:** Coordinator describes all the ways the group can help
- **Forms:** group members fill out individual data forms and rate themselves on each job listed
- **Sign up:** individuals pick jobs they want to do and indicate the amount of time they can give. (No one is asked to do anything they don't feel comfortable doing)

FIRST WEEKS

The Coordinator will fill out the contact sheet *see page 91 for sample* and send to the entire team. Other matters that need immediate attention and that need to be shared with the team are:

- **emergency plan:** include telephone numbers and put on refrigerator as EMS knows to look there
- **money issues:** figure out how each person will be compensated for expenses incurred.
(**download from STC website:** important suggestions for organizing first weeks)