



caregivers

We train family, professional, and clinical caregivers to develop and apply mindfulness for engaged care.



volunteers

We offer an opportunity to cultivate awareness and compassion by caring for those with chronic and terminal illness.



partners

We pursue better caregiving through partnering with networks of inspired people and organizations.

2020

Impact Report

Message from the Executive Director

Dear friends,

During this topsy-turvy year Zen Caregiving Project has pivoted, adapted and worked hard to support caregivers, knowing that they need support now more than ever. You stayed with us through the pandemic so we could continue to support persons caring for those living with chronic and terminal illness. Thank you.

Below are some of our major achievements this year that you have helped to make happen. We are proud of what we have accomplished and know there is so much more we could be doing. Your support will help us continue our unique and meaningful work serving caregivers as we approach 2021. It's been a busy year:

- We ran a total of 27 free sessions to support our wider community through the pandemic, reaching 1700 people.
- We developed and rolled out a Chinese-Language version of our Mindful Family Caregiving course in partnership with the Chinese American Coalition for Compassionate Care.
- We designed and launched a Train-the-Trainer pilot program with staff at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital to support family caregivers.
- We transitioned our Volunteer Program to online programming, making it possible for volunteers amidst the pandemic to continue their service with remote face-time sessions with patients of Laguna Honda Hospital.
- We designed and began recruiting for a research trial of our Mindful Family Caregiving program, in partnership with academics from University of California Davis.

We continue to build upon and honor our history of caring for persons at the end-of-life with mindfulness and compassion by taking what we've learned and making it available to all burdened caregivers. We are optimistic about what 2021 brings, and with your support, we will be able to continue to increase our positive impact supporting clinical, professional, and family caregivers and those they care for.

With you in service,



Roy Remer, Executive Director

Board of Directors

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Partner Focus:

Partnering with Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital to support family caregivers

The problem

When hospital clinicians have consultations with their terminally ill patients, the patient is often accompanied by a family member or friend. In many cases, this family member or friend is also providing some kind of care for the patient – driving them to appointments, picking up groceries, helping with medication, doing cooking etc. These family and friends are in the role of family caregiver.

We know from research and our own work that family caregiving can bring purpose and connection, but can also bring challenge and stress, with caregivers that feel burdened being at higher risk of depression and burnout, which in turn impact their ability to provide care.

Hospitals want to support the family caregivers they are in contact with, but funding this support is challenging with health-insurance being tied to treatment for the patient and not support for caregivers. In facilities like [Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital](#) (ZSGH), whose patients are primarily from underserved backgrounds with no private healthcare insurance, there are few funds to hire in external organizations to provide support to caregivers on an ongoing basis.

To solve this problem Zen Caregiving Project (ZCP) and ZSFG received funding from the [Stupski Foundation](#) to create a sustainable Train-the-Trainer program in which hospital staff are trained to deliver support sessions to family caregivers.

The program

ZCP's [Mindful Caregiving Education](#) (MCE) teaches mindfulness-based approaches and tools to build the emotional resilience of caregivers, reducing their stress and likelihood of burnout. MCE courses are traditionally taught by instructors with decades of mindfulness and meditation practice, but we realized that time-poor hospital staff wouldn't be able to attend extensive training. To overcome this time-barrier our team has created lesson plans, exercises and recorded videos explaining the key concepts within MCE. Hospital staff will then be trained by our experienced instructors in how to facilitate family caregiver groups using these ready-made materials. In this way we reduce staff training requirements from months to 11 hours while ensuring the quality of the teaching is maintained.

After the 11-hour training, facilitators will lead courses for family caregivers, with each course consisting of six two-hour sessions. Family caregivers can drop in to one session or attend all six. All of our staff training, and all of the sessions will be run online via Zoom due to the particular health risks of COVID with a vulnerable population.

By training staff, and providing materials, we are enabling ZSFG to provide support to family caregivers in a low-cost and sustainable way. And we know that by supporting caregivers the hospital will also be supporting the patients they care for.

Partner Focus:

How we are reaching Chinese-speaking caregivers

This August marked almost a year since we partnered with the Chinese American Coalition for Compassionate Care (CACCC) to translate our Mindful Family Caregiving course into Chinese. In that year we've trained volunteers, translated the course and [CACCC](#) have launched the first "Mindful Self-Care for Caregivers" in Chinese. Phew! Below we share more about the process and the outcomes and what's next.

The need for translation

According to the most recent census data, 21% of the US population speak a language other than English at home. Of these, 12% (7.3 million people) don't speak English well, or don't speak it at all. This data, coupled with our own experience supporting caregivers in a linguistically diverse area, made it clear that we needed to start offering our family caregiving support in languages other than English.



In August 2019 we partnered with [CACCC](#) to translate our [Mindful Family Caregiving](#) course into Chinese and to train Chinese-speaking volunteers to deliver the course. With over 1 million Chinese speakers in California alone, over half of whom feel they speak English "less than well", we knew this project would be meeting a real need.

The process

The translation process had three main stages.

