

***Your Valued Career: Caring  
& You.***

**By Dr. Wendy Lawson**

**As a carer**

**Society expects so much from me,  
Sometimes more than I can be.**

**My family expects so much from  
me,**

**Sometimes more than I can be.**

**I expect so much from me,  
Sometimes more than I can be.**

## **As a carer**

**I wish this didn't have to be,  
I wish that I could just be me.  
I wish I knew just who to trust,  
If I don't look after me in this,  
Then no-one wins, we all go bust!**

**Talk about things going 'pear-  
shape'!**

## **What To Expect From This Talk**

- **Thoughts about how to care for yourself:**
- **Your body**
- **Your mind**
- **Your soul**

## Knowing your self

- What kind of personality are you?
- In groups of 10 or less please have a go at the fun profiles you have as a handout.
- Let's come together to talk about what this means for you. Nominate a scribe to jot down aspects from our discussion time.

## Carer, Career?

- How do you give yourself a break from your carer occupation?
- How do you care for your body?
- Diet?
- Exercise?
- Fun?
- Relationships?

## Caring for your mind

- **Knowing your personality style should guide you towards knowing how best to feed your mind.**
- **Are you a reader?**
- **Do you like gossip?**
- **What you think influences how you feel..**
- **How do you separate home from work?**

## Acceptance

- **Do you accept who you are?**
- **Your hair type?**
- **Your size?**
- **Your education level?**
- **The family you grew up in?**
- **The one you have now?**

## Acceptance

- If you could change something about you, what would it be?
- Your hair?
- Your nose?
- Your voice?
- Circumstances, which bit would you choose?
- What if you can't change these things?

## Acceptance

- How do we accept what we cannot change?
- Is acceptance defeat?
- Is the grass always greener?
- Is choosing to accept, the same thing as living in denial?
- If not, why not?

## **Caring for your Soul**

- **People you choose to spend time with: doing your soul good or soul destroying?**
- **soulish pursuits?**
- **Music?**
- **Fun stuff?**
- **Walking?**
- **Cinema?**
- **Theatre?**

## **Caring for Self; Caring for Other**

- **Much harder to care for self if you don't feel 'good' about who you are.**
- **But, easier to care for Other, if you first learn to accept, love and support who you are.**
- **Body, soul & mind.**

## Write down

- 1 thing you can do for yourself every day?
- 1 thing you can do for yourself every week?
- 1 thing you would like others (family, friends) to do for you?
- How will you take charge of making this happen?
- How can you impliment the above?

## What do you think about

- Professional support? Clubs &/or groups (support group)?
- Are you technically inclined? would you like to be?
- Ways to increase your support....
- How could you implement this?
- If you are interested in mutual support.. Would you like to join a 'pen pal club'?

## Wendy's web page & others

[www.mugsy.org/wendy](http://www.mugsy.org/wendy)

Useful info about autism and related links  
on page above.

Useful info on support for us, on page  
below:

<http://www.au.reachout.com>

Need accessible training? Try:

<http://www.wavelearning.com.au/>

## Developing confidence

- Take home handouts supplied
- Post name & email address to 'pen pal support list'
- Remember to tell yourself positive and encouraging things about who you are and why you do what you do.
- Don't bottle up frustrations, irritations and exasperations: Share them with a trusted 'Other'.