

Parents Are Hard To Raise S02 E80 Show Transcript

[00:00:00] The world is becoming a dangerous place for us women. Lipstick bodyguard looks just like an innocent little lipstick, but it will instantly drop any attacker to his knees so you can get away unharmed. Lipstick Bodyguard. Fear no evil. Get yours today only at lipstickbodyguard.com.

Announcer: [00:00:38] Our generation is known for valuing our independence. Our aging parents are no different. But for those with certain chronic medical conditions, remaining independent often means risking our physical health. By combining Artificial Intelligence with a simple phone call, Diane's guest, **Wolf Shlagman, CEO of Care Angel** is changing all that.

[00:01:01] Parents Are Hard To Raise is now available on Spotify and it's 180 million monthly subscribers.

Diane: [00:01:19] Welcome to Parents Are Hard to Raise. Helping families grow older together without losing their minds. I am elder care expert Diane Berardi.

[00:01:29] Some of the most brilliant minds in the field say that the answer to our future health care crisis lies in the palm of our hands. My guest this week is one of them. Wolf Shlagman is an innovator in every sense of the word. Since the earliest days of digital health, nearly 20 years ago, he's been using technology and cognitive science to shape and transform the way healthcare is delivered. He's the founder and CEO of Care Angel, a technology firm that is revolutionizing the way people care for their aging loved ones. And I know he shares my own passions of improving people's lives and reducing the challenges, isolation and complications that can often go along with aging. Wolf Shlagman, welcome to Parents Are Hard To Raise.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:02:18] Thank you. Thank you very much for having me on a Friday early evening.

Diane: [00:02:24] Well we're so happy to have you. And I know the guys in the booth are laughing because I must've pronounced your last name wrong. I want to tell everyone, I said before we started. I asked Wolf how do you pronounce your name? And he told me. And I knew it. But then I probably butchered it. And I promised I wouldn't. I'm sorry! [laughing].

Wolf Shlagman: [00:02:43] No worries. No worries.

[00:02:49] Wolf... Could You tell us about Care Angel. What does your company do?

Wolf Shlagman: [00:02:53] So, I think, we kind of looked at the challenge that we have as a society, in helping to care for the sickest and the neediest, in many cases being the aging populations, our loved ones. Parents, in-laws, grandparents.

[00:03:11] And in many cases, we were now living our own lives if you will. J With jobs, kids, just the husband, wives and just all that life has to bring. But how do we know our loved ones are doing okay? How do we know they have a need or an issue that we would love to help with?

[00:03:36] So we created Angel. And she is the world's first AI and voice powered virtual caregiver that's assisting, in some cases, again, depending on who are working with, families, sometimes working with insurance companies or providers, doctors, to really extend their ability-- extend the human touch, if you will, with a simple phone call. Reach out and check in and find out what if

there is a need or an issue, how they're feeling, if they need medications or anything then you and I may take for granted. But realizing that you're dealing with isolation you're dealing with aging populations that have you know certain needs that they may not go out of the way to pick up a phone and again reach out and feeling a burden.

[00:04:25] So in a nutshell, we're really using technology to really scale the ability to extend the human touch. So I think that that's really a real vision that we have to really care more efficiently, more intelligently, more consistently, by using technology to do some of the things that are repetitive, that are in some cases robotic, and in some cases that are just not being done. Because today we don't have the resources to actually care for as many people as you need to.

[00:04:59] So we kinda have a couple different paths, if you will. We we work with some and we did some early work with AARP, in Canada CARP, where we were empowering from a individual perspective. Because caregiving is now I think one out of four roughly people is a caregiver for aging parents.

Diane: [00:05:25] Yeah. Right.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:05:26] You know the research as well, if not better. And the impacts of course the whole family ecosystem. Where it's impacting the family members, their work, their life. And so with AARP we did an earlier work where we were giving some of their members the ability to let Angel know who they needed help with and caring and checking in on.