Stage 1: All volunteers took our Mindful Family Caregiving (in-person) allowing the team to see what elements of the course translated well to Chinese, and which didn't.

Stage 2: The team selected which modules to bring into the new Chinese course, and all materials were translated, including lesson plans, support documents and handouts.

Stage 3: Volunteers received more training on Mindful Family Caregiving content and teaching skills which, thanks to COVID-19, was all conducted online via zoom.

Finally, the teaching!

In August 2020, Mindful Self-Care for Caregivers Training was launched. It is an online, 8-week course in Chinese, taught via zoom.

The class reached its max capacity at 12 students, with another course being run in October 2020. Results from the first cohort show that 100% rated the course excellent or very good, and everyone agreed the course would help them use mindfulness in their caregiving, be a better caregiver and feel a greater sense of wellbeing. During these first courses, the Zen Caregiving Project instructors have been observing the teaching and providing feedback to the volunteers, helping them deliver the highest quality experience and support for course participants.

Thanks to our other Partners



Laguna Honda Hospital

Institute on Aging

Curry Senior Center

San Francisco In-Home Support Services

Community Forward SF

Cambia Health Solutions

Caring Across Generations

Ever Presence

The Presence Care Project

Caregiver Focus:

How ZCP sessions have helped me in my work



Joan's story

I am a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and have worked for Hospice of Wichita Falls in Texas for the past eight years, with the last three years being in the Bereavement Department. My role involves working with people who have lost a loved one and helping them process and work with their grief.

In such emotionally charged work, I know that I am susceptible to compassion fatigue. Being able to support others when they are suffering is an honor, but it can also be emotionally tiring. I know that there is a very fine line between compassion fatigue and burnout, and I often walk that line.

ZCPs sessions have helped me recognize the importance of practicing *regular* self-care, and that it is necessary for me to look after myself in order to take care of my patients, my family and my colleagues. As a counsellor I do know that self-care is important, but I don't have a lot of people advocating and affirming that it is necessary for me to do on a regular basis. And with my busy job, with lots of multitasking: sending emails, phone-calls, counseling clients and families, it's easy to say to myself "I'll do one more thing, just one more, and one more" and never stop. The sessions from ZCP have taught me about the benefits of even little moments of mindfulness, stopping in the middle of the business of the day and saying, "OK Joan, sit back and take three deep breaths". Or practicing a one-minute meditation with my hand on my heart.

And if there are evenings that I finish work and I am still really wound up or have "monkey mind" (as Roy refers to it), that's when I will go and re-watch a recording of one of the sessions, which are posted on the ZCP website, and I feel more grounded and calm.

What I've learned in the sessions I'm using at work too. I am slowly introducing mindfulness techniques to a weekly grief group I run on zoom. Many of the people that attend the group are widows who have been "doing, doing, doing" all their lives so it is not in their nature to slow down and take time for themselves.

But when they do, when they breathe and have the space to listen to their heart, the tears come, and I am there to let them know that it is OK, and that crying is natural and healthy.

I had known some of these mindfulness techniques from doing mindfulness years ago, but if you don't have someone reminding you about them regularly you forget them. Having these sessions has helped me remember ways to share mindfulness as well as learn new techniques and practices.

I am deeply grateful for the ZCP sessions and appreciate the team so much. I feel a strong sense of community with ZCP and those that attend the session and feel so supported by what ZCP offers. The way I look at it, ZCP supports me so that I can continue my work supporting and helping others. What a nice way to share and support each other as a community.



Quotes from our course attendees:

“ I really appreciated the safe supportive environment that was provided and the knowledge that the others in the room were experiencing similar challenges.

“ This is an eye opening and life changing class. It provides depth and the methods of being a caregiver.

“ I was reminded how humanity contains this amazing ability of empathy, compassion and such courage. Inspired mentors lead the group and I love them for giving my heart back to me.

“ I realize I ALWAYS have a choice and that I am choosing what I do, and how I feel about it. That gives me a sense of freedom instead of entrapment.

Donor Focus:

Why I support Zen Caregiving Project

Nancy Wakeman has been a supporter of Zen Caregiving Project for over 25 years. Here we explore her relationship with the organization, why she continues to support us, and her thoughts on the organization's impact.



Nancy first heard about Zen Caregiving Project, then called Zen Hospice Project, in the early 1990s. It was a time of change and transition for her: she had lost two friends over a short period and had spent time caring at home for her father who had a stroke that was eventually fatal. During this difficult time, Nancy started to explore meditation and saw an announcement for the Zen Hospice Project Volunteer program, which combined her desire to explore and process her loss, her interest in meditation, and her drive to help others.

After completing the 40-hour Volunteer Program training Nancy volunteered for a year with Zen Hospice Project in the palliative care ward at the Laguna Honda Hospital. When asked what she had learned from the experience she shared her three main takeaways:

“ I learned a lot. I learned that everything changes in life. Even though I often assume there is stability in my life, I know that everything is still always changing. I learned the value of being in the moment. And although you can't always be in the moment, I am now more aware of when I'm not. When I am not being present to what's going on right now, I can become more judgmental and opinionated. When I am in the moment, I know everything is as it is, and I don't feel I need anything else.

