

Study Guide for "CHRISTIAN CAREGIVING"

Caring Leader is an online *DeafPah!* course that helps prepare church members to serve in their congregation's ministry. Your instructor is Rev. Donald Leber.

You may download the video lessons and this study guide for free from deafjesus.org.

The videos were originally prepared as VHS videotapes for the Deaf Institute of Theology. The chapter numbers and titles refer to the optional textbook for this course - *Christian Caregiving – a Way of Life*, by Kenneth C. Haugk; 1984, Augsburg Publishing House.

Chapter One:

It's Not Easy Being a Christian (*Caregiver: Lesson 1*)

Read Psalm 71.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What can Peter say to his friends after they mocked the sidewalk preacher?
2. Can you remember a time that you wanted to share your faith with someone but you didn't?
3. What connection is there between God's forgiveness and your being a Christian caregiver?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

You are at the airport with a good friend and the two of you have never discussed religion in the past. Just before your friend gets on the plane, your friend asks you, "Why are you a Christian?" what answer will you give in 1 minute?

Chapter Two:

God as the Curegiver (*Caregiver: Lesson 2*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you think that Jesus was a therapist?
2. Have you ever had an experience that you thought yourself to be the curegiver instead of the caregiver?
3. Have you ever had an experience that you completely trusted God to help you with a problem?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

1. A week or two ago your teacher broke an arm and went to the hospital. Today your teacher arrives home and you come for a visit. Your job is to make your teacher feel better.

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2. Your teacher is feeling very depressed because he lost his job. You are to talk with your teacher about his feelings. Remember your goal is not necessarily to get your teacher smiling or feeling better, but your job is to listen and help your teacher to open up and talk about his feelings.
3. Explain the difference between #1 and #2. \

Chapter Three:

God, You, and Me (*Caregiver: Lesson 3*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you picture God being with you in any of these three ways:
 - as a boss surgeon,
 - as a wounded healer,
 - as a comfortable chair?
2. What difference can it make to the care needer if you mention God or not?
3. How can you be a "Wounded Healer" for someone?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Share with your mentor a story about a time when you felt God was very close to you.

Chapter Four:

Why Care? (*Caregiver: Lesson 4*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you, as a Christian, care?
2. Think of a past time that you helped someone. Did you find it pleasing? What didn't you like about it? Did the person you helped know you were a Christian?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Share with your mentor about your present job and why you do it.

Chapter Five

Family Ties (*Caregiver: Lesson 5*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How is the Christian church like a family? And how is it different?

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2. What is the difference between "being nosy" and caring for another person as a Christian?
3. If you needed to talk with someone about a personal problem, who would you go to see and why? A Christian or a Non-Christian?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Make a list of names of people in your church group. After the name of the person, write a part of the body that you think this person represents. A toe? A heart? An ear? Be ready to explain your answers.

Chapter Six

Move Over Freud: Explain Dr Freud (Caregiver: Lesson 6)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think that Christian caregiving is better than other kinds of caregiving?
2. What examples can you think from the Bible about Jesus caring for individuals and how did He handle it?
3. Give an example of a situation that you would refer to another professional.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Role play: one member just had a death in the family, another member has the job of comforting the person.

Chapter Seven

Touching Spiritual Depths (Caregiver: Lesson 7)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did we Christians get the job as caregiver?
2. Why is it so difficult to talk about spiritual things?
3. Give an example of spiritual things in the "Monday-Saturday world."

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

A member of your friend's family that he loved very much has recently died and your friend is talking about the funeral. Encourage him to talk about spiritual things.

Chapter Eight

Ministering To The Whole Person (Caregiver: Lesson 8)

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think about the idea that problems in our lives come from problems in our relationship with God?
2. Someone (in your group) has recently had a child killed in a car accident. How can you care for this person's physical, emotional and spiritual needs?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Sit back, relax, and only think about Jesus. Now think about a physical problem you have. Maybe a pain or headache or anything. Remember how much it hurt. Now think about Jesus standing near a lake in Galilee. You are standing in the crowd of people. Listen to Jesus teach. Feel the wind on your face, smell the fresh air. Jesus stops teaching and comes to you and looks into your eyes and asks you, "Do you want to be healed?" You answer Jesus. Watch, feel, and listen as Jesus puts His hands on your head and says, "You are healed." Not just your body or your mind or your soul is healed. You are healed. Your whole person is healed. Jesus smiles and goes to another person. How do you feel? Jesus looks at you again. What do you say to Jesus?

Chapter Nine

Servanthood Vs Servitude (*Caregiver: Lesson 9*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can a Christian be free and a servant at the same time?
2. Have you ever found yourself in the trap of SERVITUDE?
3. How can you know the difference between a person's needs and his wants?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Think about the last time you had to do something that you didn't like to do. How did you feel about that job? Did you do a good job?

Chapter Ten

A Surprise Gift: Forgiveness (*Caregiver: Lesson 10*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is listening so important to forgiveness?
2. If you refuse to forgive a person that needs it, how can that hurt the person needing forgiveness?
3. If you refuse to forgive a person that needs it, how can that hurt you?