[00:05:54] So they would let them know it's my mom. So they would fill out a simple online register. They would then tell Angel, through our care wizard, You know it's my mom. This is her phone number. She would ask a few simple questions like, what's mum's overall health? Does she have to measure blood pressure? What about her blood sugar? What about her weight? What about her... You could say I don't know, I'm not sure. If you know, you know. Your mom take medications? Yes. Do you know... You And we basically say, by the way, if she's got diabetes, have, you know, the main conditions... Here are the common medications, just pick any of them. If you're not sure, just put "not sure." And then you go, great. You want to record a message for your mom? Wonderful.

[00:06:40] And then you put in when you want to reach out to your mom. Days and time. And then Angel will start reaching out. Could be every day. Could be once, twice, three times a week. Whatever makes sense.

[00:06:50] And Angel quickly reach out, deliver that message. So you would have Angel initially the first time you says... "This is Angel. Your Son Wolf set me up so I can help care and check in and see if you knew anything, so to make sure you happy, healthy, safe. And I'm a virtual health assistant and I'm just going to simply call you Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Or just once a week, what have you. And be able to let them know if you have any needs or issues. It's simple.

[00:07:28] And so it begins. And so, Angel will call and she may deliver a personal message that I might have delivered, during the calls. As an example, my mom has Angel call her. And when she does, she gets to hear my daughter, her granddaughter, basically provide "Hi Grandma, hope you had a beautiful day. Love you..."

[00:07:54] And so, Angel says I have a personal message to deliver that you hear. And then she goes, "Let's begin. How are you feeling? Did you take your medications? Did you take your blood pressure?" Yes. "What was it?" "Do you need anything?"

[00:08:08] So, it's a simple little, like one minute Check-in. And if there's a problem, a need, the blood pressure seems to be high... something. She'll say, "You know, I heard you say you weren't feeling well. Your blood pressure was high. You ran out of medications. Would you like me to connect you with your son, Wolf? Or with your doctor, Dr. Jones? Or it could be a nurse line...

[00:08:28] Because when I set up, in this case my mom, let's say I put there myself, I put there my brother, it could be the doctor. So simply put, it gives you choices to access resources. But I'm going to get alerted. So I will get an alert, letting me know that there is an issue, and I can call my mom right away to help take care of it.

[00:08:56] With technology like what we have, we are able to touch a lot of people. 'Cause all you need is a phone. Right? .

Diane: [00:09:01] Right.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:09:01] Any Phone... So it make it easier. But because before, the primary way to manage and monitor patients, especially seniors, was to call them... but with real people.

Diane: [00:09:12] Right. Yes exactly.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:09:15] And IVR has been used as well, here and there. But we've kind of taken it to another level by making it a stupid simple. And we can get a whole population of people in that file can tell us what conditions they are, their names, phone number, date of birth, and you name it.

[00:09:30] Then we personalize that care conversation. And the idea is that you're able to in mass help care for a lot of people that normally haven't gotten almost no care in their home and people spend 90- 95 percent of the time in their home..

Diane: [00:09:45] In their home. Exactly.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:09:47] Not in their doctor's office.

Diane: [00:09:47] No. You're right. And the loneliness. The isolation... So this is wonderful, because someone's calling and they're checking up on them, and they're conversing with them.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:09:59] Yeah. And I mean I think that today we're getting very very comfortable with your phone, right? You're able to talk to your phone whether it's Siri or you have the Alexa. Or today, you call up any company, any airline, any Fortune 500 company... You will have an automated attendant of some sort. Now they've gotten better to the point where American Airlines and they'll say, "Hi Wolf. How can I help you today? Would you like a new or is this an existing reservation? So it helps you get the outcome you want. And the point is that people are getting more and more familiar with being able to engage with more assistance, virtual assistants of one sort or another.

[00:10:40] So we're just applying it to healthcare in a more proactive way. And I think that's the future... Using Technology to really help care for a lot more people.

Diane: [00:10:52] A lot more people. Okay. We're going to continue talking to Wolf Shlagman from Care Angel. But if you're a woman, or there's a woman in your life, I'm going to tell you something that you absolutely need to know.

[00:11:05] I Want to tell you about my friend Katie. Katie is a nurse and she was attacked on her way home from work. She was totally taken by surprise. And although Katie is only 5 feet tall and 106 pounds she was easily able to drop her 6 foot 4, 250-pound attacker to his knees and get away unharmed.

Katie wasn't just lucky that day. She was prepared.