Finally, I learned the power of being with other people. We are all in life together and in a way, we are all one, even though we are all different.

Nancy has continued to support and donate to the organization as it has evolved and changed. She volunteered in the kitchen at the Guest House care facility, later supporting the organization as we closed the Guest House, leading to a greater focus on the education program and volunteering. When asked what moves her to continue to donate to the organization she shared:

“ I think sitting with people who are dying is really important work, as is supporting caregivers. When my father had a stroke, my mother and I cared for him at home with the support of a nurse. During the day it was my mother and I who cared for him, moving him in his bed, dampening his mouth with water, cleaning him. I understand first-hand how challenging caring for someone you love can be and how essential support is to those in that role.

It is so important to provide resources to caregivers because we, as a society, are reliant on having people in the community who are willing to provide care.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank Nancy for her financial support of the organization across the years, her engagement with our mission, and her support of our staff and work.

Thanks to our Supporters



\$3,000 and greater

May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust

Stupski Foundation

Estate of Susanne Dowouis

Estate of Michael Carmichael

Susan McLaughlin Family Foundation

The Holly Fund

Nancy Wakeman

The Bloom Project

Vivian Schneider

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Donald and Carole Chaiken

Mission and Values

Our Mission

Our mission is to enhance the experience of care for caregivers and care recipients and to inspire each other to live fully in the face of the universal experience of loss. We do this through teaching mindfulness and compassion as practical tools to improve well-being, and by using conversation to bring loss out into the open.

Our Values

We see caregiving as a meaningful and deeply human activity.

Service

We believe that serving others is a meeting of equals and is mutually beneficial.

Connection

We welcome all persons to heal through deep connection and community, based on shared humanity.

Universality of Loss

We recognize and accept that the experience of loss is universal and unites us in shared vulnerability.

Spirituality

We are rooted in the Zen Buddhist tradition, teaching that all beings are united by their dependence on one another.

Compassion

We are committed to witnessing and meeting suffering with an open heart.

Mindfulness

We practice being with things as they are, without judgment.

Annual Financials

for the year ending December 31, 2020

Income

Contributions	\$ 773,525
Tuition and Fees	\$ 79,227
Investment Income	\$ 7,555
Other	\$ 152

Total Income \$860,459

Expenses

Program	\$ 282,003
Management	\$ 326,516
Fundraising	\$ 19,199

Total Expenses \$627,718

Net Operating \$232,741

Assets

Bank Accounts	\$ 2,038,885
Accounts Receivable	\$ 24,791
Other	\$ 22,881

Total Assets \$ 2,086,557

Liabilities

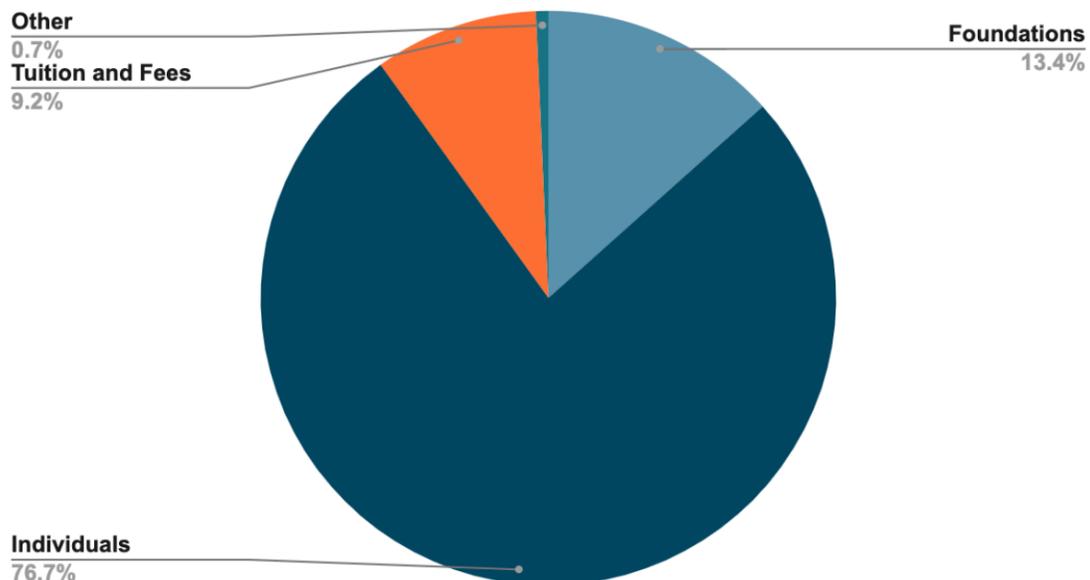
Accounts Payable	\$ 1,226
Accrued Liabilities	\$ 52,948
Payroll Protection	\$ 90,043

Total Liabilities \$ 144,217

Total Net Assets \$ 1,942,340

Total Liabilities & Equity \$ 2,086,557

Income Resources





Zen Caregiving Project
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We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (EIN #94-3155375) that teaches mindfulness and compassion to improve well-being and care.