

Companion Care & Independent Living Support

Helping You or Someone You Love Remain Independent, Connected & Supported

Sometimes a person doesn't need traditional home health care—but they could use a little more support to continue living safely and meaningfully in their own home.

Merkaba Center for Healing now offers **private Companion Care & Independent Living Support in the Ludington, Manistee, and surrounding West Michigan area.**

This service is designed for older adults, individuals living with changes in memory or physical abilities, people recovering from illness or injury, and adults who simply benefit from having a knowledgeable and compassionate person alongside them.

My approach is grounded in more than 20 years of experience in occupational therapy, including home health, acute care, outpatient rehabilitation, neurological care, and upper-extremity rehabilitation.

Rather than focusing on what a person can no longer do, I look at **what they can do—and how we can support them in continuing to do it.**

More Than Companionship

There is tremendous value in simply having another person present.

Someone to have coffee with. Someone to take a walk with. Someone to help organize the day, prepare a meal, get to an appointment, work through a difficult task, or simply provide conversation and connection.

But my occupational therapy background allows me to bring another layer of awareness to that companionship.

I naturally look at the whole person:

How are they moving?

How are they navigating their home?

Are everyday tasks becoming more difficult?

Are memory, attention, fatigue, pain, or balance affecting their independence?

Could something be organized or adapted to make life easier?

What activities still bring meaning, enjoyment, and purpose to their day?

The goal is not to take over someone's life.

The goal is to provide the right amount of support so they can continue participating in it.

Who This Service May Be Helpful For

Companion Care & Independent Living Support may be a good fit for:

- Older adults who want to remain in their own homes
 - Someone who lives alone and would benefit from regular companionship and check-ins
 - Individuals experiencing mild changes in memory or cognition
 - Adults recovering after hospitalization, illness, or injury
 - Individuals with a history of brain injury or concussion
 - People living with neurological or physical challenges
 - Adults who need help maintaining routines and organization
 - Individuals who benefit from supervision or standby assistance
 - Someone who has stopped participating in hobbies or community activities and needs encouragement and support getting re-engaged
 - Families who live at a distance and would like another trusted person checking in
 - Family caregivers who need occasional respite
 - Adults with special needs who benefit from individualized community or daily-living support
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Ways I Can Help

Support is individualized to the person rather than provided from a predetermined checklist.

Depending upon your needs, our time together might include:

Companionship & Connection

Conversation, shared activities, walks, games, hobbies, reading, outings, or simply spending meaningful time together.

Daily Routines

Help organizing and moving through the day, establishing routines, preparing for appointments, remembering tasks, and completing everyday activities.

Cognitive & Memory Support

Gentle reminders, cueing, organization, calendars, routines, and strategies that support independence rather than immediately doing things for the person.

Meal Preparation

Preparing simple meals together or assisting with meal planning, groceries, and kitchen organization.

Light Household Support

Helping maintain an environment that is comfortable, organized, and easier to navigate.

Appointments & Community Activities

Assistance getting to appointments, shopping, errands, social activities, community events, or simply getting out of the house.

Walking & Activity

Encouragement and supervision with safe movement, walking, and staying engaged in meaningful activity.

Home Safety Awareness

Using my occupational therapy background to notice environmental obstacles or everyday activities that may be becoming more difficult or unsafe.

Rehabilitation Carryover

Helping someone follow through with routines or home programs already established by their licensed healthcare or rehabilitation providers.

Family Communication

With the client's permission, communicating observations and concerns with family members so everyone has a better understanding of how things are going at home.

Respite & Family Caregiver Support

Providing companionship and supervision so family caregivers can attend appointments, run errands, spend time away, or simply have a needed break.

My Background

Before opening Merkaba Center for Healing, I spent more than two decades working as an **Occupational Therapy Assistant**.

My clinical experience included:

Home Health • Acute Care • Outpatient Rehabilitation • Upper Extremity Rehabilitation

I hold a **Bachelor of Arts in Psychology** and an **Associate Degree in Occupational Therapy**.

