CAREGIVING & TBI: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Discussion Questions

- Carolyn Rocchio remarks that acting as caregiver for an elderly parent and acting as caregiver for a family member with a TBI are different. How might these situations be different?

- What might be worth keeping in mind when the family decides who the main caregiver should be for their loved one? What can the rest of the family do to support that main caregiver?

- A traumatic brain injury affects all members of a family. Doris asks Carolyn how she dealt with her son's injury within the family, so that her other kids didn't get "lost in the shuffle." Aside from patience, what are some strategies families can use to help each other cope?

- Carolyn was concerned that if her son was stopped by the local police they might think he was on drugs because of the effects of his TBI. To prevent that, Carolyn met with the police, shared Tim's challenges and made them part of his support network. What other communitybased strategies could be used to create a framework for success and support around a person with TBI?

- Part of what is lost when a loved one sustains a traumatic brain injury is the dynamic of the relationship between the person who is injured and the person who becomes the caregiver. Roles change as a wife tends to an injured husband, as mother tends to injured son. Sarah Wade notes how important it was to start to feel like a wife again, not just a caregiver. What are some ways that these relationships can be restored? Is it realistic to expect a return to the way it used to be?

- Ted, husband of Sarah Wade, got a parttime job working at a local market. Sarah notes how important it is for both of them to be part of the greater community, so as not to feel so alone. What can the community do to welcome people after an injury?

- Sarah Wade courageously admits to being burnt out as a caregiver. If you know someone who is caring for a loved one with a traumatic brain injury, what could you do to reach out to them in an effective way?