In her pocketbook, a harmless looking lipstick, which really contained a powerful man stopping aerosol propellant.

It's not like it was in our grandmother's day. Today just going to and from work or to the mall can have tragic consequences. The FBI says a violent crime is committed every 15 seconds in the United States. And a forcible rape happens every five minutes. And chances are when something happens, no one will be around to help.

It looks just like a lipstick. So no one will suspect a thing. Which is important since experts say, getting the jump on your attacker is all about the element of surprise.

Inside this innocent looking lipstick is the same powerful stuff used by police and the military to disarm even the most powerful, armed aggressor. In fact, National Park rangers used the very same formula that's inside this little lipstick to stop two-thousand pound vicious grizzly bears dead in their tracks. It's like carrying a personal bodyguard with you in your purse or your pocket.

Darkness brings danger. Murderers and rapists use darkness to their advantage. We all know what it's like to be walking at night and hear footsteps coming at us from behind. Who's there? If it's somebody bad, will you be protected? Your life may depend on it.

My friend Katie's close call needs to be a wake up call for all of us. Myself included. Pick up a Lipstick Bodyguard and keep it with you always.

Announcer: [00:13:07] You're listening to Parents Are Hard To Raise. Now, thanks to you, the number one eldercare talk show on planet Earth. Listen to this and other episodes on demand, using the iHeart Radio App. iPhone users can listen on Apple Podcasts and Android users on Google Podcasts.

Diane: [00:13:28] There's so many new ways to listen to our show, it's hard to keep track. Spotify... Roku... You can listen on your smartphone with Apple Podcasts...Google Podcasts. You can get us an Apple TV, Direct TV. And even just ask Alexa to play the show for you.

[00:13:44] It's great because you don't have to be tied to a radio anymore. You can listen when you want. Where you want. For as long as you want.

[00:13:51] And if you're listening to the show one of these new ways, please do me a big favor. Please share this new technology. Help someone else learn about the show and show them a new way to listen.

[00:14:02] A big shout out to Jeff, from Sebastian, Florida. He listens on his Android and he showed his wife Kathy how to do it as well. Great job Jeff!

[00:14:14] So I'm here talking with Wolf Shlagman from his company Care Angel.

[00:14:19] So, Wolf. The one thing that I thought was great is that you don't need a smartphone,

because we know the elderly, a lot of them don't have smartphones. You can just use a regular landline. Is that right?

Wolf Shlagman: [00:14:35] Correct. And I think that's one of the things that we really were looking at, even though we may in many cases for a younger population have smartphones. You have to download apps. You have to set them up. You have to set up accounts. You know, it becomes a little challenging. And, give or take, something like 60 percent or so may not have smartphones. Even the ones that do, I think I saw a stat from about a year ago, the average number of apps that we download on average is like a one. Because when you buy an Android or a smart or an iPhone, it comes with like 20, 30, 40 of the most widely used apps.

[00:15:14] But we sometimes jokingly say that a lot of folks just use what I call you know dumb part of the phone. To make a phone call.

Diane: [00:15:24] Exactly.

[00:15:25] I'm curious. How do the elderly, I guess when Angel calls... Do you find they respond very well to the to the voice and in answering questions and telling things, you know because sometimes they don't want to bother us as is kids, they don't want to say, "I ran out of medication," but they might tell angel.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:15:48] Correct. That's an interesting point you made.

[00:15:51] So, a couple things. One is when you have someone set up you can let Angel also know that you can send an e-mail to your loved one, to let them know that your son, Wolf, in this case, set up Angel to check in on you.

[00:16:05] As you finish setting up your loved one, say your mom, Angel says you know we'd like to call your mom now and let her know that you've set this great service up? You make sure she's happy, healthy, safe. And you know if it's "yes", you click, and you because you already give into the number, you're calling mom.

[00:16:25] So idea is that you're letting them know ahead of time. But when she does call she introduces herself and lets them know that your son Wolf... And I could also leave a little message, if I wanted to. .

[00:16:36] But um, but yeah. The reaction has been that they love it. It's very kind of an angelic voice, if you will. And really, it's really, once again... This has been set up because they care. Because they want to be there for their loved ones. And so that's one kind of example. And I mentioned earlier that we were working with like insurance companies and providers, and doctors, and so forth. Because they're the ones that are more responsible now with what's going on with health care and Medicare. Medicare Advantage. Even Medicaid.

