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Care of the elderly: Golden or Burden?

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The healthcare for the elderly has indeed arrived at the right moment, at a time when the elderly population in the world is increasing and needs better attention. The increase in life expectancy is glaring across the globe and Singapore is no exception. The government has been building many nursing homes to accommodate to the increase needs of our elderly. However, our biggest challenge is getting the right attitude and competent staff to provide this delicate care for our elderly. The reality of caregiving is, it is stressful, and be it at home or nursing home or skilled nursing facilities. Unfortunately, not everyone is suited to this role. It really takes a special commitment to any caregiver to provide care to the elderly with passion. Even more so when our caregivers are foreigners and many of them came over for just a job. Let's face it, caring for the elderly is a very labor intensive job, and is emotionally trying to say the least. Even more trying is the added responsibility when the elderly has behavior issues or getting sicker.

On the other side of the coin, I passionately believe that ageing means changing- a potentially rich progression through life. We can't avoid the process of growing older, but we can avoid atrophy of the spirit. Caring for the elderly is like taking care of our young children, they are most precious and vulnerable. Hence, it reflects poorly on caregivers when they are mistreated when they are admitted to our facilities as our duty is to look after and cherish them.

The question is: Caring for the elderly, is it a burden or golden?

Biography

Angie Ng has more than 40 years of extensive healthcare experience working in the public and private hospitals both in Malaysia and Singapore providing nursing leadership, management, and nursing education expertise. She obtained her Doctorate in Education from the University of Western Australia at the age of 53 competing among the younger generations. Currently, she is the Director of Nursing in one of the largest private nursing home in Singapore.

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