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1) Yoga Today!

"Yoga for Caregivers" with Dr. Susan Bone meets again today at 12:20 p.m. in the Pine Tree room at the Payne Center at Southern Miss. Those who have attended are becoming big fans. The session is done in chairs, so everyday clothing is appropriate. Hope to see you there!

2) Financial Caregiving 101 by Lee Smith, MBA, and long-distance caregiver

Unfortunately, the basic money management task of balancing our checkbooks is not taught in most schools and usually not taught by our parents. As a caregiver, the simple act of balancing a checkbook gives great insight into any progressive dementia that may be occurring with our loved one. The caregiver needs to watch for unusual payees, extraordinarily large or small check amounts, loss of sequential checks, failure to record payees or amounts of checks written. Often, the person being cared for will become numerically dysfunctional and be unable to distinguish between 10s, 100s or 1000s. Simple adding or subtracting becomes nearly impossible because of the inability to distinguish numeral placement. At some point, the caregiver will need to have a limited, financial power-of-attorney because the person being cared for either realizes he or she is unable to attend to their financial affairs or the caregiver simply has to convince the person it is in his or her best interest to have a trustee attend to financial affairs. This step requires the highest level of trust on the part of person for which care is being given, and an even higher level of integrity on the part of the person assuming fiscal responsibility.

The following is a step-by-step guide to balancing a checkbook:

Step One: Reconcile Your Checks - Place them in numerical order to find gaps in the sequence and determine if the check was spoiled or is outstanding.

Step Two: Reconcile Your Deposits - Make sure each deposit shown on your bank statement is recorded in your check register. Often older adults forget about direct deposit for Social Security, Veteran's or pension benefits.

Step Three: Reconcile Your ATM Withdrawals and Debit Card Purchases - Go through the same process with your ATM withdrawals or debit card purchases, checking off each transaction on the bank statement in your check register. If the bank shows transactions that aren't included in your check register, record them now.

Step Four: Record Interest Earned and Bank Fees - Check your bank statement for any other fees and record them in your checkbook register.

Also record any interest earned in your checkbook register.

Step Five: Complete the Balancing Form - Most banks provide a form on the back of your bank statement that you can use to balance your checkbook.

A good tip to assist with reconciling is to obtain and use a printing calculator. The tape produced can then be attached to the bank form as a proof. Adapted from:

<http://financialplan.about.com/cs/personalfinance/a/CheckbookBalanc.htm>

Retrieved 15 June 2005

Additional resources:

Learn personal finance skills and money management:

<http://www.moneyinstructor.com/>