Keeping Your Loved One at Home

Steps from Start to Finish:

- **When may it be time to start looking for help:**
  - When you the care partner experiences:
    - Irritability and resentment
    - Loss of sleep
    - Increased susceptibility to colds and flu
    - Overwhelmed
  - When you or your loved one experiences difficulty with:
    - Housekeeping, shopping, meal preparation
    - Personal tasks:
      - Bathing or dressing
      - Toileting
      - Grooming
      - Walking and transferring from one place to the next
    - Driving to appointments and errands
    - Confusion or signs of memory impairment
    - Errors with taking medications
      - Wrong medication
      - Wrong time

- **Education:**
  - What type of services are available:
    - **Homemaker Services** – Can include help with cooking, light cleaning, laundry, grocery shopping, and other household chores.
    - **Personal Care** – Assistance with a variety of daily living activities such as bathing, dressing, toilet use, grooming and eating.
    - **Companionship** – From daily telephone calls from a "buddy", to a daily "friendly" visitor, to round-the-clock paid companions.
    - **Home Health Care** – Skilled care that can include nursing; speech, occupational, physical, or respiratory therapy; home health aides, and social work or psychiatric care.
    - **Adult Day Care** – Daily, facility-based programs in a community center setting for seniors who need monitoring or companionship during the day.
    - **Hospice Care** – Medical, social, and emotional services for the terminally ill and their families.
How to start locating help:

- **Who to call:** (Referrals are usually the best place to start)
  - Ask friends and family
  - Support group(s)
  - Medical professionals

- **Conduct phone inquiries:**
  - Are they licensed
  - What are the rates
    - Do they require a deposit
    - Minimums
  - Flexibility with your needs
  - Background screenings
  - Insured and bonded
  - Training

- **Setup two - three interviews in your home:**
  - Develop a set of interview questions
  - Include your family member in the interview process
  - Describe your current situation and needs
    - Be as concise and clear – do not rush
    - Ask how the service provider would deal with various situations (ex. Usually, Julie is loving and caring, but occasionally, due to her condition, she may get paranoid and belligerent. How would you handle this situation?)
  - Ask for references of recent clients
  - How soon can they start services
  - How will they match the caregiver
    - Does the caregiver have the skills necessary for the position
    - Does the caregiver personality fit
    - Can the caregiver be trusted in your home

Now you have hired a company – What is next:

- If problems arise – discuss with the caregiver first
- If the problem is not resolved – contact the company
- Request a new caregiver if problems are not resolved or personalities do not mesh
- Expect visits from the company to review needs
- Communication is the key between all of you