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4. What is the role of the pastor in forgiveness?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Share a time that you felt you couldn't forgive someone, or someone that refused to forgive you.

Chapter Eleven

Confession and Absolution Over the Back Fence (*Caregiver: Lesson 11*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was Jesus teaching on confession and forgiveness? See Matthew 6:9-15; Matthew 18:21-35; Luke 7:40-48; Luke 17:3-4. Look up these verses now.
2. Can you describe a situation where you would refuse to offer forgiveness to someone?
3. Do you think a person can confess to God and then tell himself that God forgives him?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Seven years ago a mentor took some money from work. He did such a good job of hiding it that no one found out about it and probably no one will ever find out. His conscience is bothering him. He needs to talk about it. After he tells the story, then the caregiver must help him find out the way he feels about the thing he did. If you feel sure that the care-receiver has finished confessing everything, then speak a word of forgiveness to him.

Chapter Twelve

Skills of Your Trade: Their Correct Use and Wrong Use (*Caregiver: Lesson 12*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean "universal priesthood of all believers?"
2. What are some "signs" you can watch for that will help you know the correct time to use your Christian tools?
3. Even though people don't believe the same way that you believe, do you think that they will still respect you are a Christian caregiver?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Your mentor's father recently was placed into a nursing home because the father has Alzheimer disease. What do you say?

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Chapter Thirteen

Prayer (*Caregiver: Lesson 13*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is prayer?
2. Why do you think some people are afraid to pray in front of other people?
3. How can praying with another person bring you closer to each other?
4. What do you think about showing feelings of anger, sadness, bitterness, and fear in your prayers to God?
5. Do you have a favorite prayer?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Share with your mentor two worries that you have now and two joys that you have now. Pray about your worries and joys with your mentor.

Chapter Fourteen

The Bible (*Caregiver: Lesson 14*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever used the Bible to help yourself in times of trouble?
2. How can all of us become more familiar with the Bible and find the correct verses to use to help us in our caring?
3. Does God speak to people in other ways than through the Bible?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Your mentor is grieving because their child has just died in a car accident. You are there to comfort him. Read 2 Sam 18:33, the story of David grieving over the death of his son.

Chapter Fifteen

Sharing a Blessing (*Caregiver: Lesson 15*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you find a way to change a regular blessing and make it a Christian blessing?
2. How can you help a person that is hurting by reminding them that their day is in God's hands?

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PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Tell your mentor a time in your life that God really blessed you.

Chapter Sixteen

A Cup of Cold Water (*Caregiver: Lesson 16*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some acts that you can call "cups of cold water?"
2. When does our caring become truly Christian?
3. Can you think of a time that you gave a "cup of cold water" to someone?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Read Matthew 25:31-46. Make a list of things that people need in your community. Take five minutes to do this. Then make another list of all the things that your church is doing to solve those needs. Take five minutes to make that list. Finally, make a list of things that your church can do in the future to meet those needs.

Chapter Seventeen

The Evangelism-Caring Connection (*Caregiver: Lesson 17*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What positive feelings do you have about the word "evangelism?"
2. Are there opportunities for caring evangelism in your neighborhood, your work, or among your friends? Explain.
3. Have you ever told anyone about the way God called you into His family?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Ask your mentor to help you with a person that you want to invite to church, but that person is not interested. Ask your mentor for ideas. Remember two heads are better than one.

Chapter Eighteen

Celebrating Hopes (*Caregiver: Lesson 18*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Jesus describes Himself as a tree and we are His branches. How can this picture help you and me in our Christian caring?

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2. Imagine you have a friend going through a painful divorce. How would you search for answers? How would you focus on process?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Sit quietly and write on paper three goals that you want to see happen in your church in the next ten years. Then make a list of the things you need to do to achieve these goals.

Chapter Nineteen

Hope-Full Caregiving (*Caregiver: Lesson 19*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does your hope in Jesus Christ help you in your caring relationships?
2. What does it mean that Christian hope is both now and in the future?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Share times with your mentor that you strongly hoped for something and ended up not receiving it. Then answer the following questions: 1. What effect did this have on your faith?

2. How does this affect your ability to hope now?
3. What lessons did you learn as a result of this incident of disappointed hope?

Chapter Twenty

The Thrill of It All (*Caregiver: Lesson 20*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you feel ready to go out and be a Christian caregiver?
2. How will your caring be different toward people than the way you did in the past?
3. Have you discovered through this class your special gifts that God has given to you?

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Sit back, get comfortable, relax, let your hands and arms hang down to your sides and dream. Think about a person you know that needs some caring, maybe a family member, maybe a friend. Now picture yourself going to them and becoming a Christian caring person to them. What will you do? What will you say to them? Now picture in your mind Jesus coming with you and whispering to you the correct words to say and Jesus helping you.

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FINAL EXAM:

With your mentor, find a care-needer that is a stranger to you. Ask your mentor to video tape you visiting with this care-needer. You are to demonstrate the things you learned as a caregiver.