

Sandra Levine

DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER | KEYNOTE SPEAKER | CAREGIVER

Inspiring Stressed-Out Caregivers to Speak Up & Seek Help



SIGNATURE PROGRAM

THE CHAOS OF CAREGIVING & STORIES OF HEALING

When a serious medical condition strikes, all hands come on deck to save the patient. Often, little attention is paid to the family caregiver whose world also turns upside down, and whose life can become chaotic, depressing, and lonely.

Documentary filmmaker Sandra Levine motivates overwhelmed caregivers to advocate for their loved ones and themselves, as she shares astonishing stories from her own harrowing experiences as a caregiver. A poignant, short film she produced may be shown during the presentation, which keeps audience members riveted and engaged.

Caregivers learn practical solutions to boost self-care and begin bringing peace, joy, and passion back into their lives. They're empowered by reflecting on their own resilience, gaining confidence and renewed purpose, and discovering the silver lining of caregiving.

Sandra Levine has been a television producer and filmmaker for more than 30 years, creating inspiring and insightful stories and documentaries that have been nominated 10 times for regional Emmy Awards. She has also spent much of the past 20 years as a caregiver and care manager, first for her husband, Michael, who suffered a brain injury from a rare neurological illness, and then for her mother, Dorothy, who has Alzheimer's disease.

She has in-depth knowledge of the physical, emotional, and financial impact of chronic illness on patients and family members. With her expertise in inspirational storytelling, Sandra is uniquely qualified to draw attention to the unmet needs of stressed-out caregivers and health care professionals.

Sandra Levine's husband, Michael, awoke one late October morning and complained about a numb left hand, as Sandra was getting their infant daughter ready for her first Halloween parade.

Tragically, Michael was experiencing the onset of a devastating brain injury due to Acute Disseminated Encephalomyelitis – a rare neurological illness that leaves patients who survive with physical, cognitive, and emotional problems similar to those caused by a severe stroke.

Not long after the worst of that crisis was behind them, family members noticed signs of dementia in Sandra's mother, Dorothy. Sandra spent more than five years honoring her mom's biggest wish—to remain in her own home. The excruciating process of switching parent/child roles, and watching her brilliant mother slowly slip away, eventually brought Sandra to a place of peace: She learned to meet her mom exactly where she is—every day of her journey.



THE CHAOS OF CAREGIVING & STORIES OF HEALING



Sandra's presentation will inspire audience members to:

- Strengthen their advocacy for their loved ones and themselves
- Identify resources to boost their community of caring
- Choose specific activities to reignite self-care
- Reduce shame over negative feelings like guilt and anger, to begin the process of emotional healing
- Become emboldened by their own resilience in overcoming adversity
- Find new value and meaning in their role as a caregiver

This inspirational speech on resilience appeals to all audiences. It is particularly relevant to groups interested in: caregiving, brain injury, stroke, Alzheimer's disease, compassion fatigue, and health care.

CLIENTS INCLUDE

**HEALTHSOUTH REHABILITATION HOSPITAL,
NATIONAL CAREGIVERS CONFERENCE, OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE,
CENTRAL NEW JERSEY MENSA**

"When Sandy was speaking the audience was completely engaged. People were relating on so many levels: as caregivers, wives, mothers, daughters, and professionals. Sandy was wonderful. I loved her speech."

- Mary Jo Sites, Registered Nurse

"Sandra portrays the complex process of learning to find the sacred in what to some are the mundane tasks of living, including how to make meaning of the traumatic experiences in order to let go of the past and move forward with life."

- Harriet Cohen, Associate Professor of Social Work, Texas Christian University

"Sandra has a gift for not only telling the facts but conveying the emotions and personal stories attached to the numbers. What a gift her story is to individuals and families going through brain injuries. She gives hope, yet doesn't gloss over the difficulties."

- Dawn Bunyon, Director of Resource Development, United Way of Ocean County

Book Sandra Levine
to Inspire Your
Stressed-Out Caregivers
to Speak Up & Seek Help

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