[00:17:12] In-between doctor visits, I think what people may not realize, between doctor visits, there's almost no interaction between the doctor, nurses and the and the patients. Because, they don't have the resources to check in on... Right?

Diane: [00:17:29] Right.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:17:30] They just haven't. So we do it for them. So, we're working with big insurance companies Medicare, Medicare Advantage. Also now you have Doctors and providers

called Accountable Care Organizations... ACO, that same thing... They are responsible for large population. And were partnering with them, so we could basically scale care and we're revolutionizing the way we care for people. Because you realize that today only about 5 percent, literally, about 5 percent of the population-- mostly aging seniors-- are proactively cared for. Meaning someone reaches out to them by phone and/or visit their home. Period. The rest of the 95 percent, they're given the responsibility, "Call us if you need us."

Diane: [00:18:16] Yeah. Right.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:18:16] That is healthcare... In a nutshell.

[00:18:21] So we are putting that on its head by basically proactively... We have an unlimited army of virtual health assistants, virtual nurses, that will call, check in, figure if there is a need or an issue, and connect to the right resources. There is no challenge from our technology perspective, as you're talking about. Language... Multiple languages, English, Spanish. We've got 80 languages on the platform.

[00:18:51] But Angel gets to ask that mom, or that senior, who do they want to add to the care circle? Like a loved one. Like a son or a daughter. And so they can be alerted or notified there's a need or an issue. Yes. And she says. Okay. What's her name? What's her relationship? What's her phone number? Angel will then call them and say, Your Mom, you know, doctor Jones' patient, she wanted you added to the care circle. And they send you a link. They then get added. They can download the app. if they want.

[00:19:22] And now they can get alerted automatically. So we've kind of gone that path. Instead of going to individuals one at a time. If the children, with the children, if you will... We've gone big organizations that are responsible for lots of lives and then allow Angel to help facilitate and help to bring the kids on board so that they can be alerted that there is, you know, mom has a need.

[00:19:48] So when someone leaves the doctor's office, when someone is in the hospital, when someone is just aging at home... You have someone constantly checking in on you. And that's the vision that we have, is to be able to use technology to be able to use Angel as a virtual health system, a virtual caregiver, No specific caregiver it up to basically help care for as many people as possible and then let the right people know, the children, the doctors that there is a question, a need, an issue and we can come to the help. And we have thousands upon thousands of times come to people's help when they ran out of medications, where there's tremendous pain, when they are having these major needs. One population we were able to show that we reduced readmissions to hospital by 63%.

Diane: [00:20:35] Really?

Wolf Shlagman: [00:20:35] Absolutely.

Diane: [00:20:38] Well, people are living longer. We have this Silver Tsunami that's bearing down on us. And so many of our parents, they have chronic conditions. But we don't know if they ran out of medication or they couldn't get to the doctor and they don't feel good. And they're not communicating with anyone. So that's wonderful. And I could see how that would do what you set out to do.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:21:00] Studies have shown, there's one from USC.... A few out there, that talk about, when someone goes to ask a nurse or a patient, in this case a senior...funny, we don't like to use the word "patient". I think it's kind of derogatory. We're all patients from the moment we're

born. Right. We call them "care recipients." But when someone is being questioned by a nurse or a clinician, let's say, "did you take your medications?" If some says, "No," studies have shown that there's fear of being judged. Or being told that they didn't do the right thing. What have you. So the tend to... some people may tend to lie or we tend to not be as truthful. With a Avatar or this couple of collecting... A lot more truthful. You get a lot more meaningful data. Because there is no perception of you going to be judged.

Diane: [00:21:56] That's interesting.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:21:56] And angel is also very empathetic. We've infused her with that. For example, when you say how are you feeling? You say, "terrible." "I'm so sorry to hear that. I'll let someone know." "Are you in any pain?" Yes. "OK. What level of pain are you from one to ten?" Again, she's like, "Sorry. I'll make a note of that."

[00:22:17] So as she gathers information, you feel... and what we get it a lot is, "I feel a cared for."

[00:22:28] Once again... when you think about it, over the course of a year, and we're dealing with you know with some of the organizations, we're not really calling and asking about your, you know, how you are feeling and your medication, blood pressure. But we have what we call, "Daily Affirmations." So, Angle calls and says, "today's daily affirmation is... da, da, da." We're adding very soon, Jokes or weather. So from time to time she'll say would you like to heart a joke or things of that nature. And because of the challenge of isolation and just you know loneliness, and things of that nature, this can play a role as well.

[00:23:03] I remember we were dealing with CARP we had a senior who set this up for themselves and the put her kids down. And we asked her, we interviewed, and said, why? She said, "I live on top of a mountain. And I wanted my kids to know what was going on. If I fell. If something happened. Because they never call me. Just like that.

Diane: [00:23:21] Ohhh.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:23:21] She set it up for herself. And that's OK.

Diane: [00:23:25] Right.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:23:26] That's just another kind of example. You know, when I saw my mom up initially, within a month or two, I noticed...

[00:23:35] One of the things Angel has in there... You can sort of select what other things you want Angel to ask or not... Like, "Did you exercise?" "How's your appetite?" "How'd you Sleep?" And you you want to turn off some of those questions or by default, they're there.

[00:23:53] So the question of, "Do you exercise?" So every time it was, "No." "No." "No." A trend, right... no, no, no... So after you know two three weeks of this , I go "Mom, you know, if you don't do any exercise whatsoever, your body is going to, your muscles atrophy and so forth. And what's going to happen ifs, you're going to get up to get off the chair, whatever. You're going to fall. You're gonna break your hip. And you're in diapers. And it's to have a conversation with [laughing]...

[00:24:24] The next day? And pretty much every day after. it's like, "Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes." Right?

Diane: [00:24:38] [laughing].

Wolf Shlagman: [00:24:38] But Angel's asking her, "Did you exercise?" And it's also... It's a reminder. And we're documenting it.

[00:24:46] So, we're doing a little bit of "Did you take your medications?" And if it's no I forget... I'll take them now." Take your blood pressure? Oh, take it now. So things of that nature, where Angel's helping to remind them about medication about things they need to do. And also, there's tips. The typical... Water. Water. Hydration with seniors is such an important thing. One of the number one reasons you get admitted to the hospital, ER? Dehydration.

Diane: [00:25:12] Right.

[00:25:16] And, so... "How many glasses of water did you drink today?" You say, two. "Did you know that, blah, blah, blah... and she'll give a tip about water.

Diane: [00:25:25] That's great. Yeah.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:25:25] So these are the kind of things that support someone who may be needing to sometimes be nudged. And at the same time without all the attitude, without all the baggage.

Diane: [00:25:40] I was gonna say, Yeah... It Is like a another sibling, but without. "Ma, You have to do that." You know. Like my father I don't know. He doesn't drink. I'm like, "You gotta drink!"

Wolf Shlagman: [00:25:56] One of the things we got from AARP, as a kind of a feedback was , this is like having an extra sibling in the family. But without all the baggage.

Diane: [00:26:07] That's great. Yeah. Absolutely.

[00:26:11] And how can our listeners find out about Care Angel?

[00:26:13] Well, they can go to CareAngel.com They can also go to Care.CareAngel.com to sign up and download the app. and they can have Angel care for the loved ones. Will give them the ability to do so for free. they go to Care.CareAngel.com

Diane: [00:26:37] That's perfect. Thank you so much, Wolf, for sharing all this information on Care Angel.

Wolf Shlagman: [00:26:44] My pleasure. Thank you for having us.

Diane: [00:26:45] Oh You're welcome. Thank you. And I know our listeners got something out of this episode.

[00:26:58] I love getting your emails and questions so please keep sending them. You can reach me at Diane@ParentsAreHardToRaise.org Or Just click the green button on our home page.

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[00:27:38] Our New York producer is Joshua Green. Our Broadcast engineer is Well Gambino. And from our London Studio, the melodic voice of our announcer, "Miss Dolly D."

[00:27:43] Thank You so much for Listening. Till next time...

[00:27:47] May you forget everything you don't want to remember, and remember everything you don't want to forget.

[00:27:52] See you again next week!