



A Show of Support

Caring for a person with a progressive memory disorder such as Alzheimer's or dementia can be physically and emotionally daunting, oftentimes pushing caregivers to feel they've reached their limits. This is why FIU's Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences partnered with the Brain Center in Miami to develop a workshop for the growing community of such caregivers.

The collaborative program to help caregivers balance their duties and personal circumstances was prompted by Brain Center staff who witnessed the strain on caregivers, especially family members who didn't have a health care background.

FIU OT clinical faculty and licensed therapists Alma Abdel-Moty, Dr.OT., Hector Huerta, ODT, and FIU Physical Therapy (PT) clinical education director Teresa Muñecas, DPT, spearheaded the program's curriculum and roll-out in spring 2018.

With the collaboration of other OT and PT faculty, nearly 60 participants have benefited from the workshops through learning proper care-giving techniques; the DementiaLive™ Experience to build empathy; group therapy to share and address emotional burdens; and self-care exercises to help them regain their individuality outside the caregiver role.

According to Dr. Huerta, the OT mantra, "live life to its fullest," applies equally for the caregiver who has dedicated their life providing complete care to someone else.

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