I have also worked as an **Occupational Therapy Instructor**, teaching and mentoring future Occupational Therapy Assistants, and have school-based **paraprofessional experience working with students with special needs**.

Brain injury has been another significant area of my professional work.

I founded the **Pacific Northwest Head Injury Support Group** and served on the **Brain Injury Alliance of Oregon Board of Directors**, including serving as Secretary and President.

I was previously a **Certified Brain Injury Specialist (CBIS)**. Although I no longer maintain that certification, the education and decades of professional and community experience surrounding brain injury continue to inform how I understand cognition, fatigue, sensory needs, behavior, communication, and everyday function.

Today, I continue to own and operate **Merkaba Center for Healing, LLC**, providing individualized wellness services in Michigan as well as working with clients virtually.

An Occupational Therapy Perspective

One of the most important things occupational therapy taught me is this:

Doing everything for someone isn't always helping them.

If someone can still make their own sandwich, fold their laundry, choose their clothes, water their plants, walk to the mailbox, make a grocery list, or participate in preparing dinner, those activities matter.

They are not simply chores.

They are pieces of independence, identity, confidence, cognition, movement, and purpose.

Sometimes a person simply needs more time.

Sometimes they need a reminder.

Sometimes the environment needs to be arranged differently.

Sometimes a task needs to be simplified.

And sometimes they need another person nearby so they feel safe enough to continue doing it themselves.

My role is to recognize the difference.

Whole-Person Care

My years since traditional occupational therapy have expanded the way I understand the nervous system, body awareness, stress, trauma, and the relationship between physical and emotional well-being.

When appropriate, I bring that awareness into how I communicate, pace activities, create a calm environment, and support someone through their day.

This does **not** mean every companion-care visit becomes a Merkaba healing session.

Companion care is its own service.

My additional training simply influences the way I show up: with patience, observation, respect, curiosity, and an understanding that each person is more than a diagnosis, age, injury, or limitation.

Physical Assistance & Safety

It is important that we are a good match.

My companion-care services are best suited for individuals who are **ambulatory or require minimal physical assistance**.

I can provide:

- Supervision
- Verbal and visual cueing
- Standby assistance
- Safety awareness
- Light physical assistance
- Support with daily routines and activities

I am not currently accepting clients who require **frequent heavy lifting, dependent transfers, extensive bed mobility, or routine two-person physical assistance**.

If someone's care needs have progressed beyond what I can safely provide, I will be transparent about that.

What This Service Is — And Isn't

Companion Care & Independent Living Support is a **private, non-medical support service**.

It is not a replacement for skilled nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, medical care, emergency services, or other licensed healthcare services.

I do not diagnose medical conditions or provide occupational therapy treatment through this service.

Instead, I bring my previous clinical experience into the way I observe, communicate, problem-solve, and support everyday life.

When a need falls outside my scope, I encourage families to involve the appropriate healthcare professional.

A Good Match Matters

Before beginning services, we will talk about the individual's needs, abilities, routines, interests, personality, home environment, and the type of support the family is looking for.

Just as importantly, we will determine whether **I am the right person for them.**

Companion care is personal.

Trust, comfort, communication, and connection matter.

I want the person receiving care to have a voice in that decision whenever possible.

Serving West Michigan

Private Companion Care & Independent Living Support is available in **Ludington, Manistee, and surrounding West Michigan communities.**

Services may be arranged for:

Regular weekly visits • Occasional support • Family caregiver respite • Appointment or community support • Short-term recovery support

Availability varies around my Merkaba Center for Healing client and teaching schedule.

Let's Talk About What You Need

If you are looking for support for yourself, a parent, an adult child, another family member, or someone you care about, you are welcome to reach out.

We can begin with a conversation about what is happening now, where additional support would be helpful, and whether my experience and approach are a good match.

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Supporting independence. Preserving dignity. Staying connected to what makes life meaningful.