

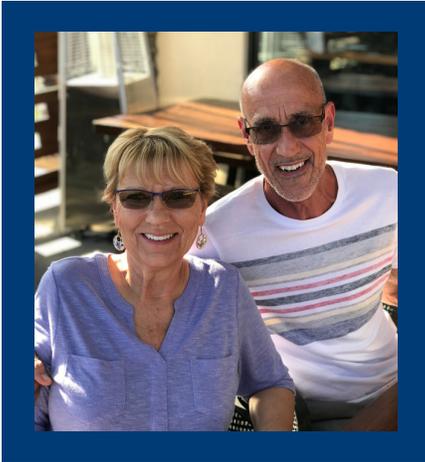
Care For the Caregivers Relief Program



CFTC -Grant Recipient

*Diagnosis of loved one - Alzheimer's
Age at diagnosis: 60's*

Meet Don and Lauren



*"If you can't laugh,
you might as well
pack it in."*

-Don.

Local to San Diego
County and
married almost
half a century (47
years and
counting!), Don
and Lauren have

always found love in going dancing together.

But then Lauren started showing signs of Alzheimer's at the age of 63 and in the past few years fear and uncertainty (common symptoms of Alzheimer's) has made it difficult for Lauren to leave the house. So Don brings Motown to Lauren now with music on the daily to lighten the mood.

Don was referred to us by a professional in the dementia care and support industry. After the approval process, we get on video chat with every CFTC Relief Grant candidate in order to understand their situation, what resources they have, don't have, or don't even know exists because their priority is the care of their loved one, not navigate the broken caregiving resource system.

The entire time Don was on the video chat with us it was clear Lauren was still in the back of his mind.

His other half, his life partner, is more than a number one priority. Like a parent to a toddler, he can't - he

won't shut it off; down to the detail of where every item in the house is placed for her safety and the safety of the item - anything he can't risk getting thrown away is locked away. He wonders about her health, how to engage her since she won't leave the house, and how he'll care for her as the physical decline continues if she won't accept help from others.

Degenerative brain diseases like Alzheimer's impacts whatever part of the brain is being destroyed. Personality, mobility, inhibition, behavior can all be impacted. **Don must live in his wife's reality, wherever that may be from day to day**, and he does it without hesitation.

What do you wish the public understood? *"I wish they understood how challenging it is to care for someone who doesn't appreciate everything you do for them. It is truly a selfless act of service. Living with someone who has Alzheimer's is also very lonely. The inability of your partner to communicate with you can be isolating."*

Gardening and Sunday dinners with family have become his therapy. The CFTC Relief Grant has given Don the opportunity to address personal health issues he has been forced to put second to caregiving expenses. The personalized resource package included with the grant provides additional care support options for continued resource options.

Don, THANK YOU for all that you do and for sharing